

SCHOOL OF MUSIC, THEATRE AND DANCE
OAKLAND UNIVERSITY

Oakland Dance Theatre
and
Oakland University
Repertory Dance Company
present
Annual Fall Dance Concert

With Guest Choreographers:
Stephanie Pizzo
and
Russell Tanenbaum

Elizabeth Riga, ODT Co-Director
Christina Tasco, ODT Co-Director
Thayer Jonutz, RDC Director
Christa Koerner, Costume Supervisor
Kerro Knox 3, Lighting Supervisor

Thursday, December 2, 2021 at 8 p.m.
Friday, December 3, 2021 at 8 p.m.
Saturday, December 4, 2021 at 2 and 8 p.m.
Sunday, December 5, 2021 at 2 p.m.
Varner Studio Theatre

Oakland University resides on the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary lands of the Anishinaabe, known as the Three Fires Confederacy, comprised of the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi. The land was ceded in the 1807 Treaty of Detroit and makes up southeast Michigan.

In recognizing the history and respecting the sovereignty of Michigan's Indian Nations, Oakland University honors the heritage of Indigenous communities and their significant role in shaping the course of this region. Further, we recognize the wrongs done to those forcibly removed from their Homelands and commit to fostering an environment of inclusion that is responsive to the needs of First Peoples through our words, policies, and actions.

The preservation and perpetuation of customs and traditions of Indigenous nations are essential to our shared cultural heritage. A deep understanding of Native peoples' past and present informs the teaching, research, and community engagement of the university in its ongoing effort to elevate the dignity of all people and serve as shared stewards of the land.

PROGRAM

Bye Bye BlackBird

Choreography: From the 1972 television special *Liza* and the 1999 musical, *Fosse*

Restaged by: Mary Murphy

Music: *Bye Bye BlackBird* by Ray Henderson with lyrics by Mort Dixon

Lighting: Colin Franz

Costumes: Mary Murphy with help from the dancers

Dancers: Lexi Benton, Olivia Dorman, Katie Farris, Jada Givens, Jane Lyszak, Megan Makulski,

Claire McCowan, Ainsley Middleton, Theresa O'Conner, Alison Penix, Morgan Pinkham, Victoria Poirier,

Lexi Radjewski, Kimberly Sexton, Theresa Sommers, Grace Whan

Featured Vocalist: Grace Whan

Habitus

Choreography: Thayer Jonutz

Music: *World to Come 1* by David Lang, *Clapping Music (1972)* by Steve Reich

Lighting: Kerro Knox 3

Costumes: Christa Koerner

Dancers: Madisyn Boussie, Iyobosasere Enabulele, Riley McClain, Rebecca Otmanowski, Lea Purrett,

Anna Taravella

“Introducing...Kristi Kreme”

Choreography: Teresa Muller

Music: *Material Girl* by Madonna, *La Vie En Rose* by Edon Piaf, *Burns* by George FitzGerald

Lighting: Eden Cope

Costumes: Colin Franz

Dancers: Tristen Cook, Jada Givens, Jane Lyszak, Victoria Poirier, Rissa Smith, April Thweatt

Just in Time

Choreography: Stephanie Pizzo

Music: *Tosca: Act II – Vista D'arte* by Giacomo Puccini, *In Circles* by Patrick Watson, *Lighthouse* by Patrick Watson

Lighting: Eileen Brennan

Costumes: Christa Koerner

Dancers: Ainsley Middleton, Morgan Pinkham, Kimberly Sexton, Grace Whan

Take Me With You

Choreography: Liz Riga in collaboration with the dancers

Music: *Yi Gui* by FM3 and Christiaan Virant

Lighting: Eden Cope

Costumes: Christa Koerner

Dancers: Lexi Benton, Tristen Cook, Kaitlin Devault, Olivia Dorman, Katie Farris, Guadalupe Gaytan,

Jada Givens, Sarah Holcomb, Emily Kloc, Angela Lowry, Megan Makulski, Claire McCowan,

Ainsley Middleton, Brianna Muawad, Alison Penix, Loren Pia, Kimberly Sexton, April Thweatt, Izzy Winarski

INTERMISSION

Mishima

Choreography: Thayer Jonutz

Music: *1962 Body Building* by Philip Glass, *Blood Oath* by Philip Glass

Musicians, Thursday and Saturday: Kyle Marker, Trey Martin, Shane Voss

Guitar Ensemble Director: Bret Hoag

Lighting: Kerro Knox 3

Costumes: Christa Koerner

Dancers: Madisyn Boussie, Iyobosasere Enabulele, Riley McClain, Rebecca Otmanowski, Lea Purrett, Anna Taravella

Farewell

Choreography: Christina Tasco

Music: *Pimpf* by Depeche Mode

Lighting: Colin Franz

Costumes: Liv Kunkle

Dancers: Guadalupe Gaytan, Sarah Holcomb, Brianna Muawad, Morgan Pinkham, Lexi Radjewski, Laurel Ryan, Rissa Smith, Theresa Sommers, Grace Whan

**Farewell premiered at Varner Recital Hall in 2011. I choreographed this piece as a tribute to my mother. I brought the piece back this year in remembrance of all those who lost loved ones during the pandemic and were unable to formally say goodbye.*

12 Notes: A Documentary of Callobration

Created by: Ali Woerner

Filmed by: Minty Photography/Sam Paraventi & Vivian Costello

Special Thanks to: Regina Carter, Tim Blackmon, Patrick Fitzgibbon, Marion Hayden, Enrique Rios-Ellis, Mark Stone, Guba, Ali Woerner, Oakland University's School of Music, Theater and Dance and Take Root

**This film documents a two day workshop led by Regina Carter, Professional Artist-in-Residence, Associate Professors Mark Stone, Guba and Ali Woerner with Oakland University's Music and Dance Majors and Take Root, Oakland University's Professional Dance Company-in-Residence. Dancers and Musicians collaborated using their artistic language; music or dance, to learn about one another, creating beautiful stories and relationships.*

Ferocity

Choreography: Russell Tanenbaum

Music: *Thor's Cave* by Nocturnal Emissions, *Bodak Yellow* by Cardi B, *Du Kommer Aldrig Nara Igen* by Orphan Ann

Lighting: Eileen Brennan

Costumes: Christa Koerner

Dancers: Tristen Cook, Olivia Dorman, Sarah Holcomb, Riley McClain, Ainsley Middleton, Rebecca Otmanowski, Morgan Pinkham, Victoria Poirier, Lea Purrett, Rissa Smith, April Thweatt, Grace Whan

Oakland Dance Theatre

Lexi Benton, Tristen Cook, Kaitlin DeVault, Olivia Dorman, Katie Farris, Guadalupe Gaytan, Sarah Holcomb, Emily Kloc, Jada Givens, Angela Lowry, Megan Makulski, Claire McCowan, Ainsley Middleton, Brianna Muawad, Theresa O'Connor, Alison Penix, Morgan Pinkham, Loren Pia, Victoria Poirier, Lexi Radjewski, Laurel Ryan, Sean Ryan, Kimberly Sexton, Rissa Smith, Theresa Sommers April Thweatt, Grace Whan, Isabella Winarsky

Repertory Dance Company

Madisyn Boussie, Iyobosasere Enabulele, Riley McClain
Rebecca Otmanowski, Lea Purrett, Anna Taravella

Choreographer Biographies

Thayer Jonutz is an independent dance artist who has been choreographing and performing for almost 30 years. In his early days, gymnastics, hip-hop and Polynesian dance along with the traditional Ballet and Jazz dance established the base of his expression. After earning a BA in Modern Dance from Brigham Young University he performed with one of the oldest Repertory Modern Dance companies, Repertory Dance Theatre for five seasons. It was there that historical works by Ted Shawn, John Butler, Helen Tamiris, Laura Dean and many others imprinted a love for honoring the past. Thayer's journey to Michigan began at the University of Michigan where he gained an MFA in Choreography and Performance. Upon graduating Thayer accepted a position as a professor of dance at Oakland University where he has been educating for the last 12 years. In 2013 he cofounded Take Root which has performed in many venues throughout Michigan and internationally including Germany, South Korea and Costa Rica. Since resigning from Take Root in 2020 Thayer is excited to use all of his dance history to create and impact the community with his diverse artistic vision.

Teresa Muller completed her M.F.A. in Dance at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts in the spring of 2017. She was awarded the opportunity to choreograph for the 2016 Masters Performance Workshop at Tisch Dance, as well as present work at the 14th Street YMCA. Her time at NYU allowed her to train with a multitude of artists, including Ori Flomin, Loni Landon, Bobbi Jean Smith and Diane Madden of the Trisha Brown Dance Company. Since moving back to her home of Metro Detroit, Teresa has been performing and touring with the Detroit-based, queer dance company Kristi Faulkner Dance and is a co-creator of the Detroit Dance Exchange—a choreographic festival for dance makers to present work with the option of receiving community feedback. She is also a founding member of Collective Sweat Detroit—a community-led collective of dancers interested in holding space for dance in Detroit. CSD was awarded a prestigious 2018 Knights Arts Challenge Grant, receiving funding over two years to bring more opportunities to professional dance artists based in Detroit. Currently, Teresa is an adjunct lecturer of dance at Oakland University, a company member with OU resident company Take Root and a freelance artist across the nation.

Mary Murphy earned her *BFA* in Dance with Special Studies in Ballet, K-12 Teaching Certification in Dance Education and Psychology from Western Michigan University and her *MAT in Dance Education* from Marygrove College. Mary has studied with Jurgen Schneider formerly of the American Ballet Theatre and with Alonzo King of the Alonzo King Lines Ballet. She has also studied with modern dance choreographers Erick Hawkins and Alwin Nikolais. She has choreographed over 70 musical theatre productions for grade schools, high schools, community colleges, community theatres and universities. She has served as the Director of Dance for the University Liggett Schools in Grosse Pointe, MI and as The Director of Dance for Livonia Public School's Creative and Performing Arts Program (CAPA) for 22 years. She has taught and created curriculum for all levels of ballet, jazz, modern dance, tap and musical theatre and has choreographed and staged numerous concert works. Mary has taught master classes in dance at Michigan State University, Henry Ford Community College, Michigan Youth Arts Festival and various private studios. She currently is a Lecture of Dance Education and Field Coordinator for the Dance Department at Oakland University. She is an instructor at The Dance Centre in South Lyon, MI and choreographer for The Farmington Barn Players in Farmington, MI. She is a member of the National Dance Education Organization, the Michigan Dance Council and the American Psychological Association. Mary serves as the MDC Dance Division and Honors Dance Ensemble Coordinator for Michigan Youth Arts Festival. She also chairs the MDC Secondary Dance Education Cohort. Mary was awarded the 2010 Michigan Dance Educator of the Year.

Stephanie Pizzo is the current Artistic Director of *Eisenhower Dance Detroit* where she joined the company as a founding member in 1991. At various points in her dance career with EDD, she served as Resident Choreographer, Associate Artistic Director, and Co-Artistic Director. Ms. Pizzo now leads the company into her 5th season as Artistic Director. Her focus involves collaborating with the highest quality national and international artists and creating strong ties within the Detroit Metro community through the art of dance. Her recent dance for film work, *The Five Tangos*, inspired by the music of Astor Piazzolla and created in collaboration with the Detroit Institute of Art, featured each contemporary tango danced in an iconic Detroit location.

Ms. Pizzo also believes in educational programming and youth mentorship as key tools to develop community connection. She works to use the art of contemporary dance both as a means to present beautiful, athletic, and engaging repertory and as a vehicle to reflect on and explore issues of social significance. She has set her choreography at Illinois State University, Texas A & M University, and Wesleyan University, along with having staged numerous works by Laurie Eisenhower on companies and universities throughout the United States. Her work has been presented in Tel Aviv as part of Eisenhower Dance Detroit's production of *The Light Show*, at international dance festivals in Poland, and most recently on the *Inside/Out Stage* at Jacob's Pillow. A native of Clinton Township, Michigan, Ms. Pizzo holds a Bachelor of Arts in Dance from Oakland University. In 2009, she received a Distinguished Alumni or "MaTilDa" award from the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance. Currently, she is a special lecturer in dance at Oakland University. Ms. Pizzo has been commissioned to set new choreography for Texas Christian University and Texas A & M University in February 2022.

Liz Riga received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Liz ventured to New York City in 2001, where she attended New York University Tisch School of the Arts and received a Master of Fine Arts in Dance. Liz worked extensively with Keigwin + Company, creating, performing, touring, and teaching as an original member of the company. Liz has had the honor of performing at the Joyce Theater, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Works in Process at the Guggenheim, the Opening Gala at Jacob's Pillow, and New York City Center, to name a few. She has taught master classes at various schools across the United States, including the University of Michigan, New York University, and North Carolina

School of the Arts. Liz recently moved to Michigan with her family and is honored to be on faculty at Oakland University.

Russell Tanenbaum is native to Palm Coast, Florida where he began dancing at 7 years old. He trained under the nation's top instructors which led him to land his first job with Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines as a dancer in the production shows. After his cruising tour, he began taking jobs as a choreographer for dance studios all over the nation. In August of 2013, Russell was invited to train at Broadway Dance Center's prestigious Professional Semester in New York City. In his final showcase from Broadway Dance Center, Russell was scouted by RWS & Associates and offered a contract with Holland America Line. He completed his tour and moved back to Florida; investing his time into traveling, teaching and choreographing all over the world. His art has taken him to 22 countries and 4 continents. Aside from his numerous choreographic and performance achievements, Russell is constantly studying and seeking new ventures and experiences to bring back to his students. His most recent endeavor took him to Israel where he trained intimately under Ohad Nahirin and Batsheva Ensemble members studying the Gaga Movement Language. After his call back for Batsheva dance ensemble, he auditioned for the Kibbutz Dance Company study abroad program, which he was accepted to. His plan was to relocate to Israel, but due to Covid Russell's plans changed. He is now the proud owner and Artistic Director of Artflux Dance Lab; a new training facility located in Novi, MI. He also is launching his own performance company, "the molecUment ensemble". Russell has created a life for himself receiving knowledge and inspiration from so many; he greatly looks forward to continuing sharing that and his visions with all those who surround him!

Christina Tasco is a special lecturer at Oakland University where she has been on faculty since 2002. Tasco teaches a variety of technique and academic classes in addition to directing Oakland Dance Theater. Christina danced professionally with Eisenhower Dance Detroit (EDD) from 1997-2004. During her time with EDD, Christina accepted the position of Director of Education and Outreach for the organization, where she managed the company's Rochester based studio and helped to open and direct two additional locations in Birmingham and West Bloomfield. Today, Christina continues to work for EDD both administratively and as a teacher. Throughout her career, Tasco has taught numerous master classes and creative movement residencies across the state and country. She has choreographed for a variety of studios, high schools, Universities and special events. Christina received both her Bachelor of Health Science and Masters of Exercise Science from Oakland University. Her master's research project, *The Effects of Quadriceps and Hamstring Strength and Flexibility on Anterior Pelvic Tilt in Dancers*, was accepted for presentation at the American College of Sports Medicine's annual conference where it then received the "Most Outstanding Master's Thesis Presentation" award. At the University, Christina was blessed with the Most Inspiration Professor award in both 2014 and 2015 and was nominated for a Teaching Excellence Award in 2016. In 2018, Christina attained the *Order of the Plume* for igniting "inspiration within the students."

GIVING

We are fundraising for the SMTD Study Abroad Music Fund, and we need as many friends, family and alumni to participate. It is not about the amount - it is the number of people that participate. The more people that participate, the more our chances increase of raising extra funds on top of the donation total. This fund assists with upcoming student travel to Ghana, Greece, Berlin, Spain and Portugal. Questions? Contact Dr. David Kidger at kidger@oakland.edu. [Click here to learn more and to give](#). Thank you!