

# KATIE VICKERS

Master of Fine Arts, Dance  
University of the Arts  
Philadelphia, PA

2021



# PORTFOLIO

By

Katie Vickers

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Presented in  
partial fulfillment of the requirements of  
the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Dance  
Low Residency Cohort

University of the Arts  
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K a t i e V i c k e r s

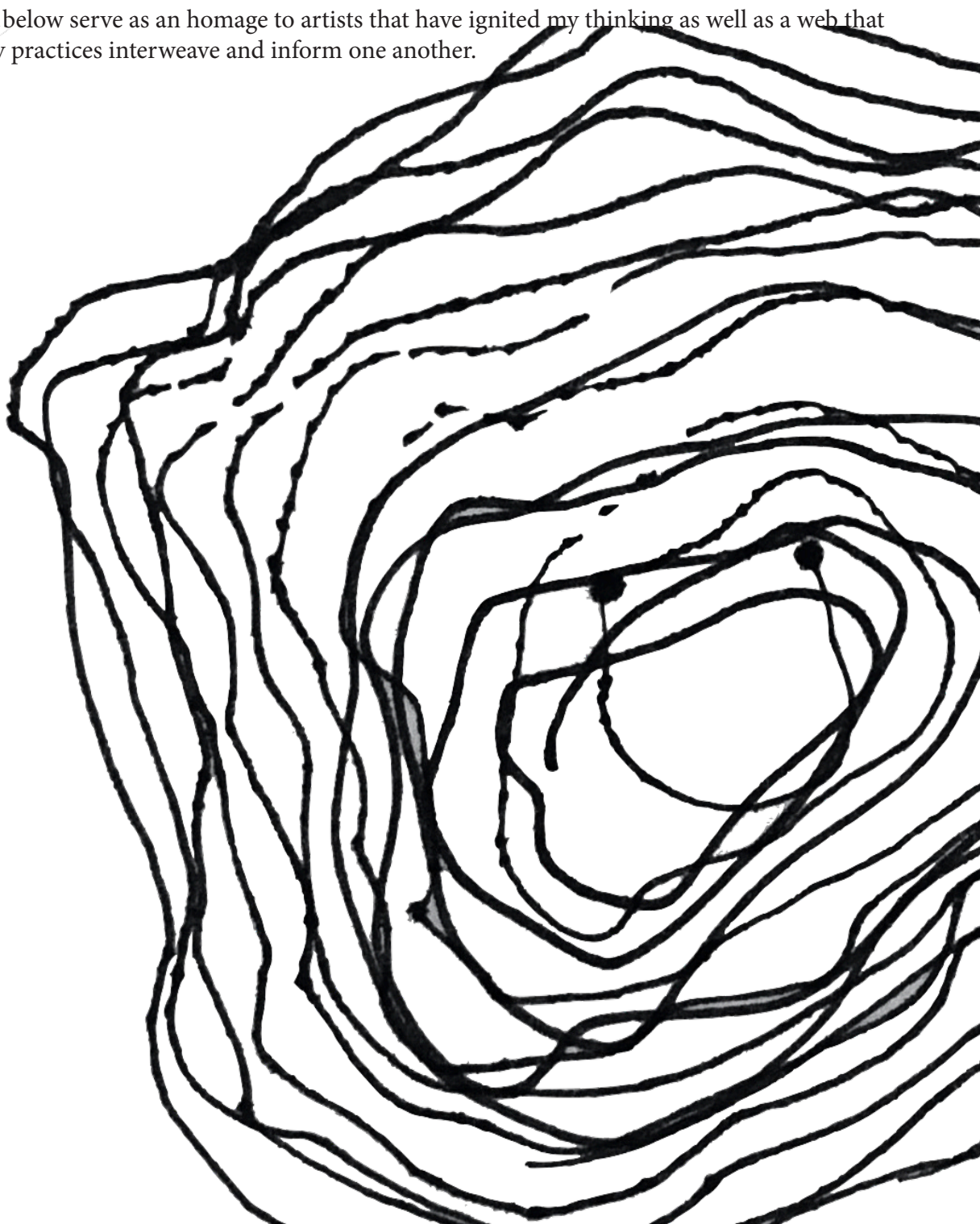
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# I N T R O D U C T I O N

This portfolio is an archive of my love affair with dance. An ever-evolving document that exhibits growth, loss, and curiosities in my career. As an artist, it is urgent to question the relevancy of dance - whether making, teaching, or performing. The why and how questions I have in this field are what keeps me in it. It is a way to keep me grounded and energized - to be alongside my thinking and doing.

The pages below serve as an homage to artists that have ignited my thinking as well as a web that illustrates how my practices interweave and inform one another.



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# A R T I S T   S T A T E M E N T

*caring, softening, tending*

I desire a moment to ground in the space together, to create a warmth that settles in the body. I facilitate spaces in which I encourage an autonomy in how to see, attention is self-led and the contract between audience and performer is devised. This provides a freedom that changes what's at stake, and changes where value and importance are placed. I want to explore and interrogate the many possibilities of how we share time and space together.

Researching dance frames and reframes movement material to aid in our experiences. In each process I question where we want to shift. Daydreaming cuts into our sense of linear time. I play inside that cut, building worlds in a liminal space through sounds (linguistic and non-linguistic), scenography (changing the feel of architecture through light and materials), and how this lens perceives the body. Most importantly, I pay attention to how all of these elements clash, blend, oppose, and hybridize into meaning. The 'when' of these elements are what motivates me. My work stretches out the moment before we can identify something (whether a feeling, a state, a way of moving). I stretch out the transition before it lands into the next material, a space of in-between. Moving forward and backward or looping we find a crack into something new, something different.

Together, I want to comfortably sit inside the endless possibilities, and not know what's going to happen.

# C O L L A B O R A T I V E

## Future Space Philly (2020-present)

This project began out of a dream to build a multi-functional space for the Philadelphia live arts community to engage in process, performance, resources, and community building. A space where we can lean into one another and imagine more possibilities of what a live arts space can be and do.

As a collective of three women, we are investigating the intersections of space, art and activism. We believe activism & social justice work are intrinsic to creating; we prioritize this way of thinking in FSP's work and are exploring what that looks like.

The collective of FSP believes it's really important to "move at the speed of trust." For us, this looks like engaging more with the Philadelphia live arts and activism communities, by going to events, building relationships, and building trust. This is an action of moving slowly.<sup>1</sup>

1      [www.futurespacephilly.xyz](http://www.futurespacephilly.xyz)

What is **possible** inside  
a live arts space?

## How can a physical art space be self-sustaining?

What **financial models** are missing within our field?

What more can happen when  
we imagine a space with  
**no artistic director?**



# Wat





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## **We Will Have Had Darker Futures (2017)**

*“Understanding is an unending activity by which, in constant change and variation, we come to terms with and reconcile ourselves to reality, that is, try to be at home in the world.” - Arendt*

*We Will Have Had Darker Futures* is a trio dance performance that deals with understanding the past in order to move forward into the future. The performers practice and facilitate detachment through movement, text, and collective actions as means to escape our constant fear of change.

We begin by looking for ways of existing and being at home in a world of constant noise, fear, and alerts. As fear is the economy of media it filters through political structures and into all aspects of every day life. The mass production line of fear is one of anxiety and terror; information on a regular basis is used simply as way to mobilize terror.

By looking at time-transgressing notions such as fear and hope, we investigate and invent new methods pivoting around detachment. Notions which transgress the order of past, present, future and give us an experience in time but outside of how one usually experiences its succession.

An inviting journey of undoing, a dance of movement and words, where language and physical language provokes and undoes what stands before us through revisitations and alterations to past events. *We Will Have Had Darker Futures* thinks of possible futures through daydreaming, language, and dance while emphasizing the passage of time in the act of collective finger knitting.

*Concept, choreography & performance: Katie Vickers, Inga Huld Hákonardóttir and Rebecka Stillman*

*Sound: Ruben Nachtergaele, Katie Vickers, Inga Huld Hákonardóttir and Rebecka Stillman*

*Co-Production: DeSingel, MDT Stockholm with the support of the Province of Antwerp, Reykjavik City, The Swedish Arts Grants Committee, wpZimmer, ccBerchem, de School van Gaasbeek and The Swedish Arts Council*

### **Tour**

2018	January 27/28th	Malmo, SE
	September 15/16th	Gothenberg, SE
2017	December 11/12th	Stockholm, SE
	September 2nd	Lennik, BE
	March 17/18th	Antwerp, BE





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## 5 Seasons (2015)

In *5 Seasons* Katie Vickers and Benjamin Pohlig in collaboration with composer Gašper Piano continue their previous work around the theme of pop culture in order to investigate the boundaries between the concert and the theatre.

The focus lies with how its two communities come together to participate in their respective forms of performance. The concert is the embodiment of the various elements of pop culture, such as sound, image and community. *5 Seasons* investigates the purpose of this collective experience while taking the (theatre) audience on a journey through the musical genres of rock, pop and dance music. Each musical style represents a ritualistic moment in everyday life, a place to escape into, disappear and resurrect back into reality.

The performance creates its own worlds filled with transfixed dances, raw energies, ornate lights and contagious beats. Drifting in and out of concert and theatre, *5 Seasons* invites the audience to acknowledge these spaces in different ways.

*Concept and choreography: Katie Vickers and Benjamin Pohlig*

*Performance: Katie Vickers, Benjamin Pohlig, Gasper Piano*

*Music: Gasper Piano*

*Co-Production: DeSingel, wpZimmer, TAKT Dommelhof, Schloss Bröllin e.V. Gefördert durch das NATIONALE PERFORMANCE NETZ (NPN) Koproduktionsförderung Tanz aus Mitteln der Beauftragten der Bundesregierung für Kultur und Medien aufgrund eines Beschlusses des Deutschen Bundestags*

### Tour

2018	January 20th	Leipzig, DE
2016	December 17th	Cologne, DE
	April 13th	Antwerp, BE
2015	December 9th	Berlin, BE





## Slogan For Modern Times (2014)

*“Is this really happening? What is it? How do we describe what is happening when we don’t know what it is? How do we experience a space that is constantly dismantling itself, now?”*

This is happening now. Stressing the moment before the moment of terror, the now anticipating the following now, two performers insist on the very moment before naming and identifying.

How long can we stay present with this unidentified something, before it is named? Inspired by outcasts and strange bodily connections, the performance is a determinate expression of inbetweens.

Bodies, beings, things and codes of communication emerge and create a suitable universe for the undefined viscera. At length *Slogan for Modern Times* questions the terrifying spaces in between the horrific and the appealing, the pleasurable perversion that is in all of us.

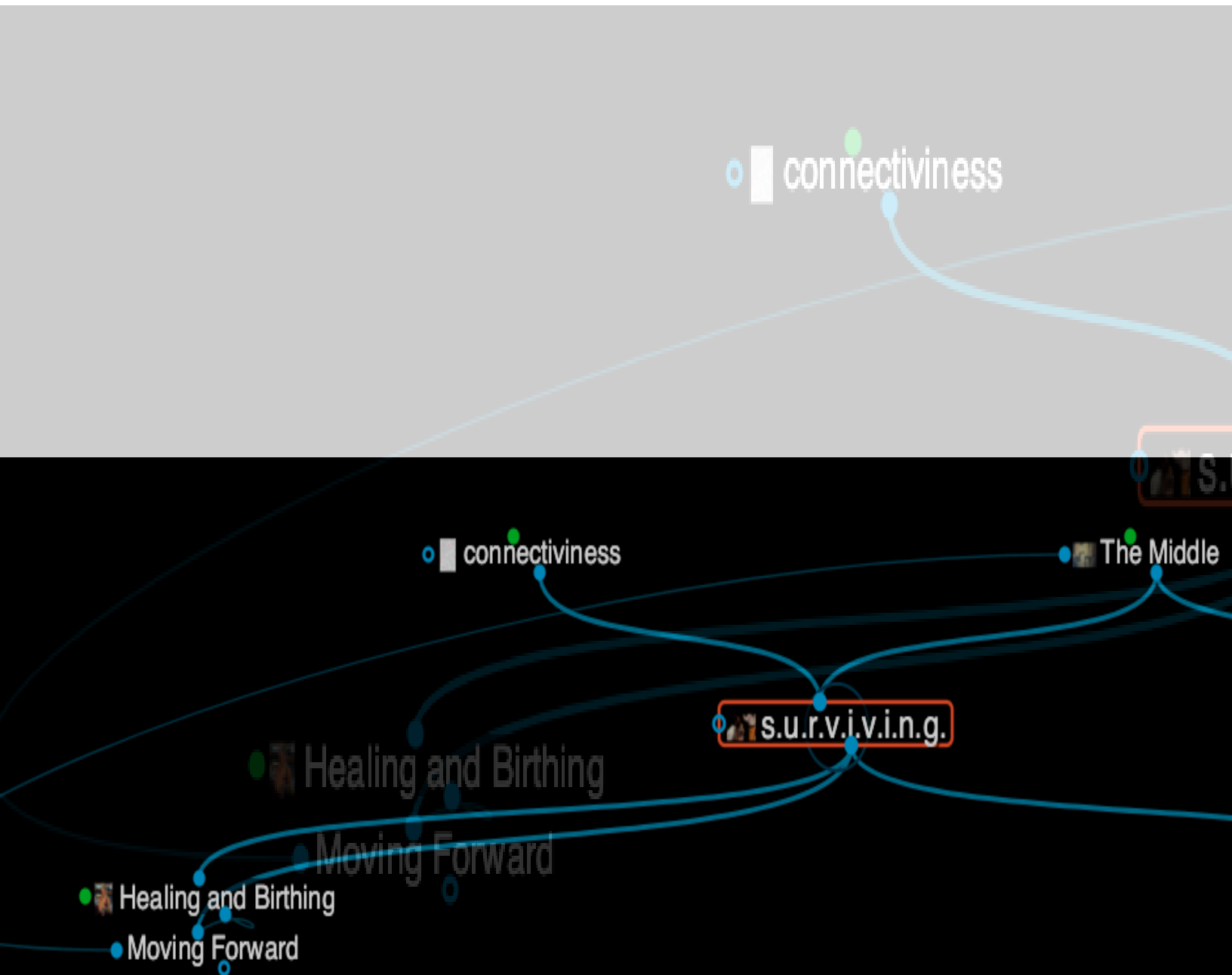
*Choreography, performance, scenography and music: Inga Hákonardóttir and Katie Vickers*  
*Production: Kosmonaut Coproduced by P.A.R.T.S and Monty Antwerpen*

### Tour

2016	April 14th	Antwerp, BE
2015	May 28th, 29th	Antwerp, BE
	September 13th	Leenik, BE
2014	June 5th	Essen, DE
	June 7th	Antwerp, BE
	June 13th	Ghent, BE
	June 19th	Amsterdam, NL
	June 24th, 27th	Brussels, BE
	July 10th	Istanbul, TR

# N A R R A T I V E   H I S T O R Y

I wrote my narrative starting in the middle. An unfolding from the center out towards its edges. Below are tiny vignettes for you to grab in a linear sense or non-linear journey. I invite you to begin from "START HERE" or to find "THE MIDDLE" and move forwards and backwards using the footnotes as a guide. The story unravels with you. Find your own pathway or read straight through.



## START HERE<sup>1</sup>

*I come from a long line of strong women, navigating patriarchy. I was born four days early with red hair and the necessity to move quickly. My family comes from the South in Shelby, North Carolina to the coal regions of Pennsylvania and the mountains of Northern Italy. I come from overtly racists grandparents, squeezing my hand while calling people out on the streets. I come from believing in the American dream where if you work hard, you get far! Exclamation point. Exclamation point. I come from wealth and privilege and private institutions. I'm from home cooked biscuits with melted cheese, chipped beef, and perfectly made fudge, to Dorothy's kitchen and Martha's knitted blankets. I am from the trees in the front yard, sitting, day-dreaming towards somewhere, towards something. I come from a lineage of staying in line, keeping the path, shoulders are back - conforming to a specific orientation in life. My American upbringing is not so different from other white, upper class children. Pulling the curtain back, I come from a place that clearly had a path<sup>2</sup> written for me if I wanted it - a mapping where the unknown was not a place to search into. I come from a place of blurriness where my father always told me to do what makes me happy, to follow your dream, this felt true and earnest, yet in the back of my head I knew there was an expiration date to the ideal statement. I come from a place where I broke a lot of rules, where I had to pull the superficial layers off my skin and cells to find a place of truth<sup>3</sup>. I am from fleeting moments of tipping over edges<sup>4</sup> bundled with curiosity and fear - a leaf flying far away from its roots.*

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1 This writing is inspired by George Ella Lyon's poem "Where I'm From."

2 path; pg.21

3 truth; pg.23

4 edges; pg.25

Herstory

The Dance Itself

The Dance Itself





© Jane Vickers



## HERSTORY

A bright-eye, open-heart, white tooth American girl walks into a Western European institution. Over time, her optimism sinks down into her skin crawling into dark spaces to hide. As an American, opportunistic is what she's learned. It is what she has been taught. Culture shock arrives and becoming more "sophisticated" becomes more of a survival or performance than a desire. Power games and inconsistent rules for students create a blurriness in the hallways - she moves to an *edge*<sup>1</sup>.

I grew up in Virginia with a man-made father, coming from nothing to creating his American dream. As a little girl up until I left for Brussels, he would take me to dinner and ask me what my goals were? What I wanted to be when I grew up? What kind of life did I want to live? At the time, I appreciated those dinners, reflecting on my dreams. Slowly, I developed a habit of understanding my worth within monetary terms - shaping certain values and ideologies in me. Capitalism. Class. Heteronormativity. Knowing from a young age dance was going to be my profession, my father's deepest concern and ever lingering question was: how are you going to make money? This was my fuel, subconsciously. I had to make a living off of dancing. However, tying your wealth and value to productivity when your instrument is the body is beyond tiring. I had a lot of remapping to do.

Besides certain values breathing down my neck, I learned a great deal by observing my parents. In their own ways and without verbally teaching me, they practice a form of *community*<sup>2</sup> that is about service and being good neighbors. My mother has always worked and built nonprofits, engaging with youth programs and fundraising for breast cancer research in my town. My father's mission has always been and remains to this day committed to building safe homes for people and renovating historical buildings. My small observations as a kid begin to slip into my choreographic practices and beyond. How does service and activism integrate itself into my art processes?

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1 *edge*; pg.25

2 *community*; pg.39





© Laurie Atkins

## CONSUELO

I started at a young age with ballet, jazz, and hip hop. As a properly trained "southern girl" I found myself getting in trouble in ballet. The uptightness of the form rubbing next to the etiquette classes I was taking were all a bit much for a child that kept asking: but why? Maybe it was the wonderment of trying to understand who made these *rules*<sup>1</sup> or the massive molding of how "we" were supposed to behave as children. Nevertheless, I found my way - escaping my small town any chance I could.

I went to a boarding school, a way to step outside of my bubble and move away from the clear path drawn in the sand for me. I attribute so much of my curiosity in dance to my highschool teacher, Denise Dalton. She is my soulmate. Denise paved a path of questioning for me that I never knew existed inside of dance. At that point, I was just a trained copy-cat. She opened a new world to me.

When I was fifteen I attended Bates Dance Festival for young dancers. It was my first festival experience. To offer solace is to offer a floor, a resting place. This festival was one of many firsts for me but finding the floor caught me off guard. Learning to trust gravity and to find a safe place to land felt monumental. It was a support I always wanted, a floor to rest on. Finding comfort from the earth stamped me forever, I knew I was always going to dance.

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1 *rules*; pg.17





## MARSHMALLOW BONES

I learned about Ohio State's program from a counselor at Bates Dance Festival. I remember her saying, if you want some rigorous training combined with keg stands, this is your place. Coming out of a strict yet hippy boarding school, it sounded pretty good to me.

I was lucky that my four years there coincided with Abby Yager and Ming Lung-Yang. They became my dancing parents. Like any child, I stuck very close to them, absorbing all the embodiment I could. Their pedagogy was invaluable, space was given to learn through listening, softening, tapping into the weight of the body - a place of resting while observing.

Improvisation was the crux of my OSU experience. Myself and a few other classmates started a group called Performing Improvisational Ensemble (P.I.E.). We met every Saturday for two years, people could come and go and practice. We were all *curious*<sup>1</sup> and playful, laughing at different scores we would create for one another, yet not fully understanding the impact this *community*<sup>2</sup> and practice was having on our lives. We were creating kin, entangling our lives together in intimate ways through touch, research, collaboration, friction and love - a multitude of connectivity was binding us all. Little did I know, this is what I would crave so deeply in Europe. The multiplicity of being with one another, as Donna Haraway says: "to be terrestrial."

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1 *curious*; pg.17

2 *community*; pg.31 or 39



© Katie Vickers

## THE MIDDLE

I have a deep love affair with dance that started young and ferocious. It only makes sense to begin in the middle of my story - to begin where the *growing pains*<sup>1</sup> started. With pain, comes a lot of learning, a lot of transformation.

I am shaped by so many *people*<sup>2</sup>, by so many places and institutions. When I think about my experience at The Performing Arts Research and Training Studios (P.A.R.T.S.) in Brussels, Belgium (2010-2014), I immediately think about the *darkest*<sup>3</sup> place in my life. This is no exaggeration. I have great insight and euphoric experiences to share but what stands out the most is what hurt me the most. I am wise where my wounds are. Those wounds have shaped me the most to how I think and behave now. As much as I wanted to quit dancing after P.A.R.T.S, my wounds somehow carried me to a place of curiosity again - perhaps the only way out of our dark spaces is through them.

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1      *growing pains*; pg.19

2      *people*; pg.33

3      *darkest*; pg.27



© Danny Willems



## S.U.R.V.I.V.I.N.G.

I moved to Europe in a time where I desperately needed a break, a moment to digest, ferment and process my education at Ohio State University. During those four years, there was not a single summer or winter break I stopped moving, thinking, wondering about dance. I went to intensives, I traveled to Taiwan with professors - I think if I stopped I would miss a step. I graduated in June, went to Bates in July and flew to Brussels in September. I had yet to learn the power of rest. Or hear Deborah Hay's score: "work like a dog, at being a pig." I only worked and thought like a dog.

n e v e r   l e a v i n g   s p a c e   f o r   t h e   u n k  
n o w n   o r   w h a t   i f

I arrived feeling jaded before I even began but growing up as I did, you never give up an opportunity. I am very transparent about my experience at P.A.R.T.S. because it is not a new story in the dance field - it is a tale as old as time. The politics of *care*<sup>1</sup> become a soft ideology. A focus on prestige and brand is the practiced virtue. The periphery remains peripheral and the center is held strong. I recall theory professors coming into the building and starting class off with "you're the next generation of important choreographers, you must have things to say." ....As I looked around the room filled with demographics and diversity - we were lost as the grooming began.

P.A.R.T.S. brings in amazing teachers from around the Western world. I learned a great deal especially after an education as formal as Ohio State. My ideas of movement and choreography were transformed overnight and placed inside of critical thought towards the world. I am forever grateful for this learning. But with great learning came great loss. As I held to my center, over the years, I increasingly lost my GPS system of intuition. I saw this with many of my colleagues, a questioning of the form became a deeper questioning of self-worth. I lost weight, lost hair, lost my sense of who I was as I ran feverishly off my nervous system. As we all became more bitter, tired, and angry - the only end sight was graduating. No solidarity or *community*<sup>2</sup> formed, we tried and failed, like many generations before us. I so desperately missed any form of care-taking and *love*<sup>3</sup> taken seriously. We were all *surviving*,<sup>4</sup> trying to make art in an institution that gave a great deal of weight to how art should look and be. It was traumatic pedagogy.

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1      *care*; pg.33

2      *community*; pg.39

3      *love*; pg.25

4      *surviving*; pg.29



© Bart Grietens

## THE DANCE ITSELF

In survival mode, there comes a real lack of deep listening. To be running off your nervous system is to constantly be inside of fight or flight - a trauma response. The dance weaved in and out of this and yet was still a guiding light to surviving. If I lost that, what was left? Dance was my muse and I held tightly to it in those years, hoping it wouldn't escape the mental battle I was enduring. I needed it and it needed me.

The dancing was a rabbit hole I kept funneling down towards. The deeper I dug, the richer it became. My relationship to the *floor*<sup>1</sup> changed - I learned how to use the spectrum of tone in my muscles - isolation became a game of scientist - the new tools I was discovering gave me a sense of texture in my dancing. I was an animal, a monster, a poet, a shape-shifting machine. It was and is, always thrilling to move through these experiences.

I very much attribute certain artists to the "goodness" of my experience there: Chrysa Parkinson, Salva Sanchis, Thomas Hauert, Sarah Ludi, my partner Albert Quesada and my long time collaborator and classmate Inga Hákonardóttir.

Some of the most rewarding work I did at P.A.R.T.S. was with my collaborator *Inga*.<sup>2</sup> I never thought of myself as a choreographer which only solidified when certain teachers told me "you are just a dancer, stick to that." Or teachers groping you outside of the school buildings and being shocked "wow, I'm surprised you're still here." Finding my *voice*<sup>3</sup> through collaboration with Inga was a true gift in friendship, *care*.<sup>4</sup>

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1 *floor*; pg.21

2 *Inga*; pg.31

3 *voice*; pg.37

4 *care*; pg.33





© Katie Vickers and Inga Hakonardóttir

## SLIM AND TEXT

Inga and I created our graduation work in 2014 called *Slogan for Modern Times*. We dove into the world of monstrosity, sublime, and slowness. A space of \*what if\* and shifting - slowing - stretching transitional space as if each transition mattered more than the last. We were slugs, we were women with unibrows and tie-dyed unitards, we were wrestling with chairs, and were hybridity in motion. Language was a huge part of our *process*<sup>1</sup> - writing fables and poems, playing with how to speak the words and how the words changed the meaning of movement and vice versa. The words became tiny *monsters*<sup>2</sup> within themselves, something familiar and yet not.

What I took away from this process was the pull and tug of collaboration. A being in community that forces you to language truth especially in the abstract. The tenacity of figuring out "what this was" was thrilling. It swept us away into our own working world of fiction and play, and keeping a keen eye on what it was we were paying attention to. This work blew up my world in terms of methodologies, performativity, and searching for liminality.

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1 *process*; pg.37

2 *monsters*; pg.29

## FINGER KNITTING MERMAIDS

I wonder if part of being a choreographer is building materials in certain shows that bring you closer to what you are truly after. In all my work, there's some great material and some not so great material. But all those great materials combined with their processes weave me closer to a specificity I'm after.

*We Will Have Had Darker Futures* premiered in 2017 in Antwerp. A trio dance between myself, Inga Hakkonardóttir and Rebecka Stillman. This piece is the closest I've gotten to building *community*<sup>1</sup> and autonomy in the theater. We started our research pre-Trump era, and yet were already researching the relationship of time, fear, and hope. Our process was rooted in taking care of each other, respecting our differences in collaboration and trusting our knowledge together. It was intimate and raw.

This *process*<sup>2</sup> felt similar to my experience working with *P.I.E.*<sup>3</sup> - a way of listening to the work and ourselves. We literally scrapped the piece two weeks before premiere and WWHHDF was truly born. There was a peaceful, relaxing feeling as you entered the performing space. The audience was seated in a quasi-circle surrounded by huge colorful, hand-knitted structures. They were already inside of a story landscape. As they sat, instructions were laid on their seat for them to learn how to finger knit if they liked. Throughout the performance, we would look at one another, me knowing that they were consumed with finger knitting while also taking us into consideration - multiple storylines were becoming entangled. Time became irrelevant as we moved through slightly similar repetitions - as the audience looped the thread between their fingers, we too were looping in space between movement and text. A blurry yet sincere meditation together.

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1 *community*; pg.19 or 39

2 *process*; pg.37

3 *P.I.E.*; pg.23







© Stefan Pries

## MOVING FORWARD

I stayed in Brussels for another four years after P.A.R.T.S. and continue to this day to go back-n-forth between Europe and the U.S.

In the aftermath of P.A.R.T.S, I was lucky enough and particularly drawn towards working with choreographers that were rooted in care. Martin Nachbar, Daniel Linehan, *Deborah Hay*,<sup>1</sup> Janine Harrington, and Albert Quesada to name a few. My experiences with them lead me to amazing tours and theater productions. The real life of a professional dancer, I thought. Packing and repacking my suitcase, traveling to multiple countries within a week - it felt glamorous and yet something was still missing, I indeed was still *healing*<sup>2</sup> and grieving. In my freelance life, I would create intense intimate relationships with my colleagues from project to project and afterwards, we would leave, sometimes meeting again at festivals or not at all. It was surreal. I missed something more *dependable*<sup>3</sup> in my relationships - not only did work feel ephemeral but the circumstances around it. Everything was in and is in motion. Where was a community, could it exist in this nomadic life?

Something needed to change.

1 *Deborah Hay*; pg.27

2 *healing*; pg.35

3 *dependable*; pg.29



© Albert Quesada





© Albert Quesada

## HEALING AND BIRTHING

In order for me to heal fully, I needed to move. This decision happened in a frenzy of moving parts. In 2018, we moved to Philadelphia, I gave birth to my son London, and my father was diagnosed with moderate Alzheimer's.

### *New chapters.*<sup>1</sup>

I became a mother at the peak of my career. This new role changed how I moved in the world in subtle ways. I too-soon went back to dancing, at three months postpartum I was in rehearsal and back on stage fully five months postpartum. A *lesson*<sup>2</sup> learned. Motherhood takes me away from my love affair and there is nothing more than being consumed and completely absorbed by that affair. It is intoxicating. It is sick. It is evolving. It is blinding. It is all I know at times. Splitting the roles between artist, daughter, partner and mother is not only a balancing act, but a sacrifice to all the people in my immediate circle. I am trying to ease this balance with my second child on the way. A search for harmonious balance.

### *Symbiotic dualities.*

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1 *New chapters*; pg.33

2 *lesson*; pg.27



## WHAT ELSE?

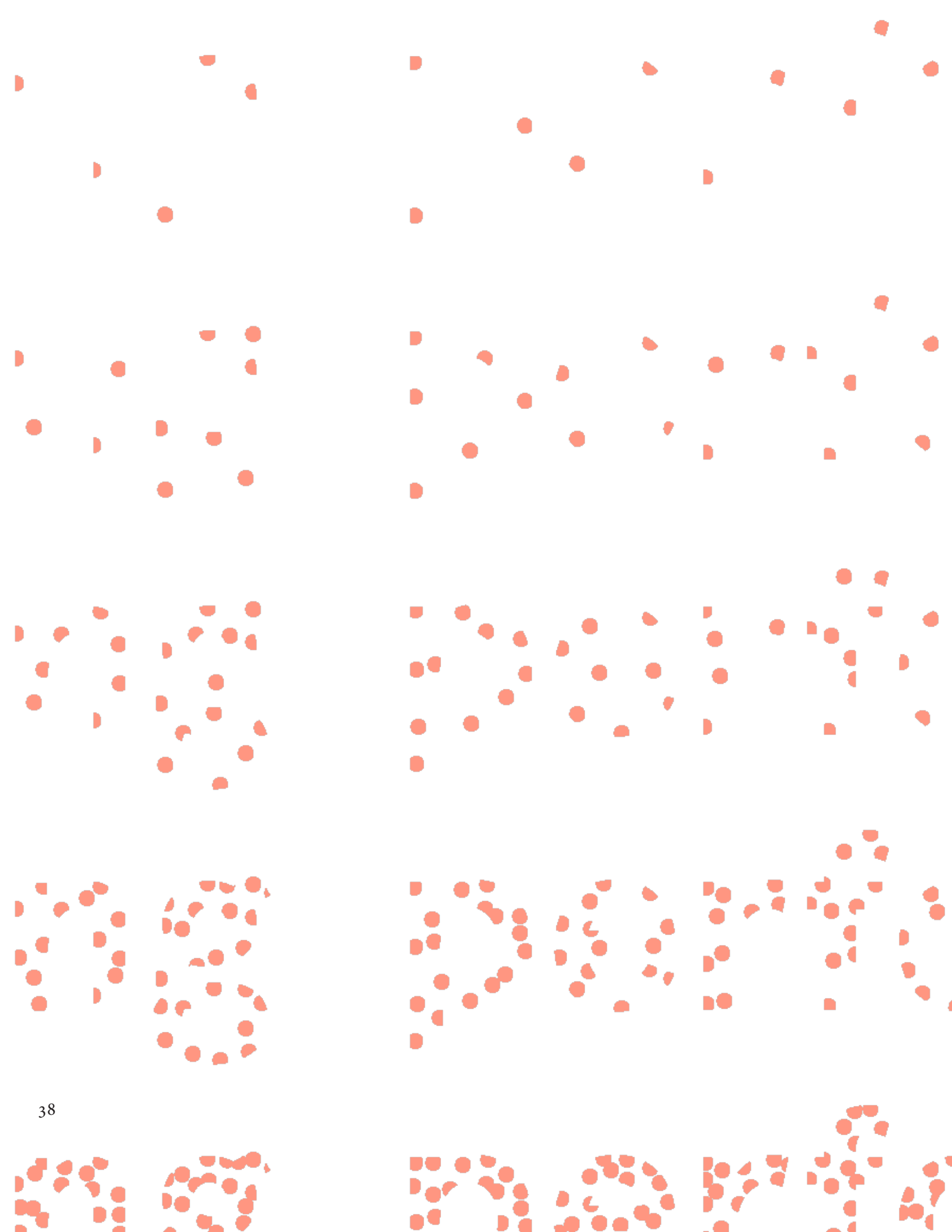
This is the question. What else? What more?

I ask this question to most things in life, never settling for concrete definitions and instead wanting to remain in motion, in flux. Once I understand something, I want to see it from all its sides and angles, flipping it on its head for good measure and to ask the "*what else*"?<sup>1</sup> This is how I think about *movement*<sup>2</sup> and choreography. When I watch myself on video, I see certain movement patterns that adhere to my muscles, a constant play between how I like to move, what I'm thinking while moving, and the *what elseness*. It's a tiny sliver that slips into not knowing or feeling beyond my analytical thought process. The *what more* is not something I search for but that finds me when I least expect it. This is what *practicing*,<sup>3</sup> performing, pedagogy is after. And why I can never let go of this field, there is too much land to still uncover and too much of myself to still give. It is a process of excavating - the self, to the body, to the space, to others.

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1     '*what else*'; pg.31  
2     *movement*; pg.29  
3     *practicing*; pg.39



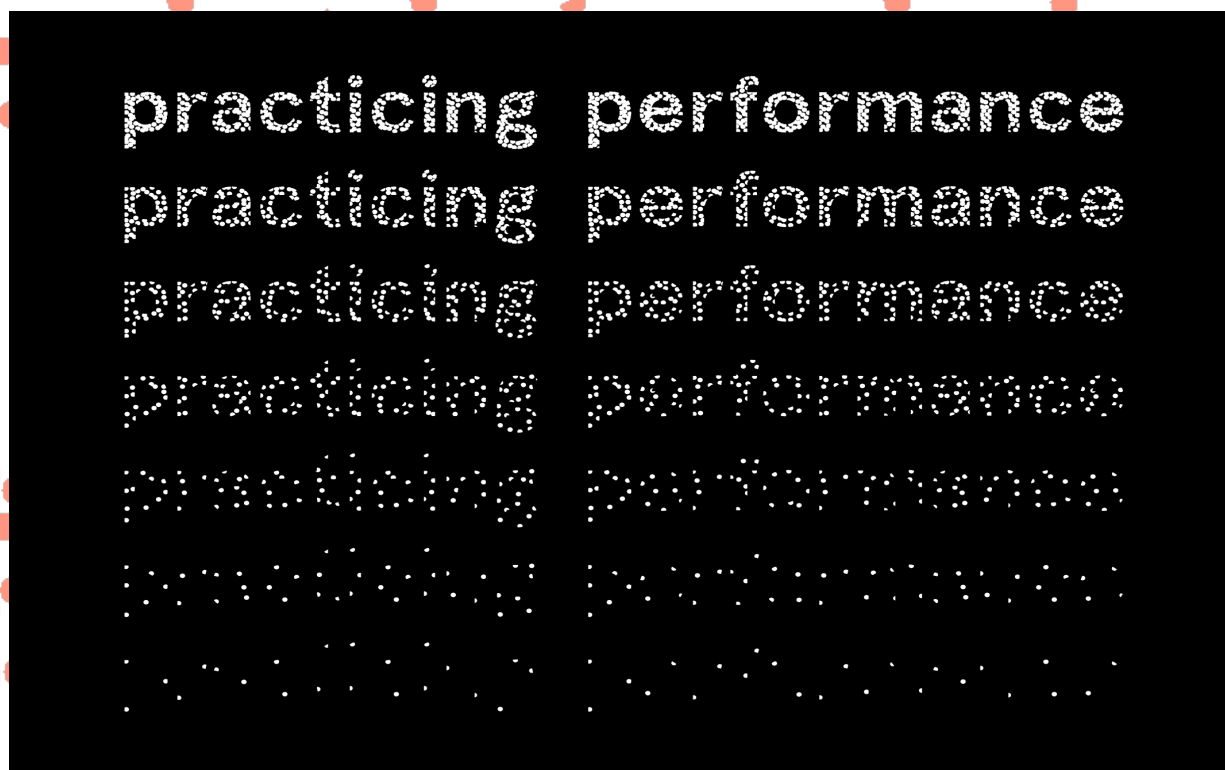


## CONNECTIVENESS

In search for community and a sense of togetherness, two projects have surfaced within the past couple of years. Albert Quesada and I started Practicing Performance in 2017.<sup>1</sup> A quasi-festival to support dancers coming together to share and exchange ideas and practices. There have been two initiatives in Columbus, Ohio and Philadelphia, PA.

In 2019 beginning of 2020, myself and a few other artists in Philadelphia launched Future Space Philly.<sup>2</sup> This project began out of a *dream*<sup>3</sup> to build a multi-functional space for the Philadelphia live arts community to engage in process, performance, resources, and community building. A space where we can lean into one another and *imagine*<sup>4</sup> more possibilities of what a live arts space can be and do. The start of 2021, we realized it's really important for us to "move at the speed of trust." For us, this looks like engaging more with the Philly live arts and activism communities, by going to events, building relationships, and building trust. As space is on our horizon, we keep grounded in action as we take smaller steps towards being good neighbors within the dance community in Philly.

*"When we have no memory or little imagination of an alternative to a life centered on work, there are few incentives to reflect on why we do as we do and what we might wish to do instead."* - Kathi Weeks



Logo by Christopher Schieche

1 <https://practicingperformance.wordpress.com/>

2 <https://www.futurespacephilly.xyz/>

3 *dream*; pg.31

4 *imagine*; pg.37



© Tristan Perez Martin







© Phinn Sriployrung

## P E R F O R M A N C E M O M E N T S

There are many performative moments that stand out to me.

- Being alongside Deborah Hay's imminent intelligence and feedback, being witness to Daniel Linehan's unfolding as an artist, struggling next to Albert Quesada as we both juggle being first time parents to our son, softening with Janine Harrington as we collectively figure out the processes of being together.

I love these people. I love this work. Work that matters to me personally and politically - keeping me fulfilled and curious about this field.



© Alfred Mauve

### **Guidelines for the classroom: A Yes Manifesto**

yes to investing in your own curiosities and desires  
yes to deep listening  
yes to valuing intuition  
yes to vulnerability and courageous actions and thinking  
yes to details  
yes to specificity without knowing what it is  
yes to attentiveness that provokes thinking through experiencing  
yes to sharing time and space with and for people  
yes to softness  
yes to rest  
yes to supporting one another



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# T E A C H I N G   S T A T E M E N T

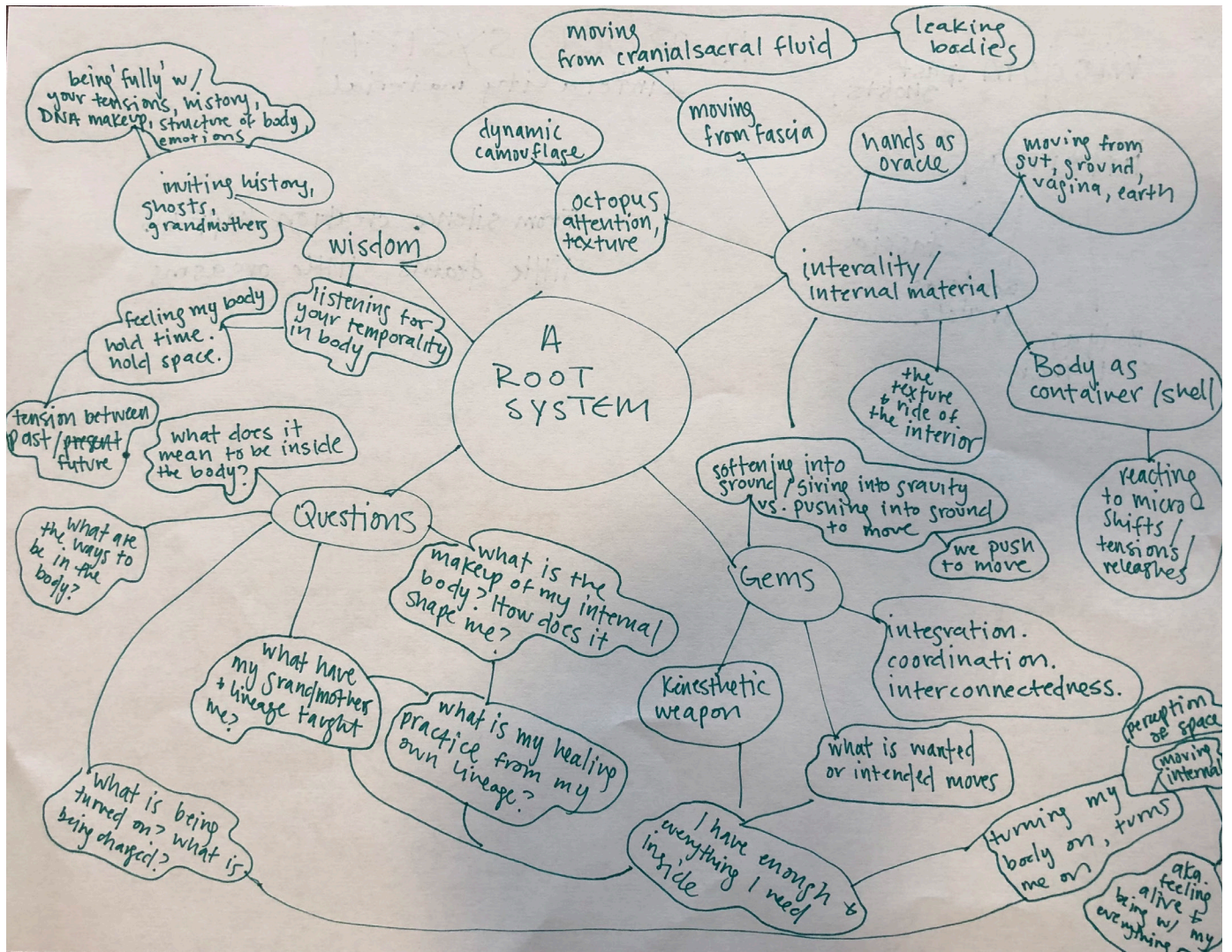
These guidelines are the backbone of any class I teach. They set up a space where we can tune in to the tools we already have, and allow our knowledge to take us into new directions. This way of thinking is about discovery, a place to explore and interrogate together. To align myself with bell hooks, “The classroom remains the most radical space of possibility in the academy.” This quote articulates my vision that the classroom is a space of transgression, a space to further our understanding of the why and how we do things. Part of studying is finding one’s own voice. My role as an educator is to facilitate a space where students feel they have the tools, the time, and the support to do that. A chance to provoke thoughtful observation and exploration.

Improvisation is a large part of my own practice as a dancer and maker, a way I have found my voice and movement. I emphasize practices of attention, asking students to develop heightened awareness of their body. What drives them and why, where do their curiosities lead them? Through specific score-based improvisation, we hone into our choice-making and autonomy as movers, analyzing our own personal histories to refine and reform our movement patterns. This inward reflection allows us to become active agents in how we want to approach materials, even expanding upon our ideas of set material. For example, when we practice a score called “push to move”, the students ask themselves how to use muscular tone to push away from the floor. While lying down we move between tone and force, learning how to access more surfaces and how much is needed to push away from the floor. This score teaches students how to isolate body parts as well as move between oppositional qualities such as tone and release.

One way we engage with one another is by watching and discussing. Recognizing how we see and how we are thinking is a vital component to performing. At times I ask students to learn through watching without any verbal explanation, and vice versa, only giving verbal instructions and seeing how the body processes linguistic direction. We quickly begin to dissect how we take in information and attune ourselves to our sensorial knowledge and psychology. This process of attention gives students time to grapple with what is important to them, to understand how they see and how that informs their dancing, a pathway into discovering their voice and methodologies.

I strive to provide a space that is courageous and grounded in honoring everyone’s differences and dance backgrounds. The fundamentals of what we practice in the studio go beyond the walls, dance is a form that asks us to be intrinsically connected to ourselves and our surroundings. As we learn together, we acknowledge how our practices manifest in the world and our daily lives.





# S E N S E - M A K I N G   D A N C E

## Technique class

Sense-Making Dance is a technique class that approaches contemporary movement and modalities as a way to understand what the body is producing and how we think when we think about moving. We focus on attention, sensing, and seeing to understand relationships in the body and in space. In itself, dancing is a practice of mobile relationships. We hone into what relationships are known to us as movers, and how to create new ways of thinking and seeing dance. I use the term "sense-making" in the class as a means to bring closer the nuances and intimate relationships in dancing. How do we make sense of what we are doing while dancing? What is being produced in the body and how does our thinking, seeing and experiencing change what is being seen and felt in real time? How does this awareness change our perception and perspective? These questions guide us in understanding that the dancing body is a thinking body.

The class works through a variety of methodologies. From the outside, one may see score-based improvisation, somatic work, set choreography, or partner work, yet the ideology of the work remains grounded in learning how our kinesthetic approaches to seeing and sensing are formed. Every student learns differently, by working with various methods, students are given multiple entry points to discover how they pay attention, how they see movement inside of space, how they sense in the body; and how these relationships translate into what the body is saying or doing. The classroom is a collaborative environment where we bring our particular histories and aesthetics to the room and focus on how our differences bring insightful ways of learning and unlearning together. In an exercise called Rhythm, students bring in a favorite piece of music. One person dances to their chosen music with the task to move without any form, to listen solely to the music's rhythm and dance. We try to forget our skills, our codified movements, and move from listening. By removing form, we see immediately the dancer's rhythm, where they place weight, how they listen, body pathways, etc. From the outside, we observe the dancer's every movement and pattern, two or more students join, trying to move exactly as the soloist. Quickly, we see how the other dancers see the soloist and what choices are made to replicate embodiment. This exercise brings self-awareness to our internal rhythms as well as how we see others move. We move through many exercises that access our thinking dancing bodies as a way to move towards performativity. Sense-making is a practice of performance.





# Katie Vickers

CV

Born in Winchester, VA, 03/10/1988

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## Education

2020-2021	University of the Arts, MFA	Philadelphia, USA
2019-2020	RYT 200 Alignment Based Yoga	Philadelphia, USA
2010-2014	P.A.R.T.S. (Performing Arts Research and Training Studios) "equivalent to a MASTER"	Brussels, Belgium
2006-2010	The Ohio State University: BFA Dance, Minor in Integrative Health and Wellness	Columbus, USA

## Scholarships

2020-2021	University of the Arts/ Life Experience Scholarship & Dance Tuition Fellowship	USA
2012-2014	P.A.R.T.S	Belgium
2011-2012	Vlaamse Overheid / <i>Flemish Government</i> .	Belgium
2009-2010	Denman Undergraduate Research for Performance Improvisation.	USA
	The Ohio State University. Undergraduate Traveling Grant.	USA

## Curating / Directing

2020-onwards	Future Space Philly	USA
2012-current	Summer Performing Arts Intensive at Mercersburg Academy ( <i>ages 10-15</i> )	USA
2017, 2019	Practicing Performance / International Dance Festival	USA

## Teaching

**tasks:** creating curriculum and assignments - setting dance phrases - creating educational scores- one on one coaching

**subjects:** Post Judson Dance, Contemporary III, Dance Science and Somatics, *contemporary dance*, *improvisation*

## UNIVERSITIES

Winter 2020-2021	<b>Guest Teacher</b>	Drexel University	Philadelphia, PA
Spring 2020	<b>Guest Teacher</b>	Artesis Conservatory	Antwerp, Belgium
Fall 2018	<b>Adjunct Professor</b>	Temple University	Philadelphia, USA
Fall 2016,2017	<b>Guest Teacher</b>	Temple University	Philadelphia, USA
Fall 2014	<b>Guest Teacher</b>	Shenandoah University	Winchester, USA
2016	<b>Guest Teacher</b>	The Ohio State University	Ohio, USA
2016	<b>Guest Teacher</b>	Temple University	Philadelphia, USA
2014,2016	<b>Guest Artist</b>	Shenandoah University	Winchester, USA

## DANCE SCHOOLS

2013	<b>Guest Teacher</b>	Conservatory of Dance	Riga, Latvia
2016	<b>Guest Artist</b>	Mercersburg Academy	PA, USA
2014	<b>Guest Artist</b>	Mercersburg Academy	PA, USA

## DANCE FESTIVALS

Summer 2017	<b>Director / Teacher</b>	Practicing Performance / Dance Festival	Ohio, USA
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## BOARDING SCHOOLS

Fall 2016	<b>Guest Teacher</b>	Episcopal Academy	PA, USA
Fall 2014,2017,2018	<b>Guest Teacher</b>	Mercersburg Academy	PA, USA

## Setting Choreography

*concept development - creating movement material - editing sound - collaborating with the costume department*

## UNIVERSITIES

Spring 2020	<b>Choreographer</b>	Artesis Conservatory	Antwerp, Belgium
Fall 2014	<b>Choreographer</b>	Shenandoah University	Winchester, USA

## DANCE COMPANIES

2017	<b>Choreographer</b>	Amateur group De Genoten	Belgium
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## BOARDING SCHOOL

2014, 2016,2017	<b>Choreographer</b>	Mercersburg Academy	PA, USA
2014	<b>Guest Artist</b>	Shenandoah University	Winchester, USA

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### Choreography

2017	<b>Tribute</b>	<i>Belgium</i>
	<b>We Will Have Had Darker Futures</b> with Inga Hakonardottir, Rebecka Stillman	<i>Belgium, Sweden</i>
2016	<b>Furthermore, Again and Again</b>	<i>USA</i>
	<b>Lecture Performance on Sustainability in Dance</b>	<i>USA</i>
	<b>ROCK</b>	<i>USA</i>
2015	<b>5 Seasons</b> with Benjamin Pohlig	<i>Belgium, Germany</i>
2014	<b>Slogan For Modern Times</b> with Inga Hakonardottir	<i>Belgium</i>
	<b>Echoes</b> with Albert Quesada	<i>USA</i>
2013	<b>Techno-Tarantella-Novella</b> with Benjamin Pohlig	<i>Belgium, Germany</i>
2012	<b>Ode To That Dance</b>	<i>Belgium, Germany,</i>
<i>Latvia</i>		
	<b>Singer</b> with Benjamin Pohlig	<i>Belgium</i>
2010	<b>Game 928.7</b> by Katie Vickers	<i>Belgium</i>
2010	<b>Globus</b>	<i>USA</i>

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### Performance Experience

2020	<b>Philadelphia Matter 1972/2020</b> by David Gordon	<i>USA</i>
2019	<b>Flamingos</b> by Albert Quesada	<i>Spain, Belgium</i>
2018	<b>Third Space</b> by Daniel Linehan	<i>Germany, Belgium</i>
	<b>Slow Sports Kids</b> by Albert Quesada	<i>Spain</i>
	<b>Traces</b> by Rosa Omarsdottir	<i>Belgium</i>
2017	<b>OneTwoThreeOneTwo</b> by Albert Quesada	<i>Spain, Germany</i>
	<b>Traces</b> by Rosa Omarsdottir	<i>Belgium</i>
2016	<b>Un Sacre du Printemps'</b> by Daniel Linehan	<i>France</i>
	<b>Figure A Sea</b> by Deborah Hay/Cullberg Ballett	<i>Belgium, USA, Finland, Germany, Netherlands</i>
	<b>Satelliser</b> by Janine Harrington	<i>Belgium</i>
	<b>Don't Wind it up, Turn it on!</b> by Marge Monko	<i>Belgium</i>
2015	<b>Un Sacre du Printemps</b> by Daniel Linehan	<i>France, Belgium</i>
2014	<b>Slogan For Modern Times</b>	<i>Germany, Belgium, Istanbul, Netherlands</i>
	<b>Majestiny</b> by James McGinn	<i>Belgium, Poland, France</i>
	<b>Techno-Tarantella-Novella</b>	<i>Belgium, USA</i>
	<b>Crosses</b> by Krisjanis Sants	<i>Belgium</i>
2013	<b>Animal Dances'</b> by Martin Nachbar	<i>Poland, Germany</i>
	<b>Evangeline</b> by Ben Van Buren	<i>Belgium</i>
2012	<b>Repertory, Achterland</b> by Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker	<i>Belgium, Germany</i>
	<b>Birdwatching 4x4</b> by Benjamin Vandewalle	<i>Belgium</i>
	<b>T.T. &amp; Ben</b> by Ben Van Buren	<i>Belgium</i>
2011	<b>Repertory, Drumming</b> by Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker	<i>Belgium</i>
2010	<b>Movement improvisation performance</b> with Pavle Heidler	<i>Belgium</i>
	<b>No Trace</b> by Ming-Lung Yang	<i>USA</i>
	<b>A Keeping Room</b> choreography by Sarah Gibbons, Kelly	<i>USA</i>
	<b>Ondor</b> by Caitlin Ewing	<i>USA</i>
	<b>Untitled</b> by Karl Rogers/ PHD. Student	<i>USA</i>
2009	<b>Littoral Zone</b> by Vicki Uris/ faculty at OSU	<i>USA</i>
	<b>Still Time</b> by Ming-Shen Ku/visiting artist	<i>USA</i>
	<b>Indelible Marks</b> by Annie Kloppenberg/ MFA Project	<i>USA</i>
	<b>P.I.E. -</b> Founding member and dancer of P.I.E. since 2008.	<i>USA (master classes taught at Kenyon University, Mercersburg Academy, Cambridge School Of Weston, Pioneer Valley Performing Arts High School, Five Colleges hosted at Mount Holyoke, Ohio University, Shenandoah University, Franklin &amp; Marshall University, Oberlin College)</i>
2008	<b>Sololos</b> by Trisha Brown, Director: Abigail Yager	<i>USA</i>
	<b>Untitled</b> by Amy Raymond/visiting artist	<i>USA</i>

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### Links

<b>Work/Bio</b>	<a href="http://www.kosmonautproduction.org/artist/katie-vickers">www.kosmonautproduction.org/artist/katie-vickers</a>
<b>Future Space Philly</b>	<a href="https://www.futurespacephilly.xyz/">https://www.futurespacephilly.xyz/</a>
<b>Practicing Performance</b>	<a href="http://www.practicingperformance.com">www.practicingperformance.com</a>
<b>Performing Arts Intensive</b>	<a href="http://www.mercersburgsummer.com/page/programs/enrichment-and-the-arts/performing-arts-intensive">www.mercersburgsummer.com/page/programs/enrichment-and-the-arts/performing-arts-intensive</a>
<b>Writing</b>	<a href="https://bit.ly/documentaKA">https://bit.ly/documentaKA</a> (pages 213-233)

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### Art Administrative

tasks:	grant writing, fundraising-social media-managing 50 plus students for summer programs-coordinating audition locations-directing a two-week summer program for 10+ participants	
2020	Future Space Philly: Building a artist run multi-functional space	USA
2017	Practicing Performance: Director of festival at The Ohio State University	USA
2017	Administrative assistant of the P.A.R.T.S summer program	Belgium
2016	Administrative assistant for the audition series for the new Training Cycle at P.A.R.T.S.	Belgium
2016	Administrative assistant of the P.A.R.T.S summer program	Belgium

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### Additional Study

Summer 2010	<b>Bates Dance Festival:</b> Lewiston, ME. Modern, Composition, Business: Doug Varone, Eddie Taketa, Omar Carrum, Kim Konikow	USA
Summer 2009	<b>P.A.R.T.S.:</b> Modern, Repertory: David Hernandez, Dominique Duszynski	Belgium
Winter 2008	<b>Taipei National University of the Arts:</b> Taipei, Taiwan: Modern, Ballet: X Chang, Y W Li, F Yang	Taiwan
Summer 2008	<b>The American Dance Festival:</b> Modern, Ballet, Advanced Improvisation, Cunningham, Modern: Brenda Daniels, Ishamael Houston-Jones, Yvonne Meier, Hou Ying, Adriane Fang. Forsythe Project (audition required): Elizabeth Corbett, Richard Siegal	USA

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### Skills

- Experience as a professional dancer and choreographer
- Able to lead small and large groups
- Excellent at one-on-one instruction
- Exceptional ability to be creative
- Dedicated to the art of dance
- Planning festivals/programs



