



FALL
FOR
DANCE
NORTH

Artistic Director
ILTER IBRAHIMOF

FALL FOR DANCE NORTH

OCTOBER 2-6, 2018

Co-presented with the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts

CIRCA

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- THE TIMES

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- HUFFINGTON
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Artistic Director
ILTER IBRAHIMOF



Photo by Darlene Huynh

Hello and welcome!

We are here to celebrate the spectacular art form of dance. Thanks to your extraordinary patronage and passion, our festival continues to flourish and has become one of the fastest-growing cultural events in Toronto.

So many individuals and organizations contribute to our success. My deepest gratitude goes to the entire Fall for Dance North team, volunteers, Board of Directors, Patrons' Circle Committee members, government supporters, corporate sponsors and private donors. We are beyond lucky to have the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts as FFDN's home and co-presenter and our new and growing partnerships with Ryerson School of Performance and Union Station.

Every work that we have chosen for this year's festival has an urgent message for us, and together they reflect the richness, diversity and energy of our modern life. I hope you'll agree with me that the sublime beauty we are witnessing onstage tonight reaffirms our hope and trust in each other and in ourselves. Is there anything we can't achieve, when we put our hearts and minds together?

Enjoy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ILTER'.

Chair, Board of Directors
JOAN LOZINSKI



Photo by Liliana Reyes

Welcome to Fall for Dance North, now in its 4th year!

FFDN aims to build the dance audiences of the future by introducing the art form to audience members through accessible \$15 tickets. Contributed income is important in keeping FFDN viable well into the future. Many of our generous backers are here to celebrate with us tonight. Thank you for your support and belief in us. For those of you who might consider supporting us and building our legacy – all donations, no matter the amount, are most appreciated.

To produce FFDN successfully, it takes valued partnerships, such as the ones we have with Sony Centre for the Performing Arts, Ryerson Theatre and Union Station, along with many hours from our conscientious office and volunteer teams, all guided throughout each year by our committed Board of Directors and our innovative Artistic Director, Ilter Ibrahimof.

As Chair, I thank the Board for their time and dedication, and we, together, thank Ilter, our presenting partners, our exceptional artists, fabulous staff and volunteers – both at the office and in our venues. We couldn't do this without you.

Thank you for joining us. We hope you enjoy these special performances.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joan'.

Proud to support Fall for Dance North

Opening doors to a more inclusive tomorrow by
creating shared experiences for everyone



THE
READY
COMMITMENT



Territorial Acknowledgment

We acknowledge this sacred land on which the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts and Ryerson Theatre operate, and where the Fall for Dance North festival takes place. It has been a site of human activity for 15,000 years. This land is the territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. The territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

Today, the meeting place of Toronto is still home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in the community, on this territory.

We recognize that there are many complexities involved in the processes of reconciliation. We believe that arts experiences, such as this festival, help us listen to and learn from each other. Through dance, let's celebrate our differences and strive to live better together.



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Crafting a career in dance isn't easy for anyone, but for women, who are perpetually under-represented in areas like choreography and leadership, it requires a certain kind of patience and resolve. BY BONNIE KIM

36 DANCING, AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

In 2018, the cultural influence of social media is undeniable. Performers and choreographers can find an audience without ever leaving the studio. BY MOLLY JOHNSON

41 DANCE LIVES HERE

Inspired by what you're seeing at Fall for Dance North? Find more dance performances throughout the coming season. In partnership with *The Dance Current* magazine.

ARTISTS OF THE FESTIVAL

- 20** Red Sky Performance, with Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra | *Adizokan* (Special Edition)
- 21** Compagnie Marie Chouinard | *Radical Vitality, Solos and Duets* (Excerpts)
- 22** Los Hijos Del Director/George Céspedes | *La Tribulación de Anaximandro (Hombre, Arche, Apeiron)* (Excerpts)
- 23** Soweto Skeleton Movers | *Seven*
- 24** Introdans, with musicians from The Glenn Gould School | *Lieder Eines Fahrenden Gesellen (Songs Of A Wayfarer)*

25 Introdans | *Canto Ostinato*

26 FALL FOR DANCE NORTH 2018 FESTIVAL OVERVIEW

ARTISTS OF THE FESTIVAL

- 28** Obeah Opera 2019 | A Nicole Brooks Vision
- 29** The National Ballet of Canada, with The National Ballet of Canada Orchestra | *Paz de la Jolla*
- 30** Compagnie Hervé KOUBI | *What the Day Owes to the Night* (Excerpts)
- 31** La Otra Orilla | *RITE / a flamenco ceremony*
- 32** Anne Plamondon + Emma Portner | *Counter Cantor*
*A Fall for Dance North Festival Commission
- 33** Ballet Kelowna | *MAMBO*

The use of cameras, camcorders, tape recorders and cell phones is strictly prohibited during all performances.



Fall for Dance North gratefully acknowledges the members of the Fall for Dance North Patrons' Circle without whose support this festival would not be possible:

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Fall for Dance North also wishes to acknowledge the following Supporters and Friends for their generosity:

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Fall for Dance North gratefully acknowledges the support of the following organizations and individuals:

Clyde Wagner, Mark Hammond and Madeleine Skoggard at Civic Theatres Toronto and the entire team at the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts

Peggy Shannon, Chair, School of Performance and Vicki St. Denys, Director, Performance Dance Program, and the entire team at Ryerson Theatre at Ryerson University

The Toronto Union Programming and Special Events team

Megan Andrews, and the team at *The Dance Current*

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Canada's National Ballet School

Canadian Contemporary Dance Theatre

Our master class and workshop studios and partners

Our generous donors, funders and sponsors

Our dedicated Board of Directors and Patrons' Circle Committee

For their time, generosity, encouragement, advice and support, we would like to thank the following:

Airborne Sensing Corporation, Martin Abel, Emma Alderman, Monica Calzaretto, Jonathan Crow, John Dalrymple, Dance Collection Danse, Marilyn Fourie, Barbara Frum, Maxine Goldberg, Peter Herrndorf, Nancy Holland, David Kent, Louis Laberge-Côté, Cheryl Lalonde, Mary Susanne Lamont, Jen McCain, Jan McCrae, Diana Reitberger, Matthew Sima, Mavis Staines, Christopher Stowell, Sud Forno, Keira Sweeney, Beth Weintrop, Wendy Whelan, Valerie Wilder, Lary Willows

Fall for Dance North especially wishes to thank our incredible team of volunteers.

New York City Center

Fall for Dance North is proudly inspired by New York City Center's renowned international dance festival, Fall for Dance™.

New York City Center (Arlene Shuler, President & CEO) has played a defining role in the cultural life of the city since 1943. It was Manhattan's first performing arts centre, dedicated by Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia with a mission to make the best in music, theatre and dance accessible to all audiences. Dance has been integral to the theatre's mission from the start and dance programs, including the acclaimed Fall for Dance™ festival, remain central to City Center's identity. City Center brings performing arts to over 9000 New York City students each year through its robust education program, and other learning opportunities are offered to seniors, families and the general public. City Center is committed to expanding its programming beyond the proscenium with pre-show talks, master classes and exhibitions of visual art, showcasing the best artists of our time.

nycitycenter.org

Support Fall for Dance North

Fall for Dance North is a not-for-profit organization and registered charity. We rely on the incredible and continued generosity of our donors to bring the best dance from across Canada and around the world to Toronto and make it accessible to everyone. Our affordable tickets (\$15!), our free Master Classes and *In Conversation...* artist talk series and our year-round free programming at Toronto's Union Station are all made possible because people like you have chosen to make their mark with us. Gifts of any amount are truly appreciated. Your generosity will make a difference and help us create the dance audiences of the future.

Donate online at ffdnorth.com/support

Please contact Director of Development Melissa Forstner, melissa@ffdnorth.com, for more information about how to support Fall for Dance North, including donations by cheque, credit card, securities, monthly donations and Aeroplan Miles.

Thank you for your support!

Registered Charitable Number: 84270 1179 RR0001

Free Programming at UNION STATION

September 22 – October 4



Our continuing partnership with Union Station presents unique arts programming in and around the station's West Wing, where the public can experience and engage in a variety of FREE dance events and performances at peak times throughout the day.

This year features the return of Open Studio – a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the creative working processes of local and international dancers and choreographers, a tango workshop and milonga, plus a tap performance curated by Toffan Rhythm Projects.

Our FREE Union Station programming – as part of Union Dance – wraps up on October 4th with *IN MUSEUM V2*, an interactive, interpretive dance performance by Montréal's Compagnie Marie Chouinard, 12:30-2:30pm. Don't miss it!

Limited seating is available at certain events on a first-come, first-serve basis.

For complete and up-to-date programming check online [@FFDNorth](http://ffdnorth.com/union)



About Union Station

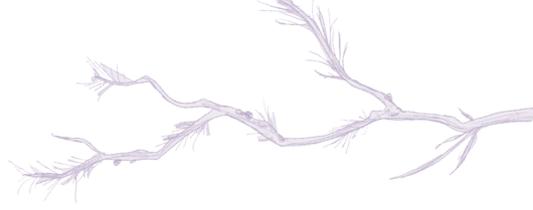
With over 250,000 daily visitors, Union Station is Canada's busiest transit hub. Through the curation of retail and culinary tenants, cultural programming and partnership activations, Union strives to be one of the world's most engaging civic experiences. The West Wing is located immediately west of The Great Hall, Union Station, 65 Front Street West, Toronto. It is accessible by TTC via the Union Station subway terminal on Line 1 and wheelchair accessible from the Front Street entrance.

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FALL
FOR
DANCE
NORTH



Union



About Fall for Dance North Passion, Purpose & Partnerships

World-class dance for a world-class city,
at a dance festival with a democratic ethos.

Inspired by the New York City dance festival Fall for Dance™, Artistic Director Ilter Ibrahimof came to Toronto with a big idea.

Originally from Istanbul, Turkey, Ilter studied in Boston and then lived in New York City before relocating his agency, Sunny Artist Management, to Montréal. On multiple occasions, he pitched international dance company clients to Toronto presenter Mark Hammond, former interim CEO of the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts and now Civic Theatres Toronto vice-president of programming. However, the limited audience for dance in Toronto made it a long shot. It would be near impossible to fill the Sony's approximately 3200-seat theatre sufficiently for a performance run to break even.

However, Mark says, "I believe that Ilter and I share a few attributes; two are stubbornness and loving dance." They got to talking. When Ilter proposed a festival like New York's Fall for Dance™, presenting large-scale international companies for a supremely affordable ticket price, as a way to grow the audience for dance in Toronto, Mark threw his support behind the idea.

From his own experience, Mark knew what it would take to realize such a vision. He committed the Sony Centre as a co-presenting partner – providing venue, production and marketing support – so long as Ilter could create an organization, formalize a board, generate the funds and program the event. Ilter quickly gathered his core team. Madeleine Skoggard, then Sony Centre program manager and now Civic Theatres Toronto director of programming, enthusiastically joined Ilter as executive director, and Michael Caldwell, acclaimed Toronto dance artist and choreographer, came on as artistic producer.

Modelled on the New York festival, running at New York City Center since 2004 – and with the blessing of City Center President and CEO Arlene Shuler – Fall for Dance North (FFDN) launched in 2015 on passion and faith. The programming announcement came in mid-summer while funding was still not fully in place. The commitment to an affordable ticket price means that ticket revenues don't even come close to covering costs. Donors, sponsors and public funding agencies play a significant role.

The FFDN team kept their spirits up and their eyes on the

horizon. Their optimism and sense of purpose created an energy that drew supporters to the project. And audiences ultimately flocked. Mark hoped for at best eighty per cent sold. Ilter set his sights on a full house – and succeeded. The inaugural festival was packed to the rafters, with almost 10,000 tickets purchased over its three-night run.

Clearly the festival had legs, so to speak.

In its second year, FFDN produced another successful festival. In 2017, the event expanded to include free dance programming at Union Station's newly completed West Wing. This year, 2018, the festival doubles its programming – with six shows instead of three – and introduces a second theatrical venue with performances at the approximately 1250-seat Ryerson Theatre.

Partnerships create a dynamic structure for the festival. The co-presenting partnership with the Sony Centre provides the base. Connecting with Union Station made a lot of sense, given the new West Wing space and its mandate for public arts and culture programming. FFDN and Union now host the year-round Open Studio series, which converts the West Wing into a dance studio where artists conduct public rehearsals. "It truly has become so special, and people expect it," says Syma Shah, Union's director of programming and special events. FFDN offers a roster of free programming at Union Station during the fall festival run.

In February 2019, FFDN will partner with Canadian Stage in the presentation of *who we are in the dark* by Peggy Baker Dance Projects. The partnership extends one of FFDN's first commissions, Baker's *fractured black* (2015), into an evening-length work featuring live music from members of Arcade Fire. With the Canadian Stage partnership, FFDN continues to diversify its activities.

From the beginning, FFDN has offered a range of educational opportunities for the public, including workshops and master classes with festival artists, pre-performance artist talks and this program magazine – with thematic articles and inside perspectives – along with the Dance Lives Here guide to dance across Ontario.

Though there was some scepticism about the festival at first, the team's genuine passion for dance and collaborative

approach have garnered respect. In 2017, FFDN mounted a local industry showcase: presenters visiting FFDN from across Canada and the United States also attended a series of performances by Toronto dance artists and companies. The event, which runs again in 2018, offers a valuable networking opportunity for everyone involved.

Relationship-building provides the key to Fall for Dance North's growth. This year's new Ryerson Theatre partnership enables FFDN to offer relatively smaller-scale performances. Students from the dance and theatre production programs will interact with festival choreographers and shadow professional technicians during the performances. "The learning opportunities for the school are immense," says Vicki St. Denys, director of the Performance Dance Program at Ryerson.

FFDN has made a specific commitment to Canadian dance by balancing its program between international and Canadian work. Ilter follows the Canadian scene closely and seeks the advice of informed voices in his curatorial and programming process. He also travels extensively, always looking for new dance artists and companies to share with Toronto. Curiosity and his aspiration to create a world-class festival of dance in Toronto drive his choices.

Each year FFDN expands, making new connections and drawing more people in. With passion, purpose and key partnerships, the FFDN team is building a truly international dance festival, in which the Toronto public can participate and of which they can be proud.

By the Numbers*

AVERAGE PERFORMANCE RATING

4.4 OUT OF 5 STARS

AUDIENCE MOTIVATION FOR ATTENDING FFDN:

74% SAY TICKET PRICE

60% SAY DISCOVERING SOMETHING NEW

89.2% OF PEOPLE FELT **INSPIRED TO SEE MORE DANCE** AFTER ATTENDING FFDN 2017

*All statistics from Audience Feedback Survey 2017, total 291 responses.

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A Canadian Stage presentation in collaboration with Fall for Dance North

A CANADIAN DANCE ICON + GRAMMY AWARD-WINNING MUSICIANS

who we are in the dark

CHOREOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION, CONCEPT + DIRECTION BY Peggy Baker

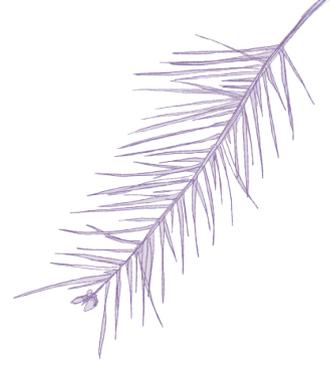
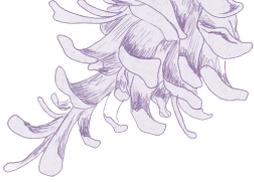
COMPOSITION + LIVE MUSIC BY Jeremy Gara + Sarah Neufeld OF ARCADE FIRE

PEGGY BAKER DANCE PROJECTS

WORLD PREMIERE

BLUMA APPEL THEATRE
FEB 21-24, 2019

Jeremy Minnagh



Engage with the Artists

Fall for Dance North's *In Conversation...* artist talk series

For the team at Fall for Dance North, it's very important that you have the opportunity to make a more meaningful connection with the artists we present. Our *In Conversation...* artist talk series deepens the discussion of dance, giving you direct access to the processes, voices and insights that inform the dance you'll be seeing.

The conversations will be hosted by our partners at Turn Out Media and moderated by artists, writers and scholars from Toronto and beyond. You never know who might show up!

Program 3 – Tues. Oct. 2nd, 6:30pm **Ryerson Theatre, Orchestra Seating**

Myriam Allard & Hedi Graja, La Otra Orilla

Simone Orlando, Ballet Kelowna

Alysa Pires, Choreographer for Ballet Kelowna

Program 1 – Wed. Oct. 3rd, 6:30pm **Sony Centre, Lower Lobby**

Valeria Galluccio & Annie Gagnon, Compagnie Marie Chouinard

Sandra Laronde, Red Sky Performance

Program 1 – Thurs. Oct. 4th, 6:30pm **Sony Centre, Lower Lobby**

Jabulani Manyoni, Soweto Skeleton Movers, with Jonzi D, Breakin' Convention

George Céspedes, Los Hijos Del Director

Program 3 – Thurs. Oct. 4th, 6:30pm **Ryerson Theatre, Orchestra Seating**

Anne Plamondon, Choreographer/Performer

Ilter Ibrahimof, Fall for Dance North

Roel Voorinhtolt, Introdans

Program 2 – Fri. Oct. 5th, 6:30pm **Sony Centre, Lower Lobby**

Lindsay Fischer, The National Ballet of Canada

Guillaume Gabriel, Compagnie Hervé KOUBI

Anthony 'Prime' Guerra, Obeah Opera 2019

Program 2 – Sat. Oct. 6th, 1:00pm **Sony Centre, Lower Lobby**

Lindsay Fischer, The National Ballet of Canada

Roel Voorinhtolt, Introdans

Nicole Brooks, Obeah Opera 2019

Subject to change. For full schedules and *In Conversation...* artist talk series moderators, please visit ffdnorth.com/artist-talks.

Free Master Classes & Workshops[†]

Fall for Dance North is pleased to offer complimentary master classes and workshops, designed for dancers and non-dancers alike. Our roster of master classes/workshops, offered by our world-class festival artists, are available at no cost across Toronto. By bringing diverse dance directly to diverse communities, it's our mission to expand access to and engagement with the art form for both practitioners and the public. In fact, some select master classes/workshops are open to spectators, when possible.

Anne Plamondon, Choreographer & Performer
Fri Sept 28th, 10-12pm, Sony Centre rehearsal hall ❖

Giorgio Galli, The National Ballet of Canada
Sun Sept. 30th, 4-5:30pm, Canadian Contemporary Dance Theatre ❖

Myriam Allard, La Otra Orilla
Mon Oct 1st, 11-12:30pm, Academy of Spanish Dance ◆ ❖

Emilie Durville, Ballet Kelowna
Tue Oct 2nd, 10-11:30am, Sony Centre rehearsal hall

George Céspedes, Los Hijos Del Director
Tue Oct 2nd, 3-4:30pm, Sony Centre rehearsal hall

Sacha Ouellette-Deguire, Compagnie Marie Chouinard
Wed Oct 3rd, 2:30-4:30pm, Ryerson Theatre stage

Guillaume Gabriel, Compagnie Hervé KOUBI
Thu Oct 4th, 10-11:30am, Ryerson Theatre stage ❖

Houssni Mijem, Compagnie Hervé KOUBI
Thu Oct. 4th, 10-11:30am, Canadian Contemporary Dance Theatre

Soweto Skeleton Movers
Thu Oct 4th, 1-2:30pm, City Dance Corps

Diane Matla, Introdans
Fri Oct 5th, 10:30-12pm, Ryerson Theatre stage ❖

Anthony 'Prime' Guerra, Obeah Opera 2019
Sat Oct 13th, 1-2:30pm, Sony Centre rehearsal hall ◆

Subject to Change. For more information about skill level, appropriate attire and dancer/spectator registration for master classes and workshops, please visit ffdnorth.com/free-workshops.

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
[ffdnorth](https://www.facebook.com/ffdnorth) #ffdnorth   

[†]Participants and spectators MUST REGISTER for all master classes and workshops.

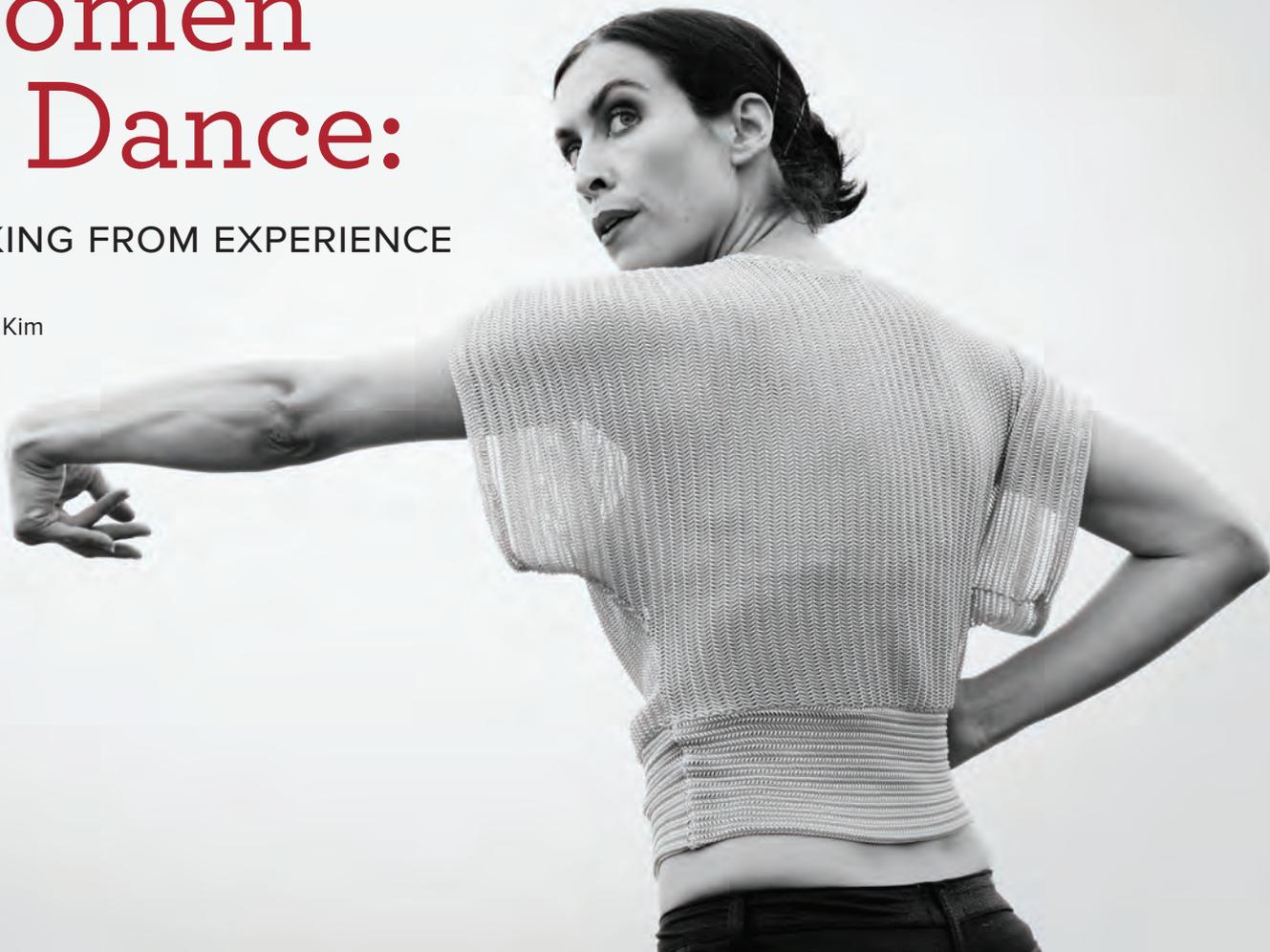
◆ Beginners welcome ❖ Spectators welcome

Fall for Dance North is committed to being a festival inclusive for all, including those with disabilities. For more information on festival accessibility, contact Christina Giannelia at 416-907-4334 or christina@ffdnorth.com. We welcome your feedback as we strive to prevent and remove barriers to participation in the coming years.

Women in Dance:

SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

By Bonnie Kim



Myriam Allard of La Otra Orilla | Photo by Levent Erutku

She's marked out the performance space and costumed the dancers – her little brother, her best friend, the family dog. She's choreographed and staged yet another masterpiece, gathered a captive audience and confidently directed everyone to their places.

Lights up, music on, it's showtime!

In basements, living rooms and backyards, young girls are cultivating their skills as dance artists, choreographers, artistic directors and CEOs. For some, these carefree days may lead to more formal instruction by way of a local dance studio or community class. In this class, there will be more girls than boys – fifteen, maybe twenty girls to one boy, if that. Though participation among males has increased with the popularity of urban dancing, there will still tend to be more females in dance overall.

Crafting a career in dance isn't easy for anyone, but for women navigating an art form where they far outnumber men, where they pioneer training techniques and pedagogy, found schools and companies and yet are perpetually under-represented in areas like choreography and leadership, it requires a certain kind of patience and resolve.

Emma Portner, co-choreographer and performer with Anne Plamondon of a duet commissioned by Fall for Dance North, says, "Growing up, I always wanted to be able to do the men's centre work in ballet class. I always wanted to not have to wear a dress to perform with a man. I wanted to have opportunities given to me as easily as they were given to the boys."

Fewer boys usually means they get more attention, more opportunities and encouragement to hone their skills, to stumble, to keep going or to try something different. These become crucial factors when looking at the trajectory of a dance career and employment options within the field. The overall confidence men develop may also help to explain their dominance in areas like creation or artistic directorship.

“I don’t want to feel like I have to succeed when one person gives me that huge chance,” Portner says. “I want to be able to fail and try, and try again, and have access to familiar bodies and studio space, without the pressures of having to prove myself with one shot, for one ‘female evening.’ I want to become a better choreographer, and not many freelance women are given safe landing spaces to learn and master through experience.”

Any girl in dance is hyperaware of the countless like her, eagerly waiting in the wings. To be opinionated, to question, may not always be looked at favourably. So, she’s a good student. She’s reliable. She keeps her thoughts to herself. But what does that do to her self-esteem? If she always feels like she can easily be replaced, how can she have the confidence to explore the scope of her artistic voice?

Anne Plamondon says, “The competition is more brutal for a woman, especially in classical ballet, but pretty much all around the dance world. From a young age, girls learn to deserve their spot by working the hardest, while developing an adaptable attitude. I remember pas de deux class at school. The men had to do the same exercise over and over to allow every woman a chance to practise the partnering. So, men had more opportunities to get better.”

Alysa Pires, whose work *MAMBO* is being performed by Ballet Kelowna, says, “I think the challenges of being a female creator in dance are similar to those faced by women in all sectors. There have been times when my male counterparts received opportunities that I assumed had been offered to them. In reality, they asked for or pitched those opportunities for themselves, in a way that I never thought I could. When I have taken a chance and presented myself in a more assertive way, it has not always been received as entrepreneurial. Where a man might be seen as a self-starter, a woman might be seen as aggressive.”

Body image, aging and biological clocks remain notoriously sensitive issues for women in dance. Curiously, all can stir up feelings around not being seen. Multidisciplinary artist Nicole Brooks, who is presenting her *Obeah Opera 2019* at Fall for Dance North, says, “As a woman of colour, I have found myself fighting to see visions of myself onstage and stories that reflect my reality. As a full-figured woman, I do not possess what is considered a standard dancer body. The works I currently engage in are primarily traditional Caribbean folk and African dance. However, my specific challenges have also

“I want to become a better choreographer, and not many freelance women are given safe landing spaces to learn and master through experience.” - Emma Portner



Above: Emma Portner | Photo by Alexander Black
Below: Anne Plamondon | Photo by Jocelyn Michel



Divine Brown, Debbie Nicholls-Skerritt, Nicole Brooks and Karen Burthwright in *Obeah Opera* | Photo by Racheal McCaig



become my advantages. Within the world of dance, my art and myself are not normally seen, and as such, my differences have welcomed me into spaces that I never dreamed of. I've had the opportunity to break the stereotypes of what kinds of bodies can and should present in dance. The journey has been taxing but well worth the efforts."

When Isabelle Poirier, rehearsal master and assistant artistic director for Compagnie Marie Chouinard, was expecting her second daughter, she was repeatedly asked if she was happy to be pregnant. "Funny question," she says, "but one that points to the fear of being forgotten and replaced in the milieu if one is not present all the time. I'm still dancing, and I'm a mother. We all know women who have had children and continue to have a career, but choosing to be a mother in this milieu brings up questions of time, the passage of time and the fear of not getting back to where we were before we left."



Above: Nicole Brooks | Photo by Amina Alfred
Below: Isabelle Poirier | Photo by Sylvie-Ann Paré



Myriam Allard and Hedi Graja of La Otra Orilla | Photo by Levent Erutku

Myriam Allard, co-artistic director of contemporary flamenco company La Otra Orilla, also speaks about the fear of losing work while pregnant and raising a family. “In such a competitive milieu, how can we better care for women dancers who choose to also raise a family?” she asks. “How can we better accompany and relieve part of the pressure that dancers face during this important shift? The family organization takes a major toll on women still today, in 2018.”

If only perceptions could also change with women’s post-baby/aging bodies. “We must change our way of seeing our female body in this profession,” Poirier says, “where our younger body seemed better suited to convey the passion of movement. We must consider the resonance of this different beauty in our transforming gestures and no longer ignore or hide or camouflage it.”

Female choreographers and/or female-led companies comprise more than half the programming at Fall for Dance

North 2018. But unlike the late-sixties cigarette ad touting women’s empowerment – “You’ve come a long way, baby!” – the dance world in general, still has way more way to go ... baby.

Simone Orlando bucked the trend when she became the first woman to take on the dual role of artistic director and CEO of a Canadian ballet company (Ballet Kelowna) in 2014. Believing in a collaborative working environment with dancers and staff, she prefers to commission artists with a similar approach. A choreographer herself, Orlando actively supports “the development and the presence of female choreographers,” but artistic merit is still key. Commissioning Pires was as much about providing an emerging contemporary choreographer an opportunity to create on a ballet company as it was about Orlando’s dancers getting to work with a promising newcomer in a different genre.

“My choreographic processes and experiences have helped build confidence and shape my leadership values and

“The life of an artist is hard enough. It is crucial that we support each other, especially as female creators.” - *Alysa Pires*



Desiree Bortolussi and Valentin Chou of Ballet Kelowna | Photo by David Cooper; Alysa Pires | Photo by Vaida Pociute

competencies,” Orlando says. “For me, it’s apparent that by supporting the artistic development of female artists, we are encouraging and developing the next generation of dance leaders.”

Quality and excellence should stand on their own. Perhaps the current climate of awareness and empowerment will someday lead to more gender equality, less “female choreographer” programming and more programming that happens to include female choreographers. In the meantime, everyone could use a little help along the way.

“Find a female mentor!” declares Orlando, who found great support and advice from women in management positions outside of dance too.

Carol Prieur, longtime dancer with Compagnie Marie Chouinard, says, “I have had the opportunity to be surrounded by strong women. They have fought hard, struggled and sacrificed to be where they are, and I acknowledge my fortune to have had these women as role models.”

Pires admits that seeing a peer succeed can be hard, especially when you’re trying to make your mark. “There is more than one seat at the table,” she says. “There is strength in numbers. The life of an artist is hard enough. It is crucial that we support each other, especially as female creators.”

Portner’s advice to a female mentee: “Always be honest and forthcoming because dishonesty can ruin a soul or a valuable relationship in a split second. Show up. Speak out. Be wherever you want to be and do everything you can to protect your machine in the pursuit of it all.”

Here’s hoping that more gutsy girls with backyard moxie get the encouragement, opportunities and exposure they deserve.

Bonnie Kim is a Toronto-based dance professional and writer.
emmandbee.wordpress.com



“it is through the creation of new and innovative works like *Adizokan* that we can fully articulate the struggle to understand this grand experiment we call Canada.”

— LUDWIG VAN TORONTO

Michel Muniidobene Bruyere of Red Sky Performance and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra | Photo by Jag Gundu

TORONTO

RED SKY PERFORMANCE

Artistic Director Sandra Laronde

Inspiring and original Indigenous artistry that could not happen anywhere else in the world – uniquely and deeply Canadian. **Red Sky Performance** is a multiple award-winning and internationally renowned company of contemporary Indigenous performance, illuminating themes, aesthetics and values of importance to Indigenous peoples. Indigenous-led by Artistic and Executive Director **Sandra Laronde** of the Teme-Augama-Anishinaabe (People of the Deep Water), Red Sky’s work is informed by Laronde’s own background and by her cross-sectorial and artistic collaborators.

Adizokan is about our “multiverse,” which includes the underworld, earthworld, waterworld, skyworld, starworld and spiritworld. Humans are a part of its whole, though limited in time and space. *Adizokan* is about the need for humans to free ourselves from a restrictive human-centric way of perceiving the universe by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living beings in their profound beauty.

This special FFDN edition of *Adizokan* focuses on contemporary and traditional Indigenous dance choreographed by Jera Wolfe and Sandra Laronde. Red Sky Performance partners with the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra (TSYO); Toronto-based Métis composer Eliot Britton; twenty-three-year-old “throat boxer” Nelson Tagoona from Baker Lake, Nunavut; Toronto-based Anishinaabe (Ojibway) traditional and powwow singers Marie Gaudet and Gabriel Gaudet; and opening act vocalist Fara Palmer (Saulteaux-Cree) whose song *My Roots* has direct ties to residential schools and offers hope through the healing power of the arts. The **Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra** provides a high-level orchestral experience and life-enriching opportunity for talented young musicians aged twenty-two and under. TSYO musicians receive coaching from and play a joint concert annually with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

THE FALL FOR DANCE NORTH PRESENTATION OF RED SKY PERFORMANCE IS GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY GRETCHEN AND DONALD ROSS.

Red Sky Performance presents ***Adizokan***, with direction by Sandra Laronde, choreography by Jera Wolfe and Laronde, and live music by the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra, on Program 1 at the Sony Centre: **Oct. 3 & 4, 7:30pm.**

redskyperformance.com
[@redskyperformance](https://www.facebook.com/redskyperformance) 
[@redskyconnect](https://www.instagram.com/redskyconnect)  

tso.ca/toronto-symphony-youth-orchestra
[@thetsyo](https://www.facebook.com/thetsyo) 
[@torontosymphony](https://www.instagram.com/torontosymphony)  



“Few choreographers take as many chances as Chouinard. And that’s why she stands out and deserves to be recognized as one of the greatest choreographers working today.”

— MASSLIVE.COM

Catherine Dagenais-Savard and Sacha Ouellette-Deguire of Compagnie Marie Chouinard | Photo by Sylvie-Ann Paré

THE FALL FOR DANCE NORTH PRESENTATION
OF COMPAGNIE MARIE CHOUINARD IS
GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY SANDRA SIMPSON.

MONTRÉAL

COMPAGNIE MARIE CHOUINARD

Artistic Director Marie Chouinard

Compagnie Marie Chouinard presents
Radical Vitality, Solos and Duets
(Excerpts), with choreography by
Marie Chouinard, on Program 1 at the
Sony Centre: **Oct. 3 & 4, 7:30pm**
&

IN MUSEUM V2 at Union Station,
West Wing: **Oct. 4, 12:30-2:30pm.**

Marie Chouinard explores the poetics of the body in immediate, intelligible and ever-surprising ways. Her dancers articulate their spines with extraordinary agility, undulating, pulsing and flinging their limbs with utter abandon. Guttural vocalizations and facial grimaces commit the dancers’ entire bodies to the choreography.

The international reputation of **Compagnie Marie Chouinard** is the result of twenty-eight years of work. Now a fixture on the world’s major stages and festivals, the company has its roots in Chouinard’s first creation, the solo *Crystallization* (1978). This piece, which immediately earned her a reputation for originality, was followed by over fifty choreographic productions, action-performances, vocal works, installations and films. Chouinard’s opus includes multimedia pieces, performances, films, exhibitions, books and an app for iPad and iPhone. She has won many prestigious awards for her contribution to the arts and has been appointed director of the Venice Biennale’s dance section for four years (2017–2020).

Chouinard delved into the company’s repertoire to compose this retrospective work, *Radical Vitality, Solos and Duets*. This provided an opportunity to take a fresh look at small choreographic forms – included or not in ensemble works – and rework them (new costumes or sound environments, new choreographic adaptations or transformation of solos into duets, etc.), as well as unearth certain creations which, until then, had remained on the pages of the choreographer’s notebooks. Threaded like beads into a unique choreographic anthology, these dance miniatures of varying length allow for a rereading of Chouinard’s creative arc. They have become stand-alone pieces in a long and profound creative process.

mariechouinard.com
@ciemariechouinard 



“George Céspedes is one of the leading dance choreographers in Cuba who can look back on an interesting career as a contemporary dancer.”

— HAVANA TIMES

Yuriandry Romero Mallo, Odeylis Mederos Olivera, Arianna Nuñez Jordán of Los Hijos Del Director | Photo by Alejandro Reyes and Danay Nápoles

HAVANA, CUBA

LOS HIJOS DEL DIRECTOR

Artistic Director George Céspedes

A controversial and leading creator in Cuban contemporary dance, **George Céspedes** makes works that reach beyond the movements themselves to talk about how we live, our culture, our anxieties and suffering. Céspedes believes dance should speak about who we are. Edgy and confrontational, alternately restrained and explosive, his choreography resonates with smouldering tension. Adept at directing movement images with large groups, Céspedes demands total commitment to the choreographic intent and makes unusual musical choices.

A graduate of the National Dance School of Cuba, Céspedes has performed and continues to choreograph for Danza Contemporánea de Cuba, in addition to directing his own company. His critically acclaimed work has been presented internationally. **Los Hijos Del Director** (The Director's Sons) was originally the name for a fictitious rock band imagined by Céspedes and friends. He adopted the name for his dance company, created in 2013 in Havana. The company commits to developing new dance made by Cubans in Cuba. Los Hijos Del Director will present *El Último Recurso* (*The Last Resource*), at New York's Joyce Theater in 2019.

In *La Tribulación de Anaximandro (Hombre, Arche, Apeiron)* the theories of the Greek philosopher Anaximandro appear in a relationship of power, role play and collisions of oppositions and impositions. How do we dance in an undefined and unlimited way in a world of precision and limits? To dance the chaos, the order, all the heavens and all the worlds in a constant process of creation and destruction, the essence of this piece is the search for an answer to our deep wondering.

Los Hijos Del Director presents an excerpt from *La Tribulación de Anaximandro (Hombre, Arche, Apeiron)*, with choreography by George Céspedes, on Program 1 at the Sony Centre: **Oct. 3 & 4, 7:30pm.**

@loshijosdeldirector 

“They do things with their limbs that just don’t seem possible.”

— NORWICH EYE



Jabulani Manyoni, Topollo Ntulo, Junior Hlongwane and Molefi Rakitla of Soweto Skeleton Movers | Photo by Owen Ling

SOWETO, SOUTH AFRICA

SOWETO SKELETON MOVERS

A Breakin' Convention Production

Soweto Skeleton Movers present **Seven**, with choreography by the company, on Program 1 at the Sony Centre: **Oct. 3 & 4, 7:30pm.**

@sowetoskeletonmovers 

breakinconvention.com

@breakinconvention  

@bconvention 

From the most notorious township on the African continent comes the rubber-limbed, bone-breaking **Soweto Skeleton Movers**, famed for their spin on “pantsula” developed by Skeleton Mover pioneer, Jabulani Manyoni. A quick, low bounce step, sharp gestures and syncopated rhythms characterize the dance form, along with a signature strut on flat feet with a deeply arched back; the name “pantsula” derives from the Zulu word for “waddling like a duck.” Not simply a dance form, pantsula was a youth culture developed in the black townships of South Africa during apartheid. The dance references breaking, popping and house dance. However, the addition of bone-breaking contortionism, acrobatic footwork and hat tricks differentiates Soweto Skeleton Movers from other pantsula groups. Their unique dancing – not to mention the magical hat tricks – astound and amaze.

The Soweto Skeleton Movers formed in Soweto in 2005 by renowned pantsula dancer Manyoni. He is joined by Junior Hlongwane, Topollo Ntulo and Molefi Rakitla, all of whom regularly feature in music videos and advertisements in South Africa. Rising to fame from humble beginnings – including thirteen years busking in the Soweto township – the dancers were first spotted busking on the famous tourist strip on Vilakazi Street, a stone’s throw from residences of Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu. The big break for Soweto Skeleton Movers came when they were invited to showcase at Breakin’ Convention 2016, the world’s largest hip hop dance theatre festival at Sadler’s Wells in London. This marked their first-ever theatre performance, and they have since toured internationally with Breakin’ Convention.



“An impressive and sometimes breathtaking beauty of a dance performance. Wonderfully stylised dance images.”

— MEPELER COURANT

Marc Beaugendre and Véronique Bouwman of Introdans | Photo by Hans Gerritsen

ARNHEM, THE NETHERLANDS

INTRODANS: JIŘÍ KYLIÁN

Artistic Director Roel Voorintholt

In **Jiří Kylián's** choreography, each movement seems to arise from an inner emotion, and each detail, no matter how lightning-fast and transient, bears witness to a restrained tension and complete control. Former artistic director of Nederlands Dans Theater (1975–1999), Kylián is still actively creating. His career can be divided into various stylistic periods. He became internationally recognized in the 1970s and 1980s with his neoclassical choreographies using folkloric motifs, strongly emotional atmospheres and plenty of virtuoso and supple partner work. In the 1990s his vocabulary became more unpredictable and even capricious, often featuring dark emotions and a sense of unease. Gradually, his dance idiom became more sober – with influences of Japanese and minimalistic aesthetics – but no less complex.

In *Lieder Eines Fahrenden Gesellen (Songs Of A Wayfarer)*, Kylián translates the composition of the same name by Gustav Mahler into a beautiful dance. Mahler wrote the song cycle between 1883 and 1885, in his young twenties, while feeling lovesick and broken-hearted. In this intimate choreography, Kylián doesn't follow the songs precisely, but in five highly inspired duets he still expresses the diverse moods and emotions of the music – ranging from the joy of first love to melancholy, jealousy and a longing for death.

Mahler's score is played live by ten musicians and mezzo-soprano Georgia Burashko from **The Glenn Gould School** at the Royal Conservatory of Music, conducted by Ivars Taurins. The Glenn Gould School is The Royal Conservatory of Music's internationally recognized centre for professional training in music at the post-secondary and post-graduate levels.

THE FALL FOR DANCE NORTH PRESENTATIONS OF INTRODANS ARE GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY JOAN AND JERRY LOZINSKI.

Introdans presents *Lieder Eines Fahrenden Gesellen (Songs Of A Wayfarer)*, with choreography by Jiří Kylián and live music by musicians from The Glenn Gould School, on Program 2 at the Sony Centre: **Oct. 5, 7:30pm & Oct. 6, 2:00pm.**

introdans.nl

[@introdans](https://www.instagram.com/introdans)   

ggs.rcmusic.ca

[@theroyalconservatory](https://www.instagram.com/theroyalconservatory)   

“The only ‘disadvantage’ of *Canto Ostinato* is the duration, because the thirteen minutes feel like five and leave you wanting plenty more.”

— NRC HANDELSBLAD



Vérine Bouwman, Jorge Pérez Martínez, Kim van der Put and Marc Beaugendre of Introdans | Photo by Hans Gerritsen

ARNHEM, THE NETHERLANDS

INTRODANS: LUCINDA CHILDS

Artistic Director Roel Voorintholt

Introdans' appearance at Fall for Dance North is generously supported by the Performing Arts Fund NL.

Introdans presents ***Canto Ostinato***, with choreography by Lucinda Childs, on Program 3 at Ryerson Theatre: **Oct. 2, 7:30pm & Oct. 4, 7:30pm.**

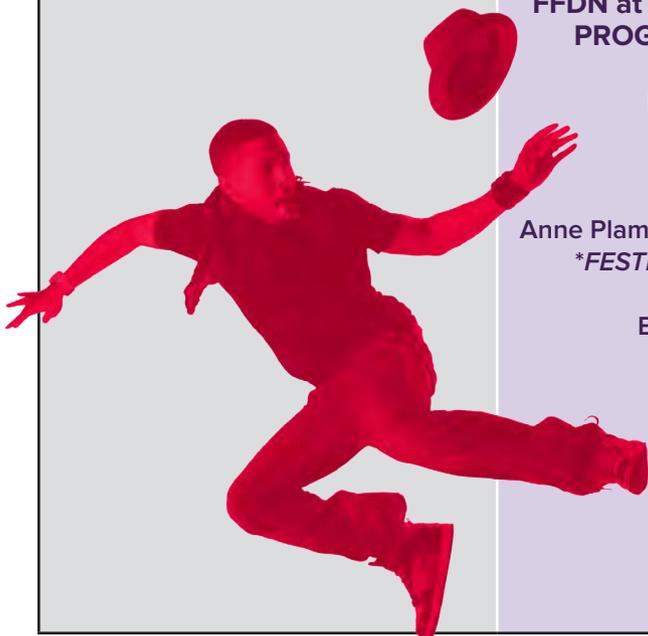
Uncompromising. That's how the American choreographer **Lucinda Childs** (b. New York, 1940) describes her own work. Childs is regarded as one of the “grand old ladies” of American modern dance, and she stands out with a movement style that is unchangingly abstract, almost mathematical and maddeningly difficult to dance. Childs uses relatively simple ballet and athletic movements to create highly complex masterpieces. As she herself says, she devises a number of movement phrases around a theme and then seeks the greatest possible variation within this framework. It has brought her the nickname “the queen of minimal dance,” but she rejects this honour. She feels she is simply part of a much larger movement in the arts.

Canto Ostinato was received with huge enthusiasm at its premiere in February 2015. Childs' choreography, set to sections of the famous composition of the same name by Simeon ten Holt, seems very straightforward: simple steps, small and low jumps, tight formations. But the appearance is deceptive: the continually shifting patterns, directions and rhythms reveal an inspired inventiveness and require the dancers to give their utmost.

Introdans takes a contemporary approach to ballet: one that's creative and surprising. Dynamic, dazzling, gravity-defying, they captivate one and all in a total dance experience. And they do this with passionate commitment and to international standards. The company presents dance that is accessible, stylish, attractive to all and preferably with a little glamour and extravagance. Introdans believes that the language of dance is so universal that it can bring together and move entire generations.



2018 Festival Overview



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<p>24 SEPTEMBER</p> <p>Free Programming at UNION STATION Open Studio</p> <p>A behind-the-scenes glimpse into the creative working processes of local and festival dance artists and choreographers</p>	<p>25 SEPTEMBER</p> <p>Free Programming at UNION STATION Open Studio</p>	
	<p>02 OCTOBER</p> <p><i>In Conversation... Artist Talk</i> Ryerson Theatre Orchestra Seating – 6:30pm</p> <p>FFDN at RYERSON THEATRE PROGRAM 3 – 7:30pm</p> <p>La Otra Orilla</p> <p>Introdans</p> <p>Anne Plamondon + Emma Portner* <i>*FESTIVAL COMMISSION</i></p> <p>Ballet Kelowna</p>	<p>03 OCTOBER</p> <p><i>In Conversation... Artist Talk</i> Sony Centre Lower Lobby – 6:30 pm</p> <p>MAINSTAGE at SONY CENTRE PROGRAM 1 – 7:30pm (OFFICIAL FESTIVAL OPENING)</p> <p>Red Sky Performance <i>with the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra</i></p> <p>Compagnie Marie Chouinard</p> <p>Los Hijos Del Director/ George Céspedes</p> <p>Soweto Skeleton Movers</p>

UNION STATION, WEST WING 65 Front St West
RYERSON THEATRE 43 Gerrard St East
SONY CENTRE 1 Front St East

Please visit ffdnorth.com for the most updated programming information and for FREE workshops and master classes.

THURSDAY		FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			<p>22 SEPTEMBER</p> <p>2:30pm Free Programming at UNION STATION Tap Performance curated by Toffan Rhythm Projects</p>
<p>27 SEPTEMBER</p> <p>7 – 10pm Free Programming at UNION STATION An Evening of Tango</p> <p>Featuring a workshop, milonga and performance to live music</p>			
<p>04 OCTOBER</p> <p>12:30 – 2:30pm Free Programming at UNION STATION IN MUSEUM V2</p> <p>An interactive dance performance by Compagnie Marie Chouinard</p>		<p>05 OCTOBER</p> <p><i>In Conversation...</i> Artist Talk Sony Centre Lower Lobby – 6:30pm</p> <p>MAINSTAGE at SONY CENTRE PROGRAM 2 – 7:30pm</p> <p>Introdans <i>with musicians from</i> <i>The Glenn Gould School</i></p> <p>Obeah Opera 2019</p> <p>The National Ballet of Canada <i>with The National Ballet of</i> <i>Canada Orchestra</i></p> <p>Compagnie Hervé KOUBI</p>	<p>06 OCTOBER</p> <p><i>In Conversation...</i> Artist Talk Sony Centre Lower Lobby – 1:00pm</p> <p>MAINSTAGE at SONY CENTRE PROGRAM 2 – 2:00pm</p>
<p><i>In Conversation...</i> Artist Talk Sony Centre Lower Lobby – 6:30pm</p> <p>MAINSTAGE at SONY CENTRE PROGRAM 1 7:30pm</p>	<p><i>In Conversation...</i> Artist Talk Ryerson Theatre Orchestra Seating – 6:30pm</p> <p>FFDN at RYERSON THEATRE PROGRAM 3 7:30pm</p>		



“An intelligent, complex and utterly compelling exploration of endurance, storytelling and strength.”
— MOONEY ON THEATRE

Nicole Brooks, Deidrey Francois, Nickeshia Garrick and Karen Burthwright in Obeah Opera | Photo by Racheal McCall

TORONTO

OBEAH OPERA 2019

A Nicole Brooks Vision

Music, theatre, dance, opera, film, video and community activism. **Asah Productions** creates and develops stories substantiated in diversity from the Black diaspora. Founder and Director **Nicole Brooks** is a filmmaker, director, performer, singer, playwright, composer, curator, teacher and “art-ivist.” She has been producing innovative content for the stage and screen for over fifteen years. Her critically acclaimed debut theatrical work, *Obeah Opera*, has been staged in various incarnations since 2009 – including at the Toronto 2015 Pan Am and Parapan Am Games.

A hand-clapping, foot-stomping, spirit-lifting theatrical experience, *Obeah Opera 2019* tells the story of the Salem witch trials from the fascinating perspective of Caribbean slave women. Sung entirely a cappella by a powerful all-female cast, the work’s original score builds on musical genres including spirituals, blues, jazz, gospel, traditional African, Caribbean folk, calypso, ska, R&B and reggae. Likewise, the choreography focuses on Caribbean folk and traditional African forms in an eclectic mix of influences from within and beyond the Black diaspora. In the Afro-Caribbean tradition, dance and music go hand in hand.

This special FFDN version of *Obeah Opera* shares new choreography developed for the reiteration of this unique production, which will be featured at *Luminato* in June 2019 and is then projected to tour to South Africa, with choreography by **Anthony ‘Prime’ Guerra**. A native of Trinidad and Tobago, Guerra has directed and choreographed numerous productions on local and international levels. He is highly sought after by many educational institutions, corporations and by other artists in dance, theatre and film for his profound knowledge of dance, the origins of dance and the African contribution to many of today’s dance forms.

THE FALL FOR DANCE NORTH PRESENTATION OF OBEAH OPERA 2019 IS GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY RENETTE AND DAVID BERMAN.

Nicole Brooks presents **Obeah Opera 2019**, with choreography by Anthony ‘Prime’ Guerra, on Program 2 at the Sony Centre: **Oct. 5, 7:30pm & Oct. 6, 2:00pm.**

obeahopera.com
[@obeahopera](https://www.facebook.com/obeahopera)  

“Justin Peck is making ballet that speaks to our everyday lives ... only 30, he is already one of the most sought-after dance makers in the world.”

— THE NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE



Artists of The National Ballet of Canada | Photo by Aleksandar Antonijevic

TORONTO

THE NATIONAL BALLETT OF CANADA

Artistic Director Karen Kain, C.C.

The National Ballet of Canada presents *Paz de la Jolla*, with choreography by Justin Peck and live music by The National Ballet of Canada Orchestra, on Program 2 at the Sony Centre: **Oct. 5, 7:30pm & Oct. 6, 2:00pm.**

Justin Peck is resident choreographer and a soloist with New York City Ballet (NYCB). In 2017, he choreographed the feature film *Red Sparrow*, produced by 20th Century Fox Studios. In 2018, he choreographed for a major revival of *Carousel* on Broadway. Peck began choreographing in 2009 at the New York Choreographic Institute and has created over thirty ballets. His works have been performed by major companies in Europe and the United States. In 2014, Mr. Peck was the subject of the documentary *Ballet 422*, which followed him for two months as he created NYCB's 422nd original ballet, *Paz de la Jolla*.

Peck created *Paz de la Jolla* in 2013 as an homage to his southern California upbringing. The ballet is a buoyant and beachy tribute to life and young love. The choreography, both brisk and languid, salty and sensual, is rich in emotional undercurrents and evocative of the pleasures and fears of youth and coming of age. The company performs to the live accompaniment of **The National Ballet of Canada Orchestra**, led by Music Director and Principal Conductor David Briskin. The orchestra has received acclaim from audiences and critics alike and has recorded two CDs.

One of the top international ballet companies, **The National Ballet of Canada** has been led by Artistic Director Karen Kain since 2005. Renowned for its diverse repertoire, the company performs traditional full-length classics, embraces contemporary work and encourages the creation of new ballets as well as the development of Canadian choreographers. The company presented the Canadian premiere of *Paz de la Jolla* in June 2018.

national.ballet.ca

[@national.ballet](https://www.facebook.com/national.ballet) 

[@nationalballet](https://www.tweet.com/nationalballet) 



“The men look like figures in an etching by William Blake, like falling angels or Icarus after flapping his wings too close to the sun.”

– THE NEW YORKER

Compagnie Hervé KOUBI | Photo by Didier Phillispart

CANNES, FRANCE

COMPAGNIE HERVÉ KOUBI

Artistic Director Hervé Koubi

Diving, whirling, soaring, cascading – thirteen male dancers from Algeria and Morocco mesmerize in a gravity-defying mix of capoeira, martial arts, urban and contemporary dance. Director and choreographer **Hervé Koubi** met the original street dancers of this work at an audition in October 2009 in Algiers. “Ever since, my enthusiasm for them and the current dancers hasn’t ceased to grow, as a result of their own pleasure in dancing ... I try to stay away from creating the spectacular for the performance, preferring to create work where the musicality of each dancer, of each body, is to serve the purpose of the performance,” says Koubi.

Of Algerian roots, Koubi grew up in France where he studied biology and dance at the University of Aix-en-Provence before graduating as a pharmaceutical doctor in 2002. Deciding on dance, Koubi performed professionally and created his first project, *Le Golem*, with longtime collaborator Guillaume Gabriel. Since 2010, he has been working through his company, which made its North American debut at New York’s City Center Theater’s Fall for Dance™ festival in October 2015 and has toured extensively over the past four seasons. In July 2015, Koubi was awarded the French medal of Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres.

The full seventy-minute work *What the Day Owes to the Night* was initially inspired by a novel of the same title by Algerian Yasmina Khadra. Music, by J. S. Bach and Mozart, woven with Sufi sounds, reflects the dancers’ power and fluidity. Movement imagery evokes Orientalist paintings and the stone filigree of Islamic architecture.

Compagnie Hervé KOUBI presents an excerpt from ***What the Day Owes to the Night***, with choreography by Hervé Koubi, on Program 2 at the Sony Centre: **Oct. 5, 7:30pm & Oct. 6, 2:00pm.**

cie-koubi.fr

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“Flamenco stripped down to its essentials as Allard pounded out the rhythms, pouring out her heart, becoming the dance.”

— THE STAR

Myriam Allard, Hedi Graja, Caroline Planté and Miguel Medina of La Otra Orilla | Photo by Hervé Leblay

MONTRÉAL

LA OTRA ORILLA

Artistic Directors Myriam Allard and Hedi Graja

Flamenco is an art of giving and of exuberance. It is deep and resonant. Genuine and poetic. “I seek a state of complete presence, constant metamorphosis and a wide range of tensions, looking for reflections and echoes in relation to the music, the performers, the audience,” says dancer and choreographer **Myriam Allard**. “Playing with shapes, bodies, sounds, words, accidents and rhythms, to allow the theme to grow out of the grand dance of the elements: I look through the eyes of a child to discover, compose and plan the staging of a proposition, whose elements answer to their own internal logic,” says singer and director **Hedi Graja**.

One enters into flamenco as one enters into religion. *RITE* exposes the relationship between body, rhythm, voice and guitar. At the heart of this artistic proposition lies an intimate conversation where each element reveals itself while defining the other. This is flamenco at its core, back to its essentials, resonating through the body and soul of the public.

Myriam Allard’s life changed when she discovered flamenco. At age twenty-one, she left her home in Québec for Spain, where she lived for six years. After intensive training, she began dancing professionally at the traditional tablao flamencos in Spain, Japan, France and Germany. She founded **La Otra Orilla** in 2006 in Montréal with Graja. Their works celebrate the timeless and universal appeal of flamenco. Their radical approach to the form reflects an absolutely transdisciplinary vision. La Otra Orilla has toured Canada, the United States, South America and Great Britain with much success.

La Otra Orilla presents an excerpt from *RITE / a flamenco ceremony*, created by artistic directors Myriam Allard and Hedi Graja, on Program 3 at Ryerson Theatre: **Oct. 2, 7:30pm & Oct. 4, 7:30pm.**

laotraorilla.net

[@laotraorilla.net](https://www.facebook.com/laotraorilla.net) 

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“Anne Plamondon doesn’t dance,
she literally floats.”

– MONTREAL.COM

“[Emma Portner is] challenging the
standard of mediocrity.”

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Anne Plamondon and Emma Portner | Photo by Ryan Pfluger

MONTRÉAL/LOS ANGELES

ANNE PLAMONDON + EMMA PORTNER

A Fall for Dance North Festival Commission

Angles and sinew. Impact and grace. Fierce individuality and delicate symbiosis. A Fall for Dance North commission, this collaboration between Anne Plamondon and Emma Portner transcends the frame of a duet – and the artists’ difference in age. “Our goal is to collaborate in the most open-minded and in-forceful way, giving space to a new way of creating as solo artists,” they write. Artists, women, human beings. No rules, no preconceptions. When they dance, there is nothing else.

Anne Plamondon premiered her self-solo *The Same Eyes as Yours* in 2012 after a critically acclaimed twenty-five-year performance career. She graduated from L’École supérieure de danse du Québec and immediately joined Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal in 1994. She then danced with Nederlands Dans Theater 2 and the Gulbenkian Ballet before returning to Canada in 2000 as a freelance artist. She has worked extensively with Crystal Pite/Kidd Pivot and is one of the founders of RUBBERBANDance Group and movement style, where she was artistic co-director from 2006 through 2015.

Emma Portner recently choreographed the musical *Bat Out of Hell* (2017) and has been recognized as one of the youngest women in documented history to choreograph a musical for London’s West End. The Canadian-born, twenty-three-year-old trained at Leeming Danceworks and Canterbury High School in Ottawa, at Canada’s National Ballet School and then the Alvin Ailey School. Portner produces, manages and directs her own short films and ever-changing dance company. She has worked in film with actress Ellen Page and indie sensation Blood Orange. Her work also appears in Justin Bieber’s *Life Is Worth Living* video.

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Anne Plamondon and Emma
Portner present **Counter Cantor**,
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anneplamondon.com

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“The audience was laughing uproariously as grinning dancers employed [Pires’] silly, even zany, choreography to full effect.”

– THE DAILY COURIER



Ballet Kelowna | Photo by Michael Slobodian

KELOWNA

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Artistic Director and CEO Simone Orlando

The only professional dance company in British Columbia’s Interior, **Ballet Kelowna** embraces the precision and athleticism of ballet technique to create original new works by Canada’s finest emerging and established choreographers.

Sweet, silly, sensual and sassy, *MAMBO* by **Alysa Pires** showcases the choreographer’s signature physicality with a tongue-in-cheek playfulness. Detailed gesture, rhythmic texture and powerful dynamics create a heightened but relatable movement language informed by Pires’ background in musical theatre and tap. Created in the cold depths of winter, in response to a world that feels increasingly chaotic and bleak, *MAMBO* follows in the tradition of escapism in theatre – reminding us that even in the darkest of times, there is light and love and music and dance.

Pires has created works for Ballet Kelowna, Ballet Edmonton (formerly Citie Ballet) and Ryerson University, among others. Alysa Pires Dance Projects made its acclaimed debut with *Exterminating Angel* at the 2016 Toronto Fringe Festival. Upcoming, Pires will participate in the New York City Ballet’s Choreographic Institute and remount *In Between* (2018) for Ballet Kelowna, a work she originally created for the National Ballet of Canada’s Choreographic Workshop. An Honours BFA graduate from the Ryerson School of Performance, Pires received the 2015 Jack McAllister Award.

Founded in 2002, and under the leadership of Artistic Director and CEO Simone Orlando since 2014, Ballet Kelowna is committed to its role as a leader, providing unique dance training and choreographic opportunities along with community collaborations and outreach programs. During her tenure at Ballet Kelowna, Orlando has brought twenty-four new works into the company’s repertoire.

Ballet Kelowna presents **MAMBO**,
with choreography by Alysa Pires, on
Program 3 at Ryerson Theatre: **Oct. 2,
7:30pm & Oct. 4, 7:30pm.**

balletkelowna.ca

[@balletkelowna](https://www.facebook.com/balletkelowna)   

alysapires.com

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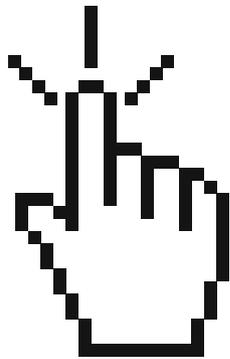
Sonia Rodriguez. Photo by Karolina Kuras.



Los Hijos Del Director | Photo by Alejandro Reyes and Danay Nápoles
Obeah Opera | Photo by Racheal McCaig

Dancing, at Your Fingertips

By Molly Johnson



In a film clip that has over 70,000 views on Instagram, Emma Portner stands behind a seated Ellen Page, manipulating the actor's diminutive limbs. The connection between the real-life partners is palpable. Though Page isn't known for her dancing chops, the film reimagines her through Portner's distinct choreographic lens. It's star power and compelling art all in one – representative of Portner's unique brand, which she built from the ground up on the phenomenon that is Instagram. Portner appears at Fall for Dance North with collaborator Anne Plamondon in a new duet commissioned by the festival.

In 2018, the cultural influence of social media is undeniable. With artists like Portner leading the charge, dance has entered a new era. Performers and choreographers can find an audience without ever leaving the studio.

Nicole Brooks, the director and creative mind behind *Obeah Opera 2019*, has a singular understanding of this. "I am fortunate in my artistic practice to have studied film and television and understand the power of visuals to draw in the masses and engage the people in the work that I do," she relates. Like Portner, Brooks has found a way to use social media to help get her work seen more widely. "The trailer alone for *Obeah Opera* has been an amazing tool to have on social media to excite people about my artmaking. I have been so grateful for the attention received from the international market and audiences who have yet to see the work but loved the trailer and are eager to learn more."

If ever an industry needed a cost-effective way to promote a product, it'd be the cash-strapped arts. And when used creatively, social media has the power to not only sell a dance artist's work but also expand their audience base in meaningful ways. "I post photos and short videos from our shows and livestream certain performances," describes Sandra Laronde. "This can help reach audiences not just in Canada but also internationally." As artistic director of Red Sky Performance, presenting *Adizokan* at Fall for Dance North, Laronde has fully embraced the tool, creating specific hashtags for each show as a means of monitoring reaction. "Dancers and performing artists are traditionally isolated within theatres and studios," explains Laronde. "In the past, audience response was confined to the odd critical review in a publication, but now I can receive



Compagnie Hervé KOUBI | Photo by Didier Phillipsart

instant feedback and a wide range of response, and this can serve as inspiration for my future endeavours.”

Companies now have the ability to reach further when it comes to developing relationships with artists. Says Brooks: “We have had an influx of new dancers and performers who we never knew of – young people who are excited by the work we are doing and want to be a part. It has been mind-blowing and exciting to see how we are influencing and encouraging the next generation to tell these innovative, untold stories.”

For Compagnie Hervé KOUBI, the group’s artistic vision relies on the capacity to connect with new voices. “When we do a casting, when we create a project for amateur dancers, social media is a way to call for participants,” offers Managing Director Guillaume Gabriel. “With social media, we can reach people further, faster and wider. It’s a way for us to share thoughts, points of view about our art, a way to remain connected with other artists.”

With social media, the word “connection” should often be taken with a grain of salt. But it’s hard to deny how online engagement has amplified the possibilities of the art world. Chelsy Meiss, first soloist with The National Ballet of Canada, has a keen sense of this: “Social media has connected me on a whole new level in the dance community. I have made new friends in other ballet companies all over the world through Instagram accounts,” Meiss describes. “When we meet in person (for example, on tour, guesting or taking company class), there has already been an introduction established.” Like Portner, Meiss is an artist whose social media presence has not only expanded her community but also led to unexpected work and press, including a cover story with *Dance Australia* magazine (Meiss was born in Melbourne).



Sandra Laronde | Photo courtesy of the artist



“Now I can receive instant feedback and a wide range of response, and this can serve as inspiration for my future endeavours.” - Sandra Laronde



Tahimy M. Cisneros García and Karla B. Argüelles Giménez of Los Hijos Del Director | Photo by Alejandro Reyes and Danay Nápoles

For artists like Meiss, Instagram in particular offers the ability to share a visual diary of the dancer as individual. Her feed is a mix of in-studio images, promo shots and pictures with family and friends – career with a side of personality. “Instagram is the account I use the most, on a daily basis, and it is both a personal and professional account,” relates Meiss. She acknowledges that the more public an artist’s private life becomes, the more mindfulness is required. “I have a lot of students and aspiring dancers who follow me. I try to set the best example possible with regard to what I post online and always screen who follows me, even though my account is public.”

When it comes to the social media stratosphere, opinions are deeply divergent. Some cite the platform as an incredible means through which to communicate the larger goals of their art. Compagnie Hervé KOUBI’s Gabriel is one such believer: “Our performances are not only spectacular shows; we want to share a message also. We work with dancers coming from Africa, and with the current situation regarding migrants, it’s important that the message of mix of culture can be exposed. Social media helps for that.”

Cuban choreographer George Céspedes – at Fall for Dance North with his company Los Hijos Del Director – ultimately has a different outlook. “Social media can trivialize or remove the real meaning of things, can make something popular or fashionable which does not always have substance,” says



“When we create a project for amateur dancers, social media is a way to call for participants.”

– Guillaume Gabriel, *Compagnie Hervé KOUBI*



Chelsey Meiss of The National Ballet of Canada | Photo by Aleksandar Antonijevic



Molefi Rakitla and Topollo Ntulo of Soweto Skeleton Movers | Photo by Owen Ling

Céspedes. He cautions, “It’s very dangerous because now when an artist or anybody wants to call attention to something, we give more importance to how we promote than what we promote.” Céspedes is not wrong – and the more we learn about the effects of tying our lives to market-driven digital realities, the more we may wish to keep our distance. In the meantime, it can be hard for an artist to resist when the ability to expand one’s creative reach is literally at your fingertips.

Sometimes, other hands do the work. Take the Soweto Skeleton Movers, a group of street performers from the Soweto township in Johannesburg, for example. They rose to international fame after being “discovered” via viral clips. “We used to busk at Vilakazi Street of Soweto where tourists come from different parts of the world,” recalls Topollo Ntulo. “They would take our video without us being aware and share it, which made it much easier for us to get to be seen almost everywhere.” After hooking up with Jonzi D of Breakin’ Convention out of Sadler’s Wells in the United Kingdom, the Skeleton Movers discovered a fan base that had first experienced the dancers’ work on social platforms.

When you think about it, social media is really just a high-speed version of an old and everlasting communication standard: word of mouth. Though dance artists like Portner have found fame via digital means, they still rely on a very human audience to spread the word.



Red Sky Performance | Photo by Jag Gundu

And in places like Cuba where Internet service remains limited, digital technology isn’t what matters – the buzz is. “Here, only thirty to forty per cent of the population use social media,” Céspedes confirms. “The more efficient way to promote is gossip. In Cuba, good gossip can fill a performance in just a day.”

Molly Johnson is a Dora Award–winning independent dance artist and a writer in the space between. thisismollyjohnson.com



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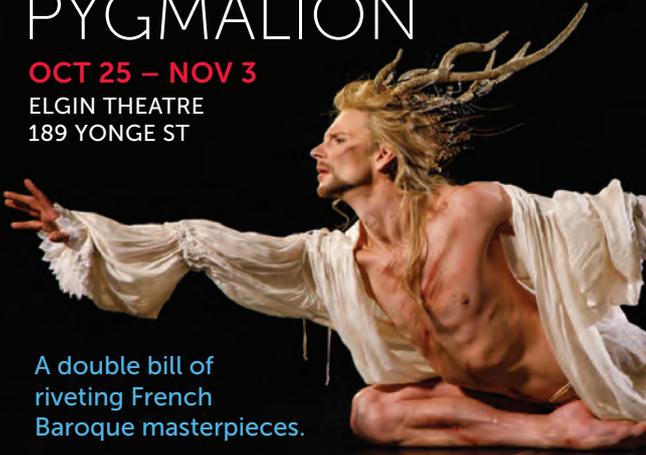
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