



Department of Dance  
*Franklin College of Arts and Sciences*  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

2023 UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA DANCE COMPANY  
**SPRING CONCERT**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 20 & FRIDAY,  
APRIL 21**  
at 8 p.m.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 22**  
at 2 & 8 p.m.

**New Dance Theatre**





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## **DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

Welcome to the Department of Dance's annual faculty and guest artist concert, the UGA Dance Company spring concert. This production marks the final show of a busy and successful performance season for the Department of Dance. In addition to home season performances of the Young Choreographers Series, Ballroom Magic, and Black History Month, dance students have graced the stages of the Fine Arts Theater alongside the legendary Martha Graham Dance Company, the Ramsey Recital Hall with Wilson Center Artist in Residence violist Kenji Bunch, and the American College Dance Association festival at Brenau University. As a faculty, we are immensely proud of the hard work, talent, and professionalism exhibited by the dancers and we are pleased to share that with you tonight.

The spring concert includes a diverse array of dance genres that are representative of the coursework we offer within the AB degree in dance. Dance majors and minors have the opportunity to train in techniques including aerial, ballet, ballroom, contemporary modern, hip hop, jazz, pointe, tap, and West African. The Department of Dance is also excited to feature choreographer Amelia Reiser as our inaugural UGA Alumni Guest Artist, commissioning her to create a new work in collaboration with current students. Beyond the reward of working with a new choreographer's unique creative process, students have benefited from the first-hand experiences that Reiser has generously shared about her career path after graduating from UGA Dance in 2011. Guest performances by the UGA Ballroom Performance Group and Atlanta-based Ballethnic Dance Company round out this exciting and diverse concert.

In addition to the hard work and dedication of our choreographers, cast, and crew, tonight's program would not be possible without the support of Carina McGeehin, Technical Director; Betty Prickett, Business Manager; Shaun Baer, Public Relations; and Dr. Skip Taylor, Department Head. Our sincere thanks to the Franklin College of the Arts and the Friends of Dance whose continued support for dance in higher education is invaluable to the success of our program. Finally, as a form of artistic expression, the show would not be complete without your support from the audience. Thank you so much for attending, and enjoy the show!

Sincerely,  
Elizabeth Stich  
Artistic Director, UGADC Spring Concert

## Last Waltz

Choreographed by Elizabeth Stich & Julianna Hane

Music: "Dance Me to the End of Love" by Leonard Cohen

Featured dancers:   Haleigh Green, Hadiya Williams (Thurs, Sat PM)  
                                  Emery Martin, Casey Wesolowski (Fri, Sat matinee)

*Last Waltz premiered in 2010 at the University of Utah as part of the choreographers' graduate thesis research in aerial dance. The work has since been restaged on student aerialists at Utah Tech University, Winthrop University, and now UGA.*

## Excerpts from La Esmeralda

Restaged by Lisa Fusillo

*1st dance adapted from Deborah Weaver, after Marius Petipa, et al;*

*2nd dance adapted from traditional after Marius Petipa, et al.*

Music: Cesare Pugni, Ludwig Minkus

Featured dancers:   Erin O'Keefe, Nika Shlomi, Madelyn Wolfe

## All the Cats Join In

Choreographed by Michael J. Fulford

Music: "All the Cats Join In" by Catherine Russell

Featured Dancers:   Alex Lee-Boulton, Alma Bajramovic, Gwen Conway, Kyle Jones  
                                  Amanda Kiefer, Ryan Ward

*"All the Cats Join In" is a traditional foxtrot set in a little speakeasy. The number celebrates the fun and free spirit of the Jazz era.*

## Brisk Breeze

Choreographed by Nena Gilreath

Costumes courtesy of Willie Anderson

Music: Violin Concerto Op. 5 No. 2 in A, 3. Rondeau

Composer: Joseph Bologne, Le Chevalier De Saint-Georges

Miroslav Vilimec, Pilsen Philharmonic Orchestra, Frantisek Preisler

Featured dancers:   Isabelle Collins, Haleigh Green, Grace Healy, Mercedes Martinez,  
                                  Ana Mattingly, Vivian Munce, Erin O'Keefe, Avery Scott, Nika Shlomi,  
                                  Madelyn Wolfe

## she wore her silence like a shroud

Directed by Elizabeth Stich

Music: Stock music provided by lordholman, from Pond5

Performance by Elizabeth Stich

Cinematography by Tom Gallo | GH Prime Media

Official selection: American Dance Festival 'Movies by Movers' 2023

## Quiet Storm

Choreographed by Christopher Huggins

Costumes by Jean Yorke

Music: "Life and Death" by Paul Cardall

Featured Dancers: Karla Tyson and Calvin Gentry

Appearance courtesy of Ballethnic Dance Company

*The ballet ventures into the contrasts and discoveries of darkness and light. We are dealing with the realities of life under threat the piece emerges and reflects our new way of life and its fragility.*

## Black Woman

Choreographed by Jason Aryeh

Music: "One Billion Rising" soundtrack from the short film

Featured Dancers: Grace Anderson, Summer Arrington, Elizabeth Clark, Sophia Ferrucci, Kendyl Hayes, Emery Martin, Vivian Munce, Lindsey Sewell, Elizabeth Steele, Hadiya Williams, Madelyn Wolfe

## Collaborative Embodiment and Cultural Acceptance

Skip Taylor:	Jason Aryeh:
Director and Grant Recipient	Choreographer for the UGA Dancers
Co-Music Director and Composer	and the University of Ghana Dancers,
Music Vocals and Recorded Memories	Rehearsal Director

Louis Romanos:

Interviews

"Lament" Composed and Performed by Skip Taylor and Louis Romanos

"Structural Disorder" Composed and Performed by Louis Romanos

Recording and Mix Engineer: Louis Romanos

Nena Gilreath:	Carina McGeehan:	Allen Rowell:	Emmanuel Siam:
Recorded Memories	Technical Director	Editor	Costume Designer

UGA Dancers:	Ghana Dancers:	Ghana Camera Crew:
Lindsey Sewell	Christian Quayson	Frederick Henry Plange – Director
Hadiya Williams	Prince Ofose Idan	Seth Oduro Plange
Kendyl Hayes	Daniel Oduro	Henry Koranteng
Elizabeth Clark	Prince Ovuike	Ebenezer Okwei

*Funded by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), this Learning Technologies Grant provided interactive digital technology for student dance performance opportunities allowing students to explore, learn, create, and include collaborative performance projects with dancers from anywhere in the world. Through this project, dance students from both the University of Ghana and the University of Georgia were exposed to this cutting-edge technology and were provided an experiential learning and creative performance opportunity through individual and group performance.*

## We Stand

Choreographed by Jason Aryeh

Costumes by Emmanuel Siam

Music: "My Power" by Beyoncé

Featured dancers: · Elizabeth Clark, Alyssa Dula, Sophia Ferrucci, Kendyl Hayes, Emery Martin, Elizabeth Steele, Hadiya Williams, Madelyn Wolfe (Thurs, Fri)  
· Gigi Anderson, Summer Arrington, Elizabeth Clark, Kendyl Hayes (8pm), Vivian Munce, Lindsey Sewell, Elizabeth Steele, Madelyn Wolfe (2pm)(Sat matinee and PM)

## Hasta el Sol de Hoy

Choreographed by Natalie Cox

Music: "Hasta el Sol de Hoy" written by Oscar Domingo Derudi, Performed by Luis

Featured dancers: Melisa Bordinau, Gwen Conway, Kyle Jones, Alex Lee-Boulton, Skyla Montgomery, Anna Purcell, Frankie Barnes (Alternate)

## The Games We Play

Choreographed by Amelia Reiser in collaboration with the dancers

*Choreographic commission supported by the UGA Alumni Guest Artist Series*

Costumes by Amelia Reiser in collaboration with the dancers

Music: "Sun & Ice" by The Field, "Hi Red" by Mark Pritchard, "Coconut" by Fever Ray, "The Sore Party" by Aisha Devi

Featured dancers: Gigi Anderson, Haleigh Green, Mercedes Martinez, Lily Medlock, Erin O'Keefe, Haley Roberson, Regan Sadowski, Abby Schulze, Avery Scott, Aria Surka, Grace Weigel, Casey Wesolowski, Madelyn Wolfe

*The Games We Play uses sports culture and childhood games as the context to explore individuals in collective grief, anticipation, joy, hope, devastation, and magic. This work raises the question: what are the agreements, boundaries, and expectations? Through a playful lens, this work investigates the ways that we are shaped by all we have loved and lost and how fiercely we hold onto what we believe.*

Photos by Jason Thrasher  
UGA Dance Company  
Spring Concert 2022



## UGA DANCE COMPANY

Gigi Anderson	Third year	Dance and Psychology (Neuroscience) double major
Summer Arrington	Second year	English major, Dance minor
Elizabeth Clark	Second year	Dance major, Exercise and Sport Science minor
Isabelle Collins	Third year	Dance and Marketing double major
Alyssa Dula	Fourth Year	TESOL and World Language Education Major, Dance Minor
Jaalah Evans	Second year	Dance major
Sofia Ferrucci	First year	Dance and Psychology double major
Haleigh Green	Third year	Dance and French double major
Kendyl Hayes	Third year	Dance and Health Promotion double major
Grace Healy	Second year	Dance and Psychology double major
Emery Martin	Third year	Dance major
Mercedes Martinez	Third year	Elementary Education major, Dance minor
Ana Mattingly	Third year	Dance major, History minor
Lily Medlock	Third year	Elementary Education major, Dance minor
Vivian Munce	Third year	Dance and Human Development and Family Science double major
Erin O'Keefe	Third year	Dance and English (Creative Writing) double major
Haley Roberson	Third year	Dance and Journalism double major
Regan Sadowski	Fourth year	Political Science major, Dance minor
Abby Schulze	Second year	Dance major, Exercise and Sport Science minor
Avery Scott	Third year	Dance and English (Creative Writing) double major
Lindsey Sewell	Fourth year	Dance and Dietetics double major
Nika Shlomi	First year	Biology major, Dance minor
Elizabeth Steele	Second year	Dance major
Aria Surka	Fourth year	Dance and Journalism double major
Grace Weigel	Fourth year	Dance and Landscape Architecture double major
Casey Wesolowski	Third year	Computer Science major, Dance minor
Hadiya Williams	Fourth year	Dance and Journalism double major
Madelyn Wolfe	Third year	Dance major

## UGA ALUMNI GUEST ARTIST SERIES

The Department of Dance is excited to feature performer and choreographer Amelia Reiser as our inaugural UGA Alumni Guest Artist. The mission of the Alumni Guest Artist Series is to support alumni of UGA Dance and to foster relationships between current dance students and distinguished graduates working in the field.

## UGA BALLROOM PERFORMANCE GROUP

The UGA Ballroom Performance Group (BPG), founded in 1991 by Dr. Mark Wheeler and currently co-directed by Natalie Cox and Michael Fulford, is a registered Student Activities organization, which enjoys the support of the Department of Dance. The group performs on campus, in local schools and nursing homes, on tour for charity and alumni events, and around North Georgia. The company's program consists of choreographed pieces in a variety of styles, including cha-cha, foxtrot, salsa, quick-step, rumba, samba, east coast swing, west coast swing, tango, Viennese waltz, and slow waltz.

## BALLETHNIC DANCE COMPANY

Ballethnic Dance Company, under the direction of Nena Gilreath and Waverly T. Lucas II, is a professional ballet company that creates visibility for Black and Brown dancers who, in spite of proper training, are overlooked. We are making a radical shift in the access of classical and contemporary ballet in Atlanta – in studios, on stage, behind the scenes, and among audiences, dance professionals, and students. For more than 30 years, Ballethnic has distinguished itself from other black professional ballet companies by its unique and authentic praxis of blending ballet with African dance concepts and placing the movements sur la pointe. We have worked to change the landscape of classical ballet by increasing artistic opportunities through our Dance Company, Ballethnic Academy of Dance, Youth Ensemble, and Danseur Development Project. We are one of the most prolific creators of critically acclaimed ballets in the Southeast and have developed diverse dance audiences across the country. Our ultimate goal is to see a fundamental change in the number of Black and culturally diverse dancers in mainstream ballet companies around the world.



## CHOREOGRAPHER BIOS



**Jason Aryeh**



**Natalie Cox**



**Michael J. Fulford**



**Lisa Fusillo**



**Nena Gilreath**



**Christopher L. Huggins**



**Amelia Reiser**



**Elizabeth Stich**



**Dr. Skip Taylor**

**Jason Aryeh**, Lecturer of Dance, is a traditional and contemporary trained dancer and historian from the coastal area of Accra- Ghana, born into the Aryeh family of court traditional historians and dancers of the Ga-Ngleshie people. Aryeh has toured the world extensively with traditional and contemporary West African dance groups, and has diverse experience as a performer, teacher, choreographer, and movement research scholar throughout West African and the United States. Aryeh is the Artistic Director and Founder of Africa Alive Dance Company, a project research-oriented movement performance ensemble, resident in Accra. He was the lead Dancer and Choreographer for the Performing Arts Workshop (PAWS), a resident performance dance company affiliated with the University of Ghana. Aryeh was also a featured performance soloist and Choreographer for the Sankofa African Dance and Drum Company affiliated with the State University of New York, College at Brockport. He was the Director, Choreographer and movement research scholar for the resident Theater Company at the Center for National Culture, Sunyani, Brong-Ahafo Region, Ghana. Jason Aryeh earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degree in Dance and African Studies from the University of Ghana and his Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree in Performance and Choreography Studies from State University of New York, College at Brockport.



## CHOREOGRAPHER BIOS

**Natalie Cox** is a double dawg that received her A.B. and J.D. from the University of Georgia. She is currently an Associate Director for Legal Affairs, co-director of the University of Georgia Ballroom Performance Group, and instructor at the UGA Department of Dance for Ballroom Foundations. Natalie trained at the University of Georgia with Dr. Mark Wheeler and spends her free time traveling and taking teacher workshops and classes at ballroom and salsa camps across the US. When not at the University, you can find Natalie at Dancefx Athens teaching and dancing with CONTACT Dance Company and Revolution Salsa Company.

**Michael J. Fulford** is the assistant dean for institutional effectiveness and strategic initiatives in the UGA College of Pharmacy, serves on the graduate faculty in the Mary Frances Early College of Education, and teaches ballroom dance in the Department of Dance, where he is co-director of the UGA Ballroom Performance Group. Along with teaching dance, Fulford is active in the local theater scene. Minorng in theatre at UGA, he began his long connection with the Town and Gown Players, where he serves on the board of trustees. He has choreographed musicals for various groups and universities locally and regionally throughout the years.

**Lisa Fusillo** began professional ballet training at the Washington School of Ballet and later trained in New York, London, Russia and Denmark. She holds the Professional Teaching Diploma from the Royal Ballet School (London) and certifications from American Ballet Theatre National Training Curriculum and the New York City Ballet Education Department. Her choreography has been presented in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, England, the Netherlands, Thailand, Taiwan, and at the International Ballet Competition in Jackson, MS. Dr. Fusillo is Fulbright Scholar (Taiwan), the recipient of four National Endowment for the Arts grants, a Willson Center Research Fellow, an Active Learning Fellow, taught at Oxford University with the UGA at Oxford Program and won an M.G. Michael Research Award. Dr. Fusillo is also the founder/director of Dance Repertory Project. She was named UGA Foundation Professor in the Arts, Phi Kappa Phi Artist 2020–2022 and TWU Distinguished Alumni in 2022.

**Nena Gilreath** is a ballerina, an entrepreneur, and an artistic director; she has spent her career immersed in dance. After graduating with a B.F.A. from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, Gilreath danced with the Ruth Mitchell Dance Theatre, the Dance Theatre of Harlem, and the Atlanta Ballet. She toured internationally with the Dance Theatre of Harlem. Seeing the need for greater racial diversity in ballet, Gilreath and her husband, choreographer Waverly T. Lucas II, co-founded Ballethnic Dance Company and Academy of Dance in 1990 to provide superior instruction and performance opportunities to underrepresented communities. Gilreath and Lucas have become award-winning artists and entrepreneurs for their work with Ballethnic. They traveled to Senegal to study dance and drum, which they include in the Ballethnic training. Ballethnic has grown into a company and a school that produces unique dance experiences for its audiences and students by fusing classical ballet, African dance and other artistic influences. Nena Gilreath is the current Facility and Programs Supervisor at East Athens Educational Dance Center.

**Christopher L. Huggins** is a visionary and dance innovator. He is an Alvin Ailey disciple, and historian; developing multi-layered, storytelling through dance. Christopher attended Purchase University, the Julliard School and was a merit scholar at the Ailey School. He's a former soloist of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Aterballetto of Reggio Emilia, Italy. His work is rooted in research that

## CHOREOGRAPHER BIOS

memorializes our darkest history. This is found in his ballet *THE LIST*, a story about the systemic genocide of a Jewish family and those in concentration camps. His ballet *NEW FRUIT*, inspired by Nina Simone's music, documents terror lynching. Through his dance initiative, he provides access to emerging dancers and choreographers to study abroad with him. He works around the globe and has held residencies at over 25 universities and colleges. Christopher is a multi-award winner including: two Alvin Ailey Awards from Black Theater Alliance, a Walt Disney Diversity award, a Critics Choice award and silver medalist of the International Dance Competition in Seoul, Korea. He holds the distinction of being "repetiteur" of Mr. Ailey's ballets. As he continues his dance legacy, Christopher wants his work to heal, entertain and inspire mankind.

Atlanta based movement artist **Amelia Reiser**, a native of Norman Oklahoma, started training at a young age at The Classical Ballet Academy. Amelia went on to attend The University of Georgia where she completed a BFA in Dance Performance in 2011. Post graduation, she spent time living in Ireland working with local artists through an internship at Athlone Arts and Heritage, and collaborated on a dance film with visual artist Lesley Wingfield titled *Waters and the Wild* (2011). Arriving in Atlanta in 2012, Amelia was a founding member of Skwhirlhaus collective with Maryn Whitmore, curating an annual series of performances from emerging and established choreographers and performers. Over her 25+ years of performing and creating, Amelia has had the profound opportunity to work with numerous dance-makers and artists including T Lang Dance, Nick Cave, Maryn Whitmore, Erik Thurmond, Christina Noel Reaves, Lesley Wingfield, Emily Christianson, Sara Santamaria, Greg Catellier (Catellier Dance Projects!), and George Staib (staibdance). Her most recent work includes *thread b a r e* (installation, projection, + live improvisation), presented at *HomeTraining: an experiential gallery show* produced by Kelly Bartnik and Kathleen Wessel, *Sheltered in Place* (2020) in collaboration with sculptor Sara Santamaria presented by Creatives Project and *DriveThru ATL*, and *pinion* (2021) a solo work in process shown at *Excuse The Art* presented by Fly on a Wall. Since 2013, Amelia has had the immense pleasure of being a collaborative company member, teacher, and performer with staibdance in Atlanta, GA. In addition to creating and performing, Amelia teaches yoga at local studios and Emory Healthcare, and is a trauma informed yoga and mindfulness teacher working with incarcerated youth through local nonprofit Centering Youth.

**Elizabeth Stich** is an artist-scholar specializing in contemporary and aerial dance. Elizabeth holds an MFA from the University of Utah, a certificate in Laban Movement Analysis/Bartenieff Fundamentals from Integrated Movement Studies, and is a graduate of the New England Center for Circus Arts. A Georgia native, Elizabeth is thrilled to be back in the southeast as the newest faculty member of UGA Dance. A versatile performer, Elizabeth is equally at home on the concert dance stage and in less conventional settings—soaring over water in *Sea World's Cirque de la Mer*, dodging BMX riders in *All Wheel Sports Extreme*, and suspended from *Corona Arch* at sunrise. Her choreography has been featured in Tuacahn Amphitheatre's Broadway season, Santa Barbara Floor to Air Festival, Red Rock Dance Festival, American College Dance Association gala concert, as well as numerous college dance programs across the western region. Her research on aerial dance has been published in the *Journal of Dance Education and Theatre, Dance, and Performance Training* (forthcoming) and presented at the National Dance Education Organization, Dance Science and Somatic Educators, and *Motus Humanus* conferences. Prior to joining UGA Dance, she served for five years as an Assistant Professor at Utah Tech University where she created and directed the department's aerial dance program including a robust aerial dance technique and performance curriculum.

## CHOREOGRAPHER BIOS

**Dr. Skip Taylor** is the Department Head of Dance and Associate Professor of Music at the University of Georgia. He earned his Masters and Ph.D in Music Education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and holds a Bachelors degree in Music Education from Winthrop University in Rock Hill South Carolina. Prior to his appointment at UGA, he taught middle school and high school orchestra in the Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools and Forsyth County Schools in North Carolina. He was the conductor and director of the Winston-Salem Youth Symphony from 1997-2001 and was the founding Director and conductor of the Greensboro Symphony Junior Strings from 2000-2001. At the University of Georgia he teaches undergraduate and graduate music education classes and administrates the Summer Educational Advancement for Teachers (SEAT) Program for graduate students. He also serves as director of the UGA Summer Music Camps, UGA String Project, and the 21st Century Grant Program for Strings and Band Education in the Boys and Girls Clubs in Athens Clarke County.

## ARTISTIC STAFF

Director	Elizabeth Stich
Lighting Designers	Christian DeAngelis and Carina McGeehin
Poster Design and Marketing	Shaun Baer

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Technical Director & Stage Manager	Carina McGeehin
House Manager	Hannah Fordham
Tech Crew	Rhenay Robinson, Sky Poole, Kira Davis, Katie Slacanin, Olivia Hulett
Videographer & Livestream Feed	Ron Braxley

## DEPARTMENT OF DANCE FACULTY AND STAFF

### FACULTY

Jason Aryeh	Lecturer
Joan Buttram	Associate Professor
Lisa Fusillo	Professor
Rebecca Gose	Associate Professor
Barbara Powers	Lecturer
Elizabeth Stich	Assistant Professor
Skip Taylor	Associate Professor and Head

### PART-TIME FACULTY

Natalie Cox, Michael Fulford, Lindsay Giedl,  
Nena Gilreath, Melissa Roberts, Lisa Williamson

### STAFF

Shaun Baer	Director of Public Relations
Carina McGeehin	Technical Production Manager
Betty Prickett	Business Manager

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