

PRESS RELEASE

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Thodos Dance Chicago and DanceWorks Chicago Introduce
 Choreographers & Company Dancers for *NEW Dances 2019*

NEW Dances 2019 continues its over 30-year tradition of providing an extensive in-house choreography incubation program for Chicago’s dance community with Melissa Thodos, Founder and Artistic Director of Thodos Dance Chicago, and Julie Nakagawa, Co-Founder and Artistic Director of DanceWorks Chicago at the helm. *NEW Dances* was founded by the Chicago Repertory Dance Ensemble in the 1980s, in 2000 it found a new home with Thodos Dance Chicago and continues jointly with Thodos Dance Chicago (TDC) and DanceWorks Chicago (DWC).

Following a successful inaugural partnership with *NEW Dances 2018*, the organizations announced its continued partnership and call for artists in March 2019. The search to find six choreographers began immediately following the announcement. The organizations conducted a thorough selection process across the Chicagoland dance community; the process included asking Chicagoland choreographers to share their goals and career path as well as an in-depth artistic statement about the work they hope to develop for *NEW Dances 2019*. “The breadth, depth, and of quality of this year’s applications were inspiring to review and reflect the truly rich and vibrant choreographic community that resides here in Chicago,” Melissa Thodos (TDC) emphasized.

Few opportunities exist in the United States for emerging choreographers to receive robust artistic, financial, and production support to realize their creative vision for the stage with no expectation other than the investment in the journey. Each *NEW Dances* choreographer will be supported by a creative residency including 25 hours of studio time plus time on stage to bring their choreographic vision to life with a Company of local, professional dancers selected through an audition for the project. In addition, Melissa Thodos (TDC) and Julie Nakagawa (DWC) along with a panel of leaders from the Chicago dance community provide mentorship for the artists during and the process and post-production as well.

We are thrilled to announce the *NEW Dances 2019* roster of selected community artists: **Francesca Baron, Jana Bennett, Lauren Blane, LOUD BODIES, Katie Carey, and Rigoberto Saura.**



Francesca Baron

Jana Bennett

Lauren Blane

Katie Carey

LOUD BODIES

Rigoberto Saura

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On Sunday, April 07, 2019, *NEW Dances 2019* Company Auditions were hosted at Ruth Page Center for the Arts. TDC and DWC welcomed over 60 Chicago-area dancers, who responded to the organizations' call for technically-proficient, stylistically-diverse, and artistically-inclined dancers to participate in a one-of-a-kind audition- no numbers, no costs, no cuts, just a community of dancers. Julie Nakagawa (DWC) recounted, "It was gratifying to hear choreographers and dancers comment about how mutually inspiring the audition process was. What a great first step to *NEW Dances 2019*!"

Dancers were warmly welcomed into the Larry Long Studio with staff and choreographer introductions, *NEW Dances* history, and an overview of the day. "The energy, excitement, and creative community spirit in the studio that day was palpable!" exclaimed Melissa Thodos (TDC). The body of the audition focused on dancers learning movement material led by each of the *NEW Dances 2019*'s choreographers.

It is an honor have these 16 professional dancers join the *NEW Dances 2019* company: Quincie Bean, Tara Charvat, Kristen Donovan, Abby Ellison, Sarah Fluegel, Jade Hooper, Sarah Jones, Cameron Lasater, Racquel Mar, Erin Quigley, Elijah Richardson, Tori Rumzis, Simone Stevens, Jack Taylor, Kallie Tierney, and Imani Williams.



Quincie Bean



Tara Charvat



Kristen Donovan



Abby Ellison



Sarah Fluegel



Jade Hooper



Sarah Jones



Cameron Lasater



Racquel Mar



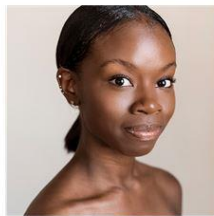
Erin Quigley



Elijah Richardson



Tori Rumzis



Simone Stevens



Jack Taylor



Kallie Tierney



Imani Williams

Melissa Thodos (TDC) and Julie Nakagawa (DWC) welcome Chicago's dance artists who make up our *NEW Dances 2019* choreographers and company, and are excited for our next phase! Supporting this journey is Ashley Rockwood from Dancers Awareness Project (DAP), a dance based production company, who also documented *NEW Dances 2018*. Rockwood created this company in 2016 as a means to share content and experiences with and about the dance community. "DAP is excited to be a creative media and strategic partner in *New Dances 2019*. Journey with



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us through a lens of this unique project including the audition, the rehearsals in the studio, the performance and much more," Ashley Rockwood (DAP) shared about the collaboration.

As always, *NEW Dances 2019* is a must-see Chicago summer event presenting six world premiere dance works that feature a diverse line-up of fresh, homegrown talent of choreographers and dancers in a fully-produced performance. ***NEW Dances 2019* will take place at the Athenaeum Theatre, Black Box Studio 2 with performances the week of June 17** (performance, ticket, and special event information to be released at a later date).

About Thodos Dance Chicago

Melissa Thodos, a choreographer, educator, and performer for over 30 years, founded Thodos Dance Chicago in 1992. For 25 years, the company offered dancers a place to perform, a place to create new work and a place to educate the next generation of dancers. Thodos Dance Chicago successfully performed and taught for over one million dance fans in Chicago, across the country in 27 states, and around the world on five continents.

In its 27th year, Thodos Dance Chicago has evolved to undertake projects that provide the greatest impact in the Chicago community beyond as a project based dance organization. Our mission is to engage and enrich the community through dance creation, advocacy, education, and mentorship. TDC is also working with Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Chris Olsen on creating documentaries and film about the development of and the performance of some of the Company's high profile signature story ballets and dance theater works. In addition, Thodos Dance Chicago continues to host seasonal workshops for the advanced, pre-professional and professional dance artist. For more information, visit <https://thodosdancechicago.org>.

About DanceWorks Chicago

Founded in May 2007, DanceWorks Chicago is committed to building a foundation for early career artists by providing a laboratory from which dancers and choreographers propel themselves and the art form to a new level of artistry through training, collaboration, mentorship, and performance. DWC's effort to nurture and convene the next generation of artists, audience, and dance citizens, inspires, empowers, and contributes to a sustainable future for dance. For more information, visit <https://www.danceworkschicago.org>.

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NEW Dances 2019 Creative Media and Strategic Partner Bio

Ashley Rockwood (Chicago, IL) Ashley discovered a love for dance at the age of 2 in her hometown of Toledo, OH. She then went on to study dance at Point Park University in Pittsburgh, PA. She is a member of Actor's Equity Association, AGMA, and AFTRA. Her theatrical productions include the Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera's productions of "42nd Street", "Music Man", "Hello Dolly", and "Me and My Girl". Her Chicago credits include principal dancer in the Lyric Opera of Chicago's productions of "Tannhauser" and "Showboat", featured dancer in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's "Welcome Yule" and guest artist with C5. Ashley danced with Giordano Dance Chicago for 7 years of which she toured, performed, and taught all over the world. Ashley had the honor of dancing with Beyoncé on Oprah's Farewell Episode and the Billboard Music Awards. One of her proudest moments was being on the cover of Dance Magazine. Currently she serves on the Ambassador committee of Dance For Life, on the associate board for Urban Gateways, and is a member of the Chicago Ideas Co-Op. She is the founder and artistic director of Dancers Awareness Project, which is on a mission to create opportunities for dancers to connect and make meaningful content for our community; the world. Ashley's most recent endeavor is a physical space, Free Mvmt Shop - a



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movement and creative studio.

NEW Dances 2019 Choreographer Bios

Francesca Baron (Morton Grove, IL) has been a Chicago-based artist since graduating from Lindenwood University with dual-degrees in Dance and Psychology, 2016. Her work has been presented at A New Light Festival, College of DuPage Annual Choreographer's Competition & Showcase, American College Dance Association, and Lindenwood University. Additionally, she has worked with company dancers of Inaside Chicago Dance to restage an original work and was invited to create on the members of Esoteric Dance.

Francesca has performed with Inaside Chicago Dance, Leverage Dance Theater, Visceral Dance Chicago, and the work Firstbite choreographed and produced by Brian McGinnis, among other various free-lance projects. Currently, she is a member of Project606 Dance and a guest artist with Trifecta Dance Collective. She looks forward to growing in the dance community as a choreographer, performer, and educator. Connecting with others through the joy of dance is what keeps her going.

Jana Bennett (Chicago, IL) is a vibrant redhead and a prominent Chicagoland director, choreographer, professional dancer, and instructor. In August of 2018, Jana founded the groundbreaking new dance studio and professional company SkunkWorks Dance. Prior to SkunkWorks, Jana danced for five years as an original member of Cocodaco Dance Project's Professional Company where she performed in works by many incredible choreographers including Francisco Avina, Ronn Stewart, Sam Watson, and David Maurice. Jana has also participated in various local festivals, most notably Dance Chicago and the Harvest Contemporary Dance Festival. In the summer of 2017, she toured with Cocodaco throughout New Mexico. Choreographically, Jana's work has been seen throughout the Chicago area. Most prominently, her piece "Alligators" served as the inspiration for Stage 773's show "Recital" featuring *The Second City's* John Sabine and Claudia Wallace. Jana is currently in the process of creating two new works for SkunkWorks. This past February, Jana released an inspiring and uplifting dance film, "Minimum Wage", which included music by upcoming music artist Taylor Bennett and production work by video mogul Daniel Williams of Purus Motus. Jana is the former Interim Artistic Director of Foster Dance Studios and a John V. Roach Honors Laureate of Texas Christian University, where she graduated with her B.F.A. in Dance.

Lauren Blane (Glendale Heights, IL) began training at the Faubourg Ballet Academy under Watmora Casey. She graduated with honors from Grand Valley State University with a B.A. Degree in Dance. Upon graduation, Lauren was chosen to receive *The Outstanding Undergraduate Award in Dance*, and her choreography was featured in the American College Dance Festival Gala. Lauren studied as a scholarship student at the Lou Conte Dance Studio under Claire Bataille and performed with Giordano Dance Chicago's Second Company for two seasons. She also had the privilege of performing with Beyoncé on *Oprah's Farewell Episode* at the United Center. She has been featured in the Marriott Theater's productions of *SHOUT! Now and Forever*, *The Nutcracker*, *Mary Poppins*, and *Evita* and most recently Drury Lane's production of *Chicago*. Lauren was honored to be chosen as the first alumni in residence at Grand Valley State University. She is also the resident choreographer for the Lake Zurich High School Musicals and has choreographed for many schools, studios, and performing groups in the Chicagoland area. She has also taught at Chicago Dance Connection, Dance Masters of Wisconsin, and Chicago National Association of Dance Masters (CNADM). Lauren is the founder and Artistic Director of the Main Street Ballet Company in Lake Zurich, IL, where her dancers have performed locally and internationally at the pre-professional level. Lauren would like to thank her husband Drew, mom Maryann, dad Mike, and her entire family for their constant love and support.

LOUD BODIES (Chicago, IL) is a dance collective co-founded by Yariana Baralt Torres and Maria Blanco. Yariana and Maria both obtained their B.A.'s in dance and sociology from Loyola University Chicago. The dance program's focus



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on practice-led research and emphasis on social justice gave them the tools and inspiration to use art for activism. Their sociological background allows them to analyze social information that they later translate into movement. LOUD BODIES looks to create meaningful work inspired by social issues that will evoke emotion and provoke change. LOUD BODIES uses dance and choreography to fight for social justice, to bring awareness to oppressed topics or communities, and to call for unity, understanding, and most importantly, action. Some of the topics they have explored already are: racial inequality, womanhood, intersectionality, sexuality and mental health. LOUD BODIES has presented work at the Greenhouse Theater - 100 Acts of Resistance, Collaboraction's Peacebook Festival, Archie's Cafe, Links Hall, and Jello. Recently, LOUD BODIES was selected as Synapse Arts - New Works Artists 2019.

Katie Carey, (Schaumburg, IL) co-director of Purus Motus, found her love for dance at the age of 8 at Marjorie Jones Schools Inc. She studied at Ballet Met and Interlochen Center for the Arts. Katie attended The Ohio State University, later moving to Chicago to train at Giordano Dance Chicago. Katie has performed with Nomi Dance Company, in DanceChance, Dance Chicago, Arts Midwest, New Voices, j e l l o and competed at World of Dance. Katie has choreographed for Nomi and Dansteps Costa Rica.

Rigoberto Saura (Chicago, IL) graduated from Havana's Escuela Nacional de Cuba and the Instituto Superieur de Arte with a degree in dance. Mr. Fernandez Saura was composition master in the Metropolitan School of Ecuador and choreographed performances for Ecuador's Urban Ballet. He recently moved to Chicago where he currently dances with Hedwig Dances and Concert Dance Inc. Additionally, Rigoberto teaches at the Ruth Page School of Dance, where he continues to develop as a dancer and choreographer. Rigoberto presented a solo piece at the Youth American Grand Prix and recently participated at J e l l o Performance Series (2018) with his work "Donde Estàs, Yolanda" and Hedwig Dances' NEW COMPANY WORKS: "The Flowering Mechanisms", with music from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He is also a guest teacher and choreographer at the Latin School of Chicago.

NEW Dances 2019 Company Bios

Quincie Bean (Chicago, IL) Quincie Bean spent her youth training in Utah at Provo Civic Ballet--now known as Ballet West Academy. At Provo Civic, she danced original pieces by Garrett Smith, Victor Plotnikov, and Brian Reeder. She spent summers training at Gelsey Kirkland, Complexions, NW Dance Project, and Modas. Quincie studied at the Modas Dance Program in residence at Santa Fe University of Art and Design. Her training was overseen by Layla Amis and Duncan Cooper. Following her year at Modas, she moved to Chicago in and accepted positions with both Cerqua Rivera and Cocodaco. Since moving to Chicago, Quincie has danced at the Dance for Life Festival in Chicago, Chicago Ideas, Harvest Dance Festival, and was honored to perform with Cocodaco at Prisma-Festival Internacional de Danza Contemporanea in Panama.

Tara Charvat (Chicago, IL) graduated Summa Cum Laude with her BFA in dance from Western Michigan University in 2018 where she trained in ballet, pointe, modern, and jazz styles. While at WMU, she had the privilege of performing works by renowned choreographers such as Paul Taylor, Marius Petipa, Antony Tudor, Lew Christensen, Frank Chavez, and Brian Enos. She has recently participated in summer programs with BODYTRAFFIC LA, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, The Big Muddy Dance Company, and DanceWorks Chicago. Charvat is currently a scholarship student at Lou Conte Dance Studio, and aspires to perform professionally within the contemporary and modern dance genres while expanding her work experience in Chicago.

Kristen Donovan (Chicago, IL) originally from Pinckney, Michigan, began her dance training with Performing Arts Dance Theater. She attended the University of Michigan, where she received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in dance and



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studied with faculty members such as Peter Sparling, Rodger Belman, Julie Tice, and Amy Chavasse. Kristen currently dances with Now Dance Project, Cocodaco Dance Project, and serves as the company's Rehearsal Director. She has been performing with a 90's hip hop cover band, Too White Crew, for the past 4 years. Kristen is inspired by sensuality, grit, and generosity.

Abby Ellison (Lake in the Hills, IL) is originally from Crystal Lake, IL where she began her dance training at the Summers Academy of Dance and performed with the pre-professional company, The Berkshire Ballet Theatre. Abby graduated from Webster University in May 2014 with a BFA in Dance, with an emphasis in ballet and received Departmental Honors. Her Webster performances included choreography by Alvin Ailey company members Antonio Douthit and Kirven Boyd, Kirk Peterson (restaging Antony Tudor's *Dark Elegies*), Amanda McKerrow and John Gardner (restaging Antony Tudor's *Continuo*), former LINES dancer Maurya Kerr and former Executive Director of Dance St. Louis Michael Uthoff. Her Thodos Dance Chicago performances include choreography by Melissa Thodos, Garfield Lemonius, Ann Reinking, Kevin Iega-Jeff, Brian McGinnis, and Shannon Alvis. Abby has also had the opportunity to showcase her own choreography in The Dancing in the Streets Festival in St. Louis in 2013, the American College Dance Festival at Northeastern Illinois University in 2014, and more recently through the Thodos New Dances Choreography project from 2015-2017. Following her time with TDC, She has taken on bigger roles in her home studio teaching and choreographing within the pre-professional program and the competitive dance team.

Sarah Fluegel (Chicago, IL) is a graduate of Loyola University Chicago with a Dance B.A. and an Advertising/Public Relations B.A. She has performed and choreographed for Loyola Dance Theatre, Collaboracion Encounter, Going Dutch, Jello Refresh, and ACDA Conferences. She trained under Sarah Cullen Fuller, Sandra Kaufmann, and Amy Wilkinson, and further studies at Hedwig Dances, The Cambrians, and The San Francisco Conservatory of Dance. Sarah was on the creative team for dance film *All* (2016) in collaboration with The Parkinson's Project, and choreographed for dance film *Get out the Vote* (2018). She has worked for In/Motion Intl. Dance Film Festival, The Cambrians, and Loyola's Marketing and Communications Department. She is a Boshart & Lawrence Fellow for Artistic Excellence in Performance and a Provost Fellow for Undergraduate Research in Dance.

Jade Hooper (Chicago, IL) from Riverside, CA, began her training at Bre Dance Studio under Clifford Breland. As an attendee of the Alonzo King LINES Ballet Summer Program, she received the Homer Avila Scholarship Award, given to one dancer in the program. Jade attended California Institute of the Arts, graduating with a BFA in Dance and Minor in Maths and Sciences in 2015. After graduation, Jade moved to Chicago to join Hubbard Street 2. She has had the honor of working with choreographers including Shannon Alvis, Joshua Manculich, Robyn Mineko Williams, and more. Jade joined DanceWorks Chicago in October 2017. She was also a member of the 2018 New Dances Company and is excited to work with a new group of Chicago Dance Artists

Sarah Jones (Chicago, IL) from South Lyon, MI, began her training at the American Dance Academy. Sarah earned her B.F.A. from Western Michigan University where she performed in Gerald Arpino's *Viva Vivaldi*, Lew Christensen's *Con Amore*, Ohad Naharin's excerpts from *Kyr* and *Anaphase*, and Antony Tudor's *Continuo*, among others. Sarah also studied in New York at The Joffrey Ballet School and with Complexions Contemporary Ballet. She was privileged to dance with DanceWorks Chicago under Artistic Director, Julie Nakagawa where she toured internationally and has had the pleasure of working with Shannon Alvis, Christian Denice, Joshua Manculich, Manuel Vignoulle, and others. Sarah is currently a co-founder and dancer with the project-based company, Ensemble180.

Cameron Lasater (Chicago, IL) from Austin, TX, started his training at the Ballet Austin Academy's Boys Scholarship Class. Cameron attended The Ailey School (New York City) as part of the Scholarship Program and Certificate



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Program. In 2016, he graduated from the Alonzo King LINES Ballet Training Program (San Francisco), where he was a scholarship recipient. Cameron danced with dawsondancesf, under the direction of Gregory Dawson, for the 2016-2017 season Les Vérités. Now he is thrilled to be welcomed into another strong, creative, and unique dance community as a part of DanceWorks Chicago! Cameron joined DanceWorks Chicago in October 2017.

Racquel Mar (Chicago, IL) from Clarkston, MI, began her training at multiple studios in southeast Michigan including Spotlight Dance Works under the direction of Liz Schmidt. She trained in many dance styles and performed works by choreographers Sonya Tayeh, Travis Wall, and other notable artists. In 2017, Racquel graduated with a B.F.A. in Dance Performance from University of California, Irvine, where she had the privilege to work with distinguished choreographers including Charlotte Griffin, Molly Lynch, and Tong Wang. Racquel had a tremendous honor and opportunity to study with legendary Donald McKayle as a member of his UCI Etude Ensemble. In addition, she was selected by Lar Lubovitch to perform his Legend of Ten during her senior year. Racquel has expanded her artistry and dance training through attendance at summer programs with Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, and b12 Berlin Workshop. Racquel is a current company member of DanceWorks Chicago under the direction of Julie Nakagawa.

Erin Quigley (Chicago, IL) from St. Louis, Missouri, began her formal dance training at the Center of Creative Arts (COCA) where she had the privilege of performing works by Frank Chaves, José Limón, Darrell Grand Moultrie, and Antonio and Kirven Douthit-Boyd. Quigley continued her studies at Butler University where she earned her BA in Dance Pedagogy, graduating with Departmental Honors. At Butler, Erin trained in ballet, modern, jazz, and pointe with Derek Reid, Susan McGuire, and Cynthia Pratt. Erin has attended summer and winter programs with The Joffrey Ballet, Northwest Dance Project, DanceWorks Chicago, The Cambrians, and Visceral Dance Chicago. Most recently, Erin is thrilled to have been a part of Ensemble180's inaugural performance this year. After her first year in Chicago, Quigley is loving the dance community she has found here and is excited to see what is next.

Elijah Richardson (Chicago, IL) from San Jose, California, grew up with a versatile training as a figure skater, actor, and singer before immersing himself in dance. In 2018, he graduated cum laude from Chapman University with a BFA in Dance Performance and a minor in History. Elijah was featured in faculty pieces by Jenny Backhaus, Sean Greene, Dale Merrill, Julianne O'Brien, and Ido Tadmor and has worked with Jess Harper & Dancers, Capitol Dance Company, and Anaheim Ballet. Elijah has trained on scholarship at San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, BodyTraffic, and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. As a creator, Elijah choreographed many works at Chapman and was selected to show films at dance festivals in New York and Arizona. Other hats he wears in the dance community on occasion include: teacher, mentor, moderator, and competition adjudicator. Elijah moved to Chicago and has been a company member with DanceWorks Chicago since September 2018.

Tori Rumzis (Chicago, IL) began her training at the age of 14 at Dancenter North in Libertyville, Illinois. She pursued her studies in dance at Point Park University where, in three years, she earned her BFA, graduating magna cum laude. Additionally, Tori has received training at Movement Invention Project, ODC, and Axis Connect. She has had the privilege of performing professionally with Aerial Dance Chicago, Dance in the Parks, Hedwig Dances, and most recently with Ensemble180. Along with performing, Tori has enjoyed working as a dance teacher and certified yoga instructor in the Chicago area.

Simone Stevens (Chicago, IL) is an Atlanta native, received her BA in Dance from Kennesaw State University in July 2017. During her college career, Stevens studied contemporary and ballet techniques, traveled to Tel Aviv to study abroad with the Batsheva Dance Company, and choreographed adjudicated works for ACDA and the Department of Dance's performing company. Following graduation, Stevens performed with professional contemporary dance



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companies Fly On A Wall and Staibdance in Atlanta for a full year before relocating to Chicago this past September. Here, she is now a Company Member with the newly formed Ensemble180, as well as a Scholarship Student at the Lou Conte Dance Studio. This will be Stevens's first season performing with New Dances.

Jack Taylor (Chicago, IL) a Southern California native started dancing at the age of nine where acclaimed tap dancer, Alfred Desio, quickly discovered Jack's potential and made him his protégé. In his preteen years, Jack trained at the Debbie Allen Dance Academy, where he was exposed to a variety of different dance styles. Ms. Allen encourages her students to be "triple threats," which led Jack to train as an actor and singer, as well as a dancer. Jack is most notably known as Dandruff Danny on the television series Hannah Montana. Jack continued his training at the Orange County School of the Arts (OCSA), where he majored in Musical Theatre and Commercial Dance. It was his training and involvement at OCSA that led him to meet Jessie Riley, creative director of the company Westside Dance Project (WDP). Jack performed with WDP for 6 years, while also obtaining his BFA in Dance and BA in Dance Science from California State University, Long Beach. The summer of 2018, Jack decided to change his scenery and move to Chicago. He is excited to now dance for the contemporary company Ensemble180 directed by Katlin Michael Bourgeois

Kallie Tierney (Chicago, IL) from Sauk City, Wisconsin, Kallie received her training in classical ballet, jazz, contemporary, and modern in Madison Wisconsin. She also spent summers training at Joffrey Ballet, River North Dance Chicago, and Alonzo King LINES Ballet. Kallie graduated high school in 2016 and moved to Chicago to be a part of Lou Conte's Scholarship program at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, under the direction of Claire Bataille.

Imani Williams (Chicago, IL) from Atlanta, Georgia, started dancing as a junior in high school and developed his passion at Sugarloaf Performing Arts. After graduation, Imani accepted a full scholarship at Joffrey Ballet School's (New York) Jazz and Contemporary Program directed by Michael Blake, where he had the honor of dancing in works by Jennifer Archibald, Bradley Shelver, Matthew Powell, Nathan Trice, and Kevin Wynn. He has worked with former prima ballerina Margo Sappington, Tony Award-winner Chet Walker, and choreographer of Rent, Marlies Yearby, and performed pieces by Emily Bufferd, Lane Gifford, Tyler Gilstrap, and Sekou McMiller. Imani was featured in Joffrey Ballet School photos by Lois Greenfield and was selected to showcase his choreography at The Ailey Citigroup Theater. Imani spent two seasons with Florida Dance Theater and one season with Giordano II. Imani joined DanceWorks Chicago in September 2018.

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