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Wilner Auditorium Wichita State University School of Performing Arts Wichita, KS

WICHITA CONTEMPORARY DANCE THEATRE

SPRING CONCERT

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Bartlett Photo Art

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Greetings from WSU Dance!

What a journey! It's hard to believe that 2 years have passed since our dancers have performed on the Wilner stage, however our creativity never stopped. Rather than allowing us to be paralyzed by the pandemic, we took a lateral step to create work in the form of screen dance projects (She Moved the Prairie, Visitors and Brave New World, Re- Imagined) and alternative venues (WDCT Spring outdoor concert, Solving for X= Identity: Matrilineal Memories at WSU, MADT improvisation pop up performances and streamed capstone projects). While we learned new methods to share our movement stories, nothing compares to the energy of a concert stage. Tonight's performance has a little something for everyone, pieces to make you reminisce, laugh and perhaps take a moment to ponder the stars. Our dancers are ready and eager to take you on a journey where they aren't telling a story, they ARE the story.

-Sabrina Vasquez – Program Director, WSU Dance



Photo credit: Bartlett Photo Art



Sabrina Vasquez

Sabrina Vasquez is originally from Tucson, AZ where her training and performance experience was with Arizona Dance Theatre under the artistic direction of Jean Paul Comelin and University of Arizona with Douglas Nielsen, Jory Hancock, Melissa Lowe, Susan Quinn Williams. Her professional dance experience was in Chicago, Illinois with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, James Kelly Choreography Project, Chicago Tribune Charities Nutcracker choreographed by Ruth Page, under the direction of Larry Long and Ballet Theatre of Chicago. Since her arrival to Wichita in 1997, Ms. Vasquez has collaborated with WSU Opera\Musical Theatre on several productions including *Pippin*, which was an alternate for the 2005 ACTF Kennedy Center Festival. She is also the recipient of the Individual Artist Fellowship Award for Choreography from the Kansas Arts Commission and received a Mary Jane Teal Award for her work with the Crown Uptown Theatre on Chicago. Sabrina is currently Program Coordinator of Dance at Wichita State University teaching ballet and jazz technique classes, Associate Artistic Director of Wichita Contemporary Dance Theatre and Associate Artistic Director of Alithea Mime Theatre with her husband of 27 years, Nick Johnson.



Cheyla Clawson Chandler

Cheyla Clawson Chandler (MA Sociology/Wichita State University and MFA Modern Dance/ University of Oklahoma) is an Assistant Professor of Dance and the Director of the School of Performing Arts at Wichita State University. Chandler's modern dance research is focused on Horton Technique and she attended the Horton Dance Technique Certificate Program 2013-2020 at The Ailey School in NYC. Her two duets, *Anam Chara* (2014) and *nosuchSymbiosis* (2016) were invited to The American College Dance Association National Festival at The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Cheyla presented her latest research focused on community integration curriculum in dance performance degrees at *The American Dance Symposium 2020* at NYU (NYC), at the *International Future(s) of Dance Education(s)* in April of 2020 (Norway), and the *International Arts in Society* conference in June 2021 (Australia). Ms. Chandler gave a workshop on Dance and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the American College Dance Association online National Workshop series in March of 2021 as well as community-based intergenerational research at the National Dance Education Organization National Conference (virtual) in November of 2021.

In collaboration with colleague Dr. Bret Jones, Cheyla researched and directed the award-winning dance film, "She Moved the Prairie," focused on female Kansas farm labor practices in the early 20th century supported as a Tallgrass National Artist 2020. Since June of 2021 the film has been screened at festivals in Mexico, Japan, India, Hungary, Lebanon, and more.

At WSU, Cheyla is part of the School of Performing Arts Leadership Team of the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Alliance (IDEA), and is a member of the university Equity Taskforce and the university President's Diversity Council. Ms. Chandler serves on the university assessment committee and is a member of a team exploring ePortfolios for the university through a year-long program by the American Association of Colleges and Universities. Outside of WSU, Cheyla is a board member for Harvester Arts and is a Policy Board Member for the National Dance Education Organization.



Denise A. Celestin

Professor of Ballet at Wichita State University, received her early ballet training in New Orleans and the BFA/MFA in Ballet from Texas Christian University. She performed with the New Orleans Ballet, Fort Worth Ballet and BalletMet Columbus, and served on the faculties of BalletMet Academy, Otterbein College, and the Ohio State University. Ms. Celestin has participated as a coach in the USA International Ballet Competition, and she has choreographed a wide range of works for Ballet and Opera. Several of her works have been presented on tours throughout Europe with Voyageurs International Kansas Ambassadors of Music, and to Taiwan, Italy and Mexico with Wichita Contemporary Dance Theatre. Awards received include an Individual Artist Fellowship Award for Choreography from the Kansas Arts Commission, the WSU College of Fine Arts Excellence in Creative Activity Award and the Excellence in Teaching Award, and the WSU President's Award for Distinguished Service. She is also a Dorothy Johansen Hauck Faculty Fellow in Dance. She has presented research papers for the Society of Dance History Scholars (Dance Studies Association,) the World Congress on Dance Research, and at Leiden University in the Netherlands. Her special interest in music and dance has led to the presentation of interactive sessions on historical dances with her colleague Dr. Sylvia Coats, at numerous national and international conferences, including Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) Conferences in New York, Los Angeles, and Washington DC, as well as International Society for Music Education (ISME) Conferences in Thessaloniki, Greece and Porto Alegre, Brazil. Well versed in all styles of ballet, she has a particular love for Russian style and aesthetics, and has studied teaching methods at the International Vaganova Method Conference/Demonstration in St. Petersburg, Russia, in addition to studies with Russian teachers in the U.S.



Nicholas Johnson

Professor and former Program Director of Dance at Wichita State University, Nick earned his MFA degree in Dance/Drama at the University of Arizona, training with Douglas Nielsen, Jory Hancock, Melissa Lowe and John Wilson. He trained in New York City with Polish Mime Director Stefan Niedzialkowski and performed with his company MimeDance Theatre while simultaneously training with dancers Frank Hatchett, Richard Levi, and Ronnie De¬Marco. Johnson has dedicated his professional career to the fusion of mime and dance in artistic production and training. Johnson is a founding member of the School for Mime Theatre, a summer residency program based at Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio, where he taught for 25 years working closely with Marcel Marceau.

Johnson is the Artistic Director for the Alithea Mime Theatre, a professional company in residence at WSU and he is also an Artistic Director for the Wichita Contemporary Dance Theatre, the student touring company from the WSU Dance Program. Alithea and WCDT have toured to Mexico, Italy, Taiwan, Shanghai, Poland, Arizona, Arkansas, and the state of Kansas. Alithea was invited to perform at the United Nations in 2006. Johnson won an Interdisciplinary/Performance Art Fellowship from The Kansas Arts Commission in 1999, the Mickey and Pete Armstrong Faculty Award for Special Fine Arts Endeavors 2015 and the 2017 Art Educator of the Year Award from City of Wichita. Johnson creates original works each semester for the Dance Program, offers master classes in mime theatre and performs with his daughter Zoe with Arts Partners for schools in the Wichita community. www.alitheacreations.com



A.J. Hopes-Pflumm

A.J. Hopes-Pflumm graduated from Wichita State University with a BFA in Dance Performance and Choreography. He has performed in numerous works choreographed by Peter Chu, Helen Simoneau, Darrell Grand Moultrie, Janice Garrett, Cheyla Clawson, Rachel Boyajian, Denise Celestin, Sabrina Vasquez, Nick Johnson, Aaron McGloin, and Sam Householder and has toured these works both nationally and internationally. He has been a quest artist/instructor for many Kansas-based companies including Ballet Wichita, Wichita Contemporary Dance Theatre, Mid-America Dance Theatre, Alithea Creations, and Clawson Dances. A.J. has also taught classes at Gibney Dance and various other NYC studios. He also guides young dancers through the creation process. He currently teaches at City in Motion and has led auditions for Dance Masters of America. In 2015, he attended Springboard Danse Montreal. In addition to performing, A.J. has created works for WCDT, MADT, American Liberty Ballet, and Ballet Wichita. He works on self-produced material together with his husband, Wil Hopes-Pflumm, as CaptiveFlow Dance. A.J.'s latest work was 'Untitled Project', performed in front of the Olathe Courthouse. He currently works as the School Director of City in Motion.

DANCE WORKS

Electric Nights

Choreography	Nicholas Johnson & Sabrina Vasquez
Music	Mannheim Steamroller/ Utah Saints/ David Byrne (Edited)
Costume Design	Nicholas Johnson & Sabrina Vasquez
Set/Props Design	Dan Williams
Performers	Performers: Panels – Caleb Faer, Denver Fankhouser (Thursday 2/24, Saturday 2/26) Rafael Guereque (Friday 2/25), Alaycea Kremeier, Bailey Buchanan, Dalton Devoe, Wyman Wheeler; Hands/legs - Charisma Brown, Evelyn Chaisson, Piper Patterson, Cobie Reeves, Lille Nightingale, Libby Peterson, Liberty Joy
Understudy	Alexandria Nickel
ever there (premiere)	
Choreography	Denise A. Celestin
Music	Canción Triste by Luis Enrique Guerra

	Naveda
Costume Design	Jade Almsberger
Lighting Design	David Neville
Performers	Hannah Chandler, Siena Radice

DANCE WORKS

BRAVE NEW WORLD - Reimagined

Writer and Director	Nicholas Johnson
Choreography	Denise Celestin, Cheyla Clawson Chandler, Sabrina Vasquez, Nicholas Johnson
Original Music Compositions	Aleks Sternfeld-Dunn, Frank Bravo
Film Producer	Greg Matthias
Cinematographers	Curt Rierson, Caleb Johnston
Editor	Caleb Johnston
Set Design	Dan Williams
Props Design/Construction	Jason Flanders, Barry Badgett
Costumes	Renea Goforth
Architect of Brave New World	Ed Baker
Script Narration	Nicholas Johnson, David Norwood
Outlanders	Caleb Hayden, la Hawkins, Deiondre Teagle (Guest Artist)
Dancers	Heather Eilerts (Guest Artist), Devin Roberts (Guest Artist), Angela Brincefield, Charisma Brown, Bailey Buchanan, Evelyn Chaisson, Hannah Chandler, Trinity Crider, Claire Gray, Alaycea Kremeier, Olivia Lockwood, Madelyn Marshall, Teagan Myers, Alexandria Nickel, Lille Nightingale, Piper Patterson, Liberty Peterson, Siena Radice, Cobie Reeves, Alex Simpson, Kendal Sullivan, Liberty Joy
Special Guest Performers	Judy Babnich, Jeannine Russell, Adalyn Yarberry

DANCE WORKS

Given Perspective (premiere)

Choreography	AJ Hopes-Pflumm
Rehearsal Mistress	Sabrina Vasquez
Music	"Peach, Plum, Pear" by Joanna Newsom sung by Owen Pallet
Costume Design	Blake Grimsley
Lighting Design	David Neville
Performers	la Hawkins (Thursday 2/24 & Saturday 2/26) Caleb Faer (Friday 2/25)

Stargaze (premiere)

Choreography	Cheyla Clawson Chandler & Sabrina Vasquez
Rehearsal Assistant	Ia Hawkins
Music	Frank Bravo
Costume Design	Caleb Faer
Lighting Design	David Neville
Performers	Bailey Buchanan, Hannah Chandler, Madelyn Marshall, Alexandria Nickel, Piper Patterson, Siena Radice, Liberty Joy
Understudies	Claire Gray, Olivia Lockwood, Lille Nightingale, Liberty Peterson, Cobie Reeves

PRODUCTION TEAM

Crew Members

Artistic Director	Sabrina Vasquez
Production Coordinator	Melissa Penkava Koza
Technical Director	Ed Baker
Stage Manager	Blake Grimsley
Assistant Stage Managers	Molly Bazar, Denise Ussery
Costume Design Mentor	Sarah Bussard
Scene Shop Manager	Jason Flanders
Costume Shop Manager	Melissa Penkava Koza
Lead Costume Shop Assistant	Katy Reko
Costume Shop Assistants	Jade Almsberger, Emery Downs, Caleb Faer, Adia Tolbert
Costume Practicum	Ben Bolinger, Dylan Bray, Tamara Gagne, Jessica Hudson, E. James, Katelyn King, Katelyn Koch, Emma Lewis, Haven Massey, Imani Perkins, Alexys Porter, Zac Richardson
Props Manager	August Smaglik
Wardrobe Supervisor	Aida Tolbert
Wardrobe Crew	Tamara Gagne, Alexys Porter
Lightboard Operator	Nick Roux
Head Electrician	Katelyn Koch
Producer and Director of the School of Performing Arts	Cheyla Clawson Chandler
Program Design Mentor	Stacy Salters
Program Design	





Jade Almsberger

Jade Almsberger (*Ever There* Costume Designer) is excited to be a part of Wichita State University's WCDT Concert. She is a sophomore pursuing a BFA in Design & Technical Theatre and this is her first experience as a collegiate costume designer. Her mission is to create art while connecting and collaborating with those around her.

Charisma Brown

Charisma Brown started training at age four and danced with many local studios. Before high school, she started at Newton Performing Arts Center. After graduating high school, she started dancing parttime at WSU. She is a part of Wichita Contemporary Dance Theater and Mid-American dance theater. Her most recent performance was in Brave New World.



Bailey Buchanan

Bailey Buchanan is a sophomore BFA Dance major at Wichita State University. Her early dance training began at The Pointe School of Dance in Hutchinson, KS where she trained in multiple styles. She has been teaching classes there for 7 years. Buchanan is the Outreach Coordinator for the student company Mid-America Dance Theatre and has been on the Shocker Dance Team for 2 years.



Evelyn Chaisson

Evelyn Chaisson is a sophomore Dance major and an Entrepreneurship minor. She has found a love of dancing at age 13 but had to stop. Evelyn picked up dancing her first year of college and has loved it since. She has training from Dallas Black Dance Academy and Powerhouse Dance Company (Dallas, Texas). She has trained in ballet and modern but enjoys jazz and hip hop.



Hannah Chandler

Hannah Chandler is currently working on her BFA in Dance and BA in Exercise Science with an ultimate goal of getting her Doctorate in Physical Therapy. Hannah has been a company member at Ballet Wichita for 11 years and a staff member for 2 years. She is the Secretary for MADT and the Vice President of Academic Excellence for Kappa Gamma.



Dalton Devoe

Dalton DeVoe is excited to participate in the WCDT Spring Concert! He is a sophomore Musical Theatre major, and although not involved with Dance as much, has had a blast working on this performance. You can also catch him in Empty Space Theatre's *Putnam County Spelling Bee*! He'd like to thank his friends and family for their continuous love and support.



Caleb Faer

Caleb Faer is a senior dance major, with a minor in music. They are a designer and costume shop assistant at WSU and the Assistant Director for the Flint Hills Fairies. Faer has also performed professionally at drag pageants, renaissance fairs, conventions, festivals, and at local Wichita venues. They produce and game-master House Roles on Youtube.



Denver Fankhouser

Denver Fankhouser is a sophomore pursing a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre with a minor in Dance. Previously he appeared in *Keepers of the Flame* (Wichita State University), *Disaster* (Roxy's Downtown), & *Singing in the Rain* (Broadway Academy of Performing).



Claire Gray

Claire Gray is a freshman studying Dance at Wichita State University and is planning to graduate in 2025 with a Bachelor in Fine Arts. She is currently a member of the Wichita Contemporary Dance Theatre. Before the start of her college career, Claire danced competitively for nine years and also helped choreograph dances for students of all ages.



Blake Grimsley

Blake Grimsley is a freshman BFA in Design and Technical Theatre with a focus in stage management and costume design (he did both for this show). He is the Co-Technical Director on the Empty Space Theatre executive board. He was also previously the Assistant Stage Manager on *Love's Labor's Lost*. He is so excited to be on this team of amazing dancers and designers.





Ia Hawkins

Ia Hawkins is a native of Southern California. Currently a senior, she will be graduating with her Bachelor of Arts in Dance this spring. She is a certified Pilates instructor, dance teacher, and freelance model as well. Ia would like to extend a special thanks and much love to all the wonderful faculty and fellow dancers of the WSU dance program!

Liberty Joy

Liberty Joy is a rising junior at Wichita State University (WSU). She is currently working on her BA in Dance with minors in Music Theatre and Sociology. She started her training in her hometown, Casper, Wyoming at Rising Star Tumbling and Dance Studio. Liberty Joy is the Vice President of Mid-America Dance Theatre and is also a Fine Arts Ambassador at WSU.



Alaycea Kremeier

Alaycea Kremeier is a freshman Nursing major with a Dance minor at Wichita State University. Kremeier's dance training began at the age of 3 at Newton Performing Arts Center in Newton, KS where she continues to teach. She is currently a 2nd year National Dance Alliance staff member and on the Shocker Dance team.





Olivia Lockwood

Olivia Lockwood is a freshman BFA candidate in Performing Arts-Dance at Wichita State University (WSU). She is also a member of the Wichita Contemporary Dance Theatre and on the dance team at WSU. Olivia grew up dancing in competitions, and now choreographs pieces for students of all ages at her former studio, Dance Kinetics.

Madelyn Marshall

Madelyn Marshall is a junior BFA candidate in Performing Arts -Dance at Wichita State University. Her dance career started at Young World Dance Studio from age 5 to 18. She is Social Media Chair of Mid-America Dance Theatre. She is also currently a part of the Wichita State Dance Team and coaching a high school dance team.



Rafael Guereque

Rafael Guereque is a freshman majoring in Forensic Science. He has always had a passion for dancing but never had an opportunity to pursue it. Once Rafael enrolled in Art of Dance with Nick Johnson, he found a pathway to dancing in college. Being widely involved and already having a connection to the College of Fine Arts through Shocker Sound and Shocker Sound Machine, joining the Wichita Contemporary Dance Company was an easy choice for him.





Alexandria Nickel

Alexandria Nickel is a sophomore at Wichita State University pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in dance. She began dancing in 2007 at Angel Feet Dance studio (Fortress Ballet) where she currently teaches various styles and levels of dance. Alexandria is the Treasurer for the Mid-American Dance Theatre and a Fine Arts ambassador.

Lille Nightingale

Lille Ana Nightingale is a freshman working toward a BFA in Dance and the Honors Baccalaureate with a concentration in Environmental Science at Wichita State University. Lille is a member of the Wichita Contemporary Dance Theater. She began her dance training in high school and was a competitive gymnast for over 14 years.



Piper Patterson

Piper Patterson is currently a sophomore Dance major at Wichita State University where she trains in modern, ballet, hip hop, and mime theatre. In her early years, she trained in multiple styles of dance at Little Steps Dance and Gymnastics under Sharon Deters. Patterson is a member of the student dance company, Mid-America Dance Theatre at WSU and a Randall M. Jones scholarship recipient.



Liberty Peterson

Liberty Peterson is a dance major and freshman in her second semester at Wichita State University. She is very thankful for the opportunity to perform in *Electric Nights* and understudy for *Stargaze*. She is very excited for the show and hopes everyone has a wonderful time!



Siena Radice

Siena will be graduating in the spring with her major in Sociology, minor in Dance, and certificate in Environmental Sustainability. She has treasured her time in the dance department and shares much gratitude for her professors. Siena has performed professionally throughout Kansas and Missouri and is excited for the many careers and adventures ahead of her.



Cobie Reeves

Cobie Reeves is an Oklahoma-born dancer of over sixteen years. She is attending Wichita State University (WSU) and pursuing a BFA in Dance and part in the associated companies, Wichita Contemporary Dance Theatre and Mid-America Dance Theatre. While she attends WSU, she has trained with Cheyla Clawson Chandler, Denise Celestin, Mina Estrada, and many others.



Wyman Wheeler

Wyman Wheeler is thrilled to be a part of the WCDT spring concert at Wichita State University. His previous credits include *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (MYP Second Stage), *Guys and Dolls* (Robidoux Resident Theater or RRT), and *Newsies* (RRT). Wyman is a sophomore pursuing a BFA in Musical Theater. His mission is to entertain and influence audiences for years to come.



Denise Ussery

Denise Ussery is thrilled to be a part of the WCDT Spring Dance concert. Previous credits include Stage Manager in *Grease* (Thornton High School), and Audio Technician for *Loves Labors Lost* (Wichita State University). Denise is in her second year of college pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Design and Technical Theatre.

Special Thanks

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In Memoriam



Amy Chisman

This last August, the School of Performing Arts beloved Production Manager, Amy Chisman, lost her valiant battle with cancer. Amy (or "Chis" as many of us called her) was an invaluable member of our SPA family. She was a WSU/SPA graduate, a talented and brilliant artist and an ardent supporter of the Arts. She was an amazing mentor, a wonderful colleague and a beautiful friend.

Amy was a Keeper of the flame. She was a Keeper of Creativity and Artistry, of Knowledge and Skill. She was a Keeper of Love & Kindness & Compassion. While you may be reading this through tears (as I am while writing it), keep this Keeper in your hearts. Let her always live on and inspire you to become a Keeper like her.

Amy, we love you. We miss you and we are immensely grateful for all that you were and all that you gave us. We will always, always keep your flame burning, Dear Friend. ~ Jeannine Russell

Karla Burns

We would also like to acknowledge the passing of Karla Burns who passed away this June.

While studying theatre and music at WSU in the 1970's, she graced the stage in many productions in both Wilner and Duerksen Fine Arts Center. She went on to an international career with performances at the Metropolitan Opera, Paris Opera, and Cairo Opera House to name just a few. She is remembered as a powerhouse performer whose voice and personality captivated all who saw her perform. Her signature roles were probably Queenie in *Showboat* and *Hi-Hat Hattie*, a one-woman show which she toured for years.

A scholarship in her name has been established at the WSU Foundation. You can contribute to the "Karla Burns Memorial Scholarship for Performing Artists" at https://foundation.wichita.edu.memorials-honors/



Scholarship Recipients

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The Performing Arts Angels exist to provide educational and training opportunities for talented dance, musical theatre, and theatre (performance and design/tech) students in the School of Performing Arts - opportunities not funded through the state or university.

The School of Performing Arts faculty, staff, and students recognize and deeply appreciate all your financial support. It allows us to fulfill our mission to educate and train students for a career in the arts and entertainment industry. To find out how you can become a Performing Arts Angel and support the School of Performing Arts students, please contact our office at 316-978-3945 or give online at www.wichita.edu/give.

We apologize in advance for any omission or errors in this list. Please bring corrections to the attention of Ann Marie Siegwarth at annmarie.siegwarth@wichita.edu or 316-978-3945. Listings may shift from one program to another depending on the timing and receipt of gifts.

Giving for January 2021 - February 2022

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