

November 19, 2018

**Lewis Center for the Arts presents Princeton Dance Festival**

***Annual festival features a diverse program of repertory and new works***

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Photos caption: Students performing a work by Alexandra Beller from the 2017 Princeton Dance Festival

Photo credit: Larry Levanti

What/Who: Princeton Dance Festival presented by the Lewis Center for the Arts’ Program in Dance featuring repertory works by Robert Battle, Mark Morris, and Crystal Pite, and premiere of new dances by Marguerite Hemmings, Malcolm Low, and Abby Zbikowski performed by Princeton students.

When: November 30 at 8 p.m., December 1 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and December 2 at 1 p.m.

Where: Berlind Theatre at McCarter Theatre Center, 91 University Place in Princeton

Tickets: $12 in advance of show dates, $10 for students, and $17 purchased the day of performances at the box office, available at <https://www.mccarter.org/season/2018-2019/pdps/princeton-dance-festival/>

(Princeton, NJ) The Lewis Center for the Arts’ Program in Dance at Princeton University presents the annual Princeton Dance Festival. Repertory works by Robert Battle, Mark Morris and Crystal Pite along with the premiere of new works by Marguerite Hemmings, Malcolm Low, and Abby Zbikowski will be performed by students in the Program. Performances will take place Friday, November 30, 2018, at 8 p.m., December 1 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and December 2 at 1 p.m. at the Berlind Theatre at McCarter Theatre Center.

Repetiteur **Elisa Clark** has staged **Robert Battle’s** *Rush Hour*, with a percussive score by John Mackey. *Rush Hour* is one of Battle’s earlier signature works and was inspired by his first impressions of the fast-paced energy of New York City as a young student. Battle has been Artistic Director of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater since 2011. He danced with The Parsons Dance Company from 1994 to 2001 and then founded his own Battleworks Dance Company, which made its debut in 2002 in Düsseldorf, Germany, as the U.S. representative to the World Dance Alliance’s Global Assembly. Battle was honored as one of the “Masters of African-American Choreography” by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in 2005, and he received the prestigious Statue Award from the Princess Grace Foundation-USA in 2007. Clark has worked closely alongside Battle for the past 17 years. She is a Juilliard graduate and Princess Grace Award winner, as well as a former company member with Battleworks, Lar Lubovitch Dance Company, Mark Morris Dance Group, and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

Dance faculty member **Tina Fehlandt** has staged **Mark Morris**’ *Pacific*. The score, by the iconoclastic American composer, Lou Harrison, will be performed live by **Vince di Mura**, Lewis Center Resident Music Director and Composer, with students Emiri Morita on violin and Douglas Wallack on cello.Of a recent a performance of *Pacific* by the Mark Morris Dance Group, the *Washington Post* said, “The choreography made them (the dancers) look glorious, illuminating all the most sophisticated qualities and polishing them a notch more…The strings of jumps that bore the dancers from corner to corner weren’t about distance or height or speed, but about pure, clean air.” Fehlandt, a full-time Lecturer in Dance at Princeton, was an integral member of the Mark Morris Dance Group for 20 years, from its inception in 1980 to January 2000, and she is a renowned stager of his work. Morris has created close to 150 works for the company and has been called “the most successful and influential choreographer alive, and indisputably the most musical” by *The New York Times.*

**Alexandra Damiani,** the former artistic director of Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, stages an excerpt from *Grace Engine* choreographed by **Crystal Pite** and commissioned by Cedar Lake in 2012. *Grace Engine* focuses on the human experience as a series of moments along a timeline, acknowledging that, although elastic, time is a powerful locomotive, and it is this pressure and inevitability that propels Pite's creation. A Canadian choreographer, Pite has created over 40 works for companies such as Nederlands Dans Theater I, Cullberg Ballet, Ballett Frankfurt, The National Ballet of Canada, Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal, Ballet British Columbia, and Louise Lecavalier/Fou Glorieux. She has collaborated with Electric Company Theatre and Robert Lepage. Pite is Associate Choreographer of Nederlands Dans Theater I, Associate Dance Artist of Canada’s National Arts Centre and Associate Artist at Sadler’s Wells, London. Her company Kidd Pivot tours nationally and internationally. Pite is the recipient of the 2008 Governor General of Canada’s Performing Arts Award, the 2011 Jacob’s Pillow Dance Award, the Canada Council’s 2012 Jacqueline Lemieux Prize and a Laurence Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Dance, among others.

The Dance Festival also premieres three new works.

**Marguerite Hemmings** is staging a new work with Princeton students as part of*we free*: a multimedia project looking at the millennial approach to liberation through its music, social dance and social media. This iteration examines reclaiming time, body, and space in increasingly anxious and fearful environments while using group technologies. The students and Hemmings practiced ways of relating with one another through examples of social dance structures of the African Diaspora and in U.S. popular culture. The collaborators also looked at and drew information from these popular movement and music practices asking what they said about social context and more importantly, what they said about how bodies move through, fight against, release and heal inside of social context. Hemmings’ work centers itself in improvisation and social dance practices as a real time embodiment of liberation, reparation, and social change. She has received grants from the Jerome Foundation, Brooklyn Arts Council, Harlem Stage, University Settlement, and Dancing While Black to further her work as a choreographer/youth organizer, as well as a 2017 Bessie Award for her part in Eva Yaa Asantewaa’s *Skeleton Architecture*. She is most recently a recipient of the 2017-18 Urban Bush Women Choreographic Center Fellowship, and through that, also the 2018-19 Projecting All Voices Fellowship at Arizona State University.

**Malcolm Low’s** new piece is created in collaboration with his cast and explores concepts such as performance/rehearsal, inside/outside, and freedom/constraint. Low has performed with Joseph Holmes Chicago Dance Co., Les Ballets Jazz de Montreal, Ballet British Columbia, Ronald K. Brown, Stephen Petronio, Complexions, Zvi Gotheiner and Dancers, Margo Sappington, Reggie Wilson, and Crystal Pite/Kidd Pivot, and he spent five years with Bill T. Jones. He currently works with Ralph Lemon, David Thomson, and Patricia Hoffbauer. Low has been showing his own work since 1999, in recent years at Brooklyn Arts Exchange, Summer Stage at Red Hook Park, Main Stage, and Dixon Place, and choreographed *One Forgotten Moment* on Alvin Ailey 2 in 2012. He was awarded a Fund for New Work/Harlem Stage Gatehouse Grant, a BAX Passing It Down Award, a Choreographic Fellowship in Robert Battle’s New Directions Choreography Lab at Alvin Ailey, was Artist in Residence at Queensborough Community College for 2014, and he was awarded a MAP Fund grant for his work *In The Thrust Towards The Future…I Want To Leave Something Of Use*. Low’s work, *Speakeasy*, was commissioned and presented by Gibney Dance in 2016.

*Metal Earth* is a new work created by Bessie Award-winning choreographer **Abby Zbikowski** in collaboration with her cast of Princeton students. This work re-imagines sections from Zbikowski’s critically acclaimed work, *abandoned playground* (2017), and foregrounds a rhythmic, hyper-physicality that pushes dancers to uncover new mental and physical stamina within themselves. This practice-based work is derived from Zbikowski’s own history in the practice of Afro-Diasporic dance forms of hip-hop, tap, and West African, as well as organized sports. *Metal Earth* is an experiment of the body being pushed beyond its perceived limits and attempts to create a new movement lexicon that works towards triangulating dancing/moving bodies across multiple cultural value systems simultaneously. Zbikowski, along with Ralph Lemon and Karen Sherman, are the inaugural Hearst Choreographers-in-Residence at Princeton, each creating new works commissioned through the program.

The Berlind Theatre is an accessible venue with access details available at [www.mccarter.org](http://www.mccarter.org) [embed link: https://www.mccarter.org/plan-your-visit/accessibility/]. Assistive listening devices are available upon request when attending a performance. Patrons in need of other access accommodations are invited to contact the Lewis Center at 609.258.5262 or [LewisCtr-Comm@princeton.edu](mailto:LewisCtr-Comm@princeton.edu) for assistance at least two weeks prior to the selected performance.

Reserved seating tickets for Princeton Dance Festivalare $12 in advance of show dates, $10 for students, and $17 purchased the day of performances at the box office. Tickets are available online through https://www.mccarter.org/season/2018-2019/pdps/princeton-dance-festival/, by calling the McCarter box office at 609-258-2787, at the Frist Campus Center Ticket Office or Roth Box Office at the Lewis Arts complex, and at the door on the night of performances.

To learn more about the Princeton Dance Festival, the Program in Dance, and the more than 100 performances, exhibitions, readings, screenings, concerts and lectures presented each year by the Lewis Center for the Arts visit: [arts.princeton.edu](https://arts.princeton.edu/).

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