

HILL DANCE ACADEMY THEATRE PRESENTS

12th Annual Spring Dance Concert



Featuring the choreographic works of

Chandler Bingham | Kaila Carter | Ryann Coleman | Kyaien Conner-NDong
Erika Durden | Akinlana Lowman | **HDAT** Senior Class Choreographic Work

April 17- 10:00 AM

April 18- 7:00 PM

April 19- 3:00 PM

August Wilson
African American Cultural Center
980 Liberty Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

www.5678HDAT.org | 412-925-3693

12th Annual Spring Dance Concert Show Order

Tiriba

African Dance

1ofus

Contemporary

Mulher Guerreira

Capoiera

We Land in Light

Contemporary

Intermission

Solar Hour

Ballet

Queens of Pop

Jazz

Workin' Day and Night

Hip-Hop

Please silence all cell phones during the performance. Photography and video recording is allowed as long as it does not interfere with the experience of those around you, PLEASE NO FLASH. Enjoy the show and feel free to move and groove in your seat. Thank you.



Dr. Kya Conner-N'Dong
Choreographer

Cheikh N'Dong
Fode Lavia Camera
Anthony Mitchell
Drummers

About Tiriba

The rhythm and dance Tiriba comes from West Guinea, in the Boke & Boffa Regions.

Over the course of its long history, the meaning of Tiriba has changes several times. Three phases can be identified. In the oldest phase, a great dancer called Tiriba had assembled a group of percussionists and performed his dances. They called him Tiriba when he wore a particular costume. There are no more Tiriba dancers today but the rhythm is still alive and well! In the second phase, Tiriba was played after the initiation of the girls, when mothers and daughters celebrated and danced together. Today, in its third phase, the rhythm has become very popular and is one of the favorites at all festivities where people dance. In this piece, we celebrate all 3 phases of the Tiriba and end with a community celebration highlighting the joy

and energy of this beautiful dance and rhythm.

About the Choreographer

Dr. Kyaien “Kya” Conner-N’Dong, LSW, MPH, PhD is a principal dancer with Balafon West African dance Ensemble where she studied under Mama Kadiatou Conte since 2012. She is the former Choreography Director for Kuumba Dancers and Drummers of Tampa, FL. Dr. Conner has performed all over the world and was featured in the 2020 release of major motion picture “Coming to America 2”. A few other major performances include: Dancer and Choreographer Odun Ogunano “Omalosa” (2020); Wakanda Forever, Carnival Cruise Lines (2019); Welcome to Africa, Performance at The World Bank, Washington, DC (2012) and Performance to the Ambassadors, Guinea Embassy, Washington, DC (2012). Dr. Conner is also a Full Professor and the Donald M. Henderson Endowed Chair, Director of the Center on Race and Social Problems (CRSP) and Associate Dean for Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) at the University of Pittsburgh School of social work. A clinical social worker by profession, her research addresses issues of health and mental health equity and cultural adaptation to mental health interventions to address disparities in Black communities. She is also an adjunct professor of Dance where she teaches introduction to West African Dance and a performance class focused on African dance styles.



Camille Howard | Darren Wodard
Journee Kinsel-McLain
Choreographers

1ofus Music Credits

“Thong Song”
by Sisqo
(Instrumental AI Cover by YBR-RIDER X)

“Call Us What We Carry”
Poem by Amanda Gorman

“A Song for You”
by Donnie Hathaway

“Yellow Eyes”
by Yebba (Abigail Smith)

“Spike’s Interlude”
by MrBigB

About 1ofus

This choreography explores the tension between identity, societal expectations, and the urge for change through the eyes of Gen Z. The piece opens with a raw reflection on the political and social injustices that shape our world and influence our experiences. As the performance unfolds, it unravels the struggle of growing up under

the influence of previous generations, balancing inherited ideals with a personal drive for rebellion and self-expression.

Through movement, we embody the challenges faced by marginalized groups and the refusal to conform in the face of oppression. The choreography is a visceral response to the silencing of youth, identity, and individuality, portraying both the frustration and resilience that come with demanding change.

The work culminates in a powerful statement of defiance and hope, capturing the ongoing fight for recognition and growth. There is no neat resolution, only a continuum of resistance and a prayer for a future where voices like ours are heard

About the Choreographers

Camille Howard was born in Beaver, PA, and began dancing at the age of 2. Trained in classical ballet, she studied at the Pittsburgh Ballet Theater and West Pointe Ballet. At West Pointe Ballet, Camille danced in *The Nutcracker*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Cinderella*, and *Le Corsaire*. Transferring to the Hill Dance Academy Theater (HDAT), she connected to the black dance community. At HDAT, she learned multiple styles of black dance such as Afro-Caribbean, Horton, and Capoeira. She has worked with various teaching artists including Jennie Beckles, James Gilmer, Robert Garland, Michia Carmack, Bianca Brandon, and Celita Hickman. In her spare time, she plays the piano and participates in academic competitions. She competes in multiple sports for her school including track, cross country, and wrestling. In the summer of 2021, she was accepted into the high school marching band, becoming the first African American, 8th grade member of the drumline playing the coveted snare.

Darren Woodard's journey through the dance world started at the late age of 10 years old. He has danced for about 8 years now at Hill Dance Academy Theatre. He is also a member of his high school's competitive dance team. Over the years, Darren has dabbled in a plethora of dance opportunities. Though Darren has trained in various genres of dance, he particularly loves the adrenaline rush constructed through dancing the genres Hip Hop and Jazz. Dance

truly brings Darren joy. He often wonders where it could potentially take him in life.

Journey Kinsel-McLain is a dedicated and versatile dancer based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She trains at Hill Dance Academy Theatre while also dancing at Pittsburgh Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA), studying ballet, modern, jazz, hip-hop, contemporary, African, and Horton. She has developed her artistry through rigorous training and performance experience, appearing in numerous showcases and productions, including the International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD) conference and the High School Dance Festival (HSDF). Journey has also participated in summer intensives and worked with professional artists such as Ronald K. Brown, Tommy-Waheed Evans, James Manning, and Abdel R. Salaam. She continues to grow as an artist, bringing passion and intention to every performance.



Akin Lowman
Choreographer

Mullher Guerreira Music Credits

Hugo Cruz
Thomas Chatman
Akin Lowman
Percussionists

“afro futurista”
by Francisco Müller

About Mullher Guerreira

Mullher Guerreira is the story of a girl who is prophesied to save her people. In this great village of warrior women, the queen gives birth to a daughter. The people celebrate the arrival of the princess. As the girl gets older, the women teach her how to be a warrior. All of a sudden, a rival group attacks and lays waste to their village.

Now, the girl, who has grown into a young lady, leads her warriors to find those who attacked them. When they do find them, they attack and ultimately defeat their enemies. And once again, their people are able to celebrate and live in peace.

About the Choreographer

Akin is a multidisciplinary artist with a BFA from SCAD, where he studied Art and Design. Since graduating, he has continued creating artwork, freelancing, and illustrating a published children's book. He has been a teaching artist in Pittsburgh since 2018, working with organizations such as the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, Project Art, and the Legacy Arts Project. Through the Capoeira Association of Pittsburgh, he also teaches visual arts year-round and offers Summer Intensives to support the development of young artists.

In addition to his visual arts work, Akin is a master drummer with lifelong experience in music and dance. He learned Conga, Shekere, Djembe, various percussion instruments, and multiple cultural vocal traditions by observing and studying with community drummers and singers. His performance history includes groups such as Dromatala, ACDT, ADARC, Ballet Abaraka, and the Royal Ethiopian Community. He later founded TutuOla Cultural Performance Collective, which performed throughout Florida, taught workshops, and recorded an album. From 2013-2015, he performed with Latin Soul as a percussionist.

Akin plays a wide range of musical styles, including Rumba, Afro-Cuban Orisha music, West African Djembe orchestra, Capoeira music, Brazilian Samba, Salsa, Merengue, Bachata, and fusion. After relocating to Pittsburgh in 2017, he founded the Capoeira Association of Pittsburgh in 2018 and continues to teach and perform throughout the community and in schools.



Chandler Maria Bingham Choreographer

We Land In Light Music Credits

Sound score includes works by Andre 3000, Solange, Computer Data, and Samuel Chartier, featuring:
“Ants To You, Gods To Who,” “Dreams,” “Baum,”
“Day Moving,” “S. McGregor (Interlude),” and “Sereba,”
alongside an Amapiano track

About We Land In Light

This work imagines a future shaped by softness, strength, and possibility. Rooted in breath and grounded presence, the piece moves through cycles of repetition and expansion, where movement becomes mantra. As phrases evolve, they reveal new layers of potential, opening pathways toward transformation and becoming. Drawing from cultural memory and collective energy, the work holds space for both intimacy and celebration. Honoring lineage while reaching toward what is still unfolding.

Special thanks to Layla Gunter for her support and insight in helping process and shape the movement material.

About the Choreographer

Chandler Bingham is a Pittsburgh-based dance artist, choreographer, educator, model, and multidisciplinary performer whose work spans concert dance, film, television, and commercial media. A native of Michigan, she is an alumna of the Conservatory of Performing Arts at Point Park University, where she earned a B.A. in Dance with a minor in History. Chandler has performed works by choreographers including Staycee Pearl, David Norsworthy and many others. She has collaborated with organizations including Bricolage Production Company and Rainbow Serpents Inc.. Since 2019, Chandler has been a Company Dance Artist with PearlArts Movement & Sound, performing repertory works and touring throughout the United States.

In addition to her concert dance career, Chandler works professionally in film and commercial media, appearing in Netflix productions and modeling for brands including Bath & Body Works and Vitamix. She also serves as a teaching artist and was a member of the faculty for the International Association of Blacks in Dance Conference & Festival in 2025 and 2026. Chandler is committed to arts education and community engagement, contributing to programming and creative initiatives that expand access to movement practices.



Kaila Carter
Choreographer

Solar Hour Music Credits

“Nocturne No. 1 in D Minor” played live by Jon Batiste

“Golden” by The String Queens

“Jesus Creates Sound (Main Mix)” by Marlon Daito

About Solar Hour

This work is a celebration of another generation of Black girls learning ballet and excelling in a space that has tried to discourage them from participating. It honors the dancers who came before them while simultaneously acknowledging the work they have put in as individuals to hone their technique and choosing to embark on the path to finding their own unique artistry.

About the Choreographer

Kaila Carter was born in Washington D.C. and began dancing at a young age. For high school, Kaila attended Duke Ellington School of the Arts where she majored in dance. Kaila is an alumna of Butler University, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Dance/Arts- Administration. While there, she was able to grow choreographically and given many opportunities to showcase her

work, including a piece of hers being featured on European stages. After graduation, Kaila joined Ballethnic Dance Company as a company member for two seasons. Kaila then moved to Pittsburgh in 2021 to perform as a Company Artist with Confluence Ballet Company for three seasons. She also received the YWCA Emerging Leader Award for the work she does in her community. In 2024, Kaila was named the first Artist in Residence for the Experience Art Residency at the Museum Lab in Pittsburgh. Kaila also received the Advancing Black Arts grant through The Pittsburgh Foundation to further the creation of her choreography. With their support, she put on her first self-produced performance in November of 2025 where she previewed a new work. Kaila worked as a guest artist with Brooklyn Ballet for their 24-25 season and is currently the Associate Artistic Director of *Hill Dance Academy Theatre*.



Erika Durden
Choreographer

Queens of Pop Music Credits

Michael Jackson Tribute Medley
“Dangerous” “Dirty Diana” “Rock My World”
“The Way You Make Me Feel” “PYT”

About Queens of Pop

This is an all out tribute to my inspiration, the King of Pop, Michael Jackson.

About the Choreographer

Erika Durden is a 23 year old Pittsburgh native and has been dancing since the age of 3. She started her dance career at Hill Dance Academy Theatre (HDAT). Erika graduated from Lincoln Park Performing Art Charter School in 2021, performing in The Nutcracker as Sugar Plum , Arabian and 'The Evil Queen' in Snow White. She has also attended many Summer intensives such as Joffrey Ballet, Dance Theater of Harlem, Dayton Contemporary, LINES Ballet, DADA on Pointe, Deeply Rooted, and Pointe Park.

Erika started her professional career as an apprentice with Lula Washington Dance Theatre. From there, she went on to audition for Royal Caribbean and went on to perform in the theatre of Ovation, Spectrum , Odyssey and both Inaugural casts of Icon and Legend of the seas.



Ryann Coleman
Choreographer

Workin’ Day and Night Music Credits

“Dance Five Times” - Paramour

“Working Day and Night” - Michael Jackson

About Solar Hour

“Workin’ Day and Night” choreographed by Ryann L. Coleman is a high energy, groove driven hip-hop piece rooted in the foundations of locking and inspired by the electrifying spirit of Soul Train. What begins as routine transforms into joyous movement as the sounds of funk and soul fill the space, inviting the dancers and the crowd into a world of rhythm, connection, and community.

Drawing from the legacy of Black artists who lit up Soul Train, this piece celebrates Black joy as both expression and resistance. In a time when opportunities were limited, these artists created spaces where they could be unapologetically themselves—vibrant, stylish, and free. “Workin’ Day and Night” honors that legacy by blending musicality, and groove with moments of individuality and communal energy.

Similarly to the artists who graced us with Soul Train, the dancers reclaim the factory floor as a site of joy, reminding us that even in

the most constrained environments, music and movement have the power to liberate.

About the Choreographer

Ryann LaNae Coleman, a proud Pittsburgh native from the Historic Hill District, has dedicated her life to the art of dance. Her extensive training spans renowned institutions such as Hill District Academy Theatre, Reign Dance Productions, Pittsburgh's CLO (Civic Light Opera), CAPA 6-12, Philadelphia's University of the Arts, and Point Park University where she earned her BFA with a Jazz concentration. Ryann continues to refine her artistry as a performer and choreographer while also sharing her passion as a dance teacher.

With a deep love for storytelling through movement, Ryann focuses on amplifying the voices and experiences of her community. She finds joy in sharing the transformative power of the arts with those around her. She's deeply honored to be returning to HDAT as an instructor and extends her heartfelt gratitude toward her mother, her Hill Community, and everyone who has supported her in this journey.

SPiRiT MiND & BoDY

6-Week Summer Dance Arts Program

JUNE 22 - AUGUST 1, 2026

WEEKDAYS 8AM - 5PM

A summer filled with exploration of the arts, culture, academics, and field trips. Students take classes that will work their Spirit, Mind, and Body in a safe environment and for a full day.

DANCE STARTS HERE

For ages 5 and 6

This six-week intensive includes the artistry of dance genres, drumming, visual arts, cooking, sewing, reading, and much more to invigorate their spirits, minds and bodies. Students will also participate in Friday field trips around the City.

SUMMER ARTS INTENSIVE

For ages 7 through 13

Students will be immersed in technique classes, choreography, and an extensive roster of renowned choreographers, artistic directors, educators, performers, dance leaders, and change agents in the world of professional dance.

SUMMER ARTS INTERNSHIP

For ages 14 through 17

HDAT's multi-focused paid internship program for students exploring careers in the arts, enables them to experience the real-world environments of dance, theater, tech productions, and arts management.

WWW.5678HDAT.ORG/SUMMER

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Tony Campbell
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Friday, April 24, 2026
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Free to the Public

Morgan-Lee Arts Centre Jazz Club
2900 Bedford Avenue
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www.morganleearts.com
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