PITCHBOOK
new American dance projects
Volume VI
FALL 2019
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Native Intelligence/Innate Intelligence is a two-part dance performance incorporating modern dance, hula, Hawaiian chant, and live music to examine home and belonging. Part One, Native Intelligence, asks how Christopher Morgan maintains his root cultural identity, having been separated from his ancestral land. Part Two, Innate Intelligence, examines the human instinct to connect to one another through movement, scenery and music, expanding the conversation about identity sparked in Part One to include more voices. The two parts create a comprehensive picture of the multiplicity of identities Morgan navigates, and invites audiences to reflect on their perception of Native people, their own identities and instincts. This work is intended to bring together people from different backgrounds, living in the same community, to reflect on their connections to one another and their sense of place. The work is a collaboration among Choreographer Morgan, Composer/Cellist Wytold, Visual Artist Brenda Mallory, cultural consultant Patrick Makuakane, and a cast of dancers Morgan has been working with for several years. The set, created by Mallory, is conceived as a textured floor evoking images of hardened lava and tethers referencing umbilical cords. Constructed in sections, the floor will be shifted by the performers during the piece to create cracks and fissures, alluding to the sense of separation addressed in the work.

Length: 70 min.
Premiere: May 2, 2020 | Dance Place (Washington, DC)
Seeking: Commissioning, Production, Post-production, and Tour Support
Other Partners: Maui Arts & Cultural Center, Maui HI; PA'I Foundation, Honolulu HI
Co. Contact: Christopher K. Morgan | Website: www.christopherkmorgan.com
Watch Video Pitch | Password: ckmpitch
Dallas Black Dance Theatre commissioned Darrell Grand Moultrie to choreograph the new work *Execution of a Sentiment* in 2019. Moultrie describes the work as “exploring the beauty of both classical ballet technique and modern dance, molded into one,” by moving people in unexpected ways.

Moultrie adds: “So I wanted it to be the idea of a sentiment, a thought, an attitude, a feeling, an emotion, and we spoke about executing it at the highest, most excellent level.” Moultrie loved working with the DBDT dancers because he was able to “strip the dancers away from all of their ways of moving and get back to just a simple passé, sustaining a passé.”

Moultrie is known for his ability to choreograph in all genres, including ballet, modern, theater, and commercial dance. Some of his credits include commissioned works for The Juilliard School, Colorado Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Ailey II, and Smuin Ballet, among others.

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**Length:** 23 min.

**Premiered:** May 17, 2019 | Wyly Theatre, AT&T Performing Arts Center (Dallas, TX)

**To be Presented With:** How to Kill a Ghost, by Juel D. Lane; Essence, by Christopher L. Huggins; Face What’s Facing You! by Claude Alexander III; and, Absolute Rule, by Elisa Monte.

**Seeking:** Post-Production & Tour Support

**Co. Contact & Booking:** Melissa Young | Website: www.dbdt.com

[Watch Video Pitch](#) | Password: Pitchbook@2700
“Eighty minutes of creative genius,” TheaterScene.net) is a visceral, brash and humorous dive into the brain of a woman struggling to maintain her sanity. A swirl of movement, wood construction, tap dance, live music, pinball, and dreamlike imagery from Cervantes’ Don Quixote create a textural maze of a world where two women face off in a visual and aural battle between the specter of delusion and the voice of reason.

In TILT, five performers emerge from a large wooden ‘pinball machine.’ As the fractured, dreamlike story unfolds, they build, dismantle and rebuild tenuous constructions (created by Bill Kennedy). The stage gradually becomes cluttered and chaotic — mirroring the protagonist’s descent into madness. Tap dancer Heather Cornell’s improvised percussive sounds “playing” the wood physically evince her internal dialogue and emotions, adding to Composer Lynn Wright’s evocative sonic landscape and Jon Harper’s moody lighting design.

TILT uses both composed/choreographed elements and improvisation to contrast the imagined and the real. The cast creates a detailed storyline, score and movement template in rehearsal but must adapt in real time onstage, as the wood behaves unpredictably. The audience sees their efforts to hew to the script and their decision-making process when they fall away from it; not a perfect product, but the beauty of imperfect striving — creating a world that is highly theatrical but with visible cracks of reality. In this way, we echo Don Quixote, who appropriates humble materials and transforms them with his imagination. His intentions often have profoundly unexpected results, yet he perseveres.
In the Wurkz is a touring dance project that tells the story of Chicago footwork dancing, from “the holy ghost” to the Bud Billiken Parade, from roller skating rinks to juke parties in Japan. In the Wurkz is written and choreographed by The Era Footwork Crew, esteemed battle dancers from the South Side of Chicago. The show is supported by the City of Chicago’s “year of theater” and is currently a finalist for a National Dance Project grant from the New England Foundation for the Arts. In the Wurkz will premiere in 2020.

Length: 65 min.
Premiere: Currently Under Discussion
Partners: Links Hall (IL); Bates Dance Festival (ME); The Yard (MA), MANA Contemporary (NJ); and, the City of Chicago/Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (IL)
Seeking: Production, Post-Production and Tour Support
Co. Contact: Jamal Oliver and Litebulb
Website: www.theerafootworkcrew.com

Watch Video Pitch
The Only Constant is an evening-length work choreographed by LACDC Artistic Director Genevieve Carson. Over the course of 55 minutes, the audience is taken on a journey with a diverse cast of four performers who navigate the often complicated relationships they each develop within themselves, with one another, and with the world they inhabit. The piece is at once wild, graceful, humorous, and heartbreaking.

Featuring the classic compositions of Bach, Mozart, Handel, and Chopin, the score is enhanced and distorted by Los Angeles Composer Robert Amjarv. With the omnipresent and quiet constant of time ticking away behind them, the performers’ decisions become more weighted as the piece pushes forward, bringing forth reflection — after it’s already too late.

The set design features a white marley floor, black wings and a black upstage wall. Five white lamps hang from the ceiling at slightly different heights, presenting a world that is seemingly organized ... but not quite right. The performers attempt to turn them on, only to realize that the lamps are filled with dirt. Throughout the piece, falling dirt is used as a metaphor for life’s hardships, the incessancy of time and the weight and ephemeral nature of memories. The clean, organized world we begin with is unrecognizable by the end. Lamps are hanging askew, the white marley is covered in piles of dirt, and the performers are exhausted, sweaty and filthy, highlighting a universal truth of our human existence: we cannot control our surroundings; the only constant is change.
Evie Ladin’s all-female percussive dance company MoToR/dance creates powerful interlocking percussive dance arrangements with layered vocal harmonies and large group choreography, in a moving choir. Inspired by the vibrant International Body Music scene to create in-depth works with a live score using only the human instrument, their new piece, Water In The Kettle/Baby-O takes a hard look at American culture: the promise of equality and the very real barriers against achieving it.

From African polyrhythms that lie at the foundation of American music – that with Anglo and Native cultures created the Appalachian laments that tell our stories – we sing: “What will you do with the baby-o?” America what will you do with this baby you promised freedom? You declare equality for all, but your history says otherwise.

MoToR/dance is a cross-generation of women raised by working mothers to be working mothers, also facing the very real question: “What will you do with the baby-o?” Can we really be equal in career and family and thrive in America? The true realization of hard-fought equality continues to be elusive. “Put a little water in the kettle,” we sing, stamp, clap, swoop – we have a lot to discuss. With Ain’t No Grave and The Storm, this third piece of repertoire completes our evening concert. MoToR/dance works grab you in the gut and shake you out your shoulders.

**Length:** 40 min.
**Premiere:** Currently under discussion
**Seeking:** Commissioning support
**Other Partners:** Trolley Dances (San Francisco, CA); 8x8x8 (Oakland, CA); Dance On Camera Film Festivals
**Co. Contact:** Evie Ladin | Website: [www.evieladin.com](http://www.evieladin.com)

[Watch Video Pitch] | [Tech Notes]
Notes on Territory is a performance lecture and installation made with Damon Locks and Giau Truong that considers prison architecture and the body. Through lecture, dance and a reading room, Territory is a space for probing the dual inquiries: What is the prison and where are its holes? Interweaving political histories, social geographies, embodied research, and tricksterism, Territory takes audiences through the Middle Ages up to our modern times. Alongside the performance is an installation – another access point for audiences to consider the role of designed space and how we experience freedom. This installation is the same dimensions (7 x 9 x 3 feet) as the attic Harriet Jacobs’ lived in for seven years on her journey from slavery to freedom. However, inside this crawl space is a rich resource library for visitors wishing to study the intersections of architecture, design, social control, slavery, prisons, and freedom movements. Before we can properly address our society’s addiction to incarceration, we have to be able to acknowledge the humanity of those we incarcerate. This prism reading room makes plain the possibility of life inside spaces of containment.

Notes on Territory has been developed with generous support from Chicago Dancemakers Forum, Pivot Arts, Ruth Page Center for the Arts, the University of Michigan Daring Dances Residency Program, Velocity Dance Center, Whitman College Spring Studio Series, the Headlands Center for the Arts, and the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts.

Length: 75 min.
Premiere: November 22, 2019 | Green Line Performing Arts Center (Chicago, IL)
Other Presenters: SITE/less Architecture, Movement and Research (IL); The Chocolate Factory (NY); The Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts (IL); Chicago Dancemakers Forum (IL)
Seeking: Tour Support
Co. Contact: Anna Martine Whitehead | Website: www.annamartine.com

Watch Video Pitch | Password: Pitchbook
Strange Fruit draws its title from the 1937 poem and song of the same name by Abel Meeropol and made famous by the great jazz singer Billie Holiday. The song makes a metaphor between the swinging body of a lynching victim with fruit hanging from a tree.

The impetus for this world premiere work is lynching and its usage as a tool of racial terrorism during the Jim Crow Era. Lynching emerged as a vicious and horrific tool of racial control in the South of the United States after Reconstruction (the period at the end of the Civil War when newly freed Blacks were enfranchised). It was a way to reestablish white supremacy and suppress black civil rights. While there are more than 4,075 documented racial terror lynchings of African Americans in southern states between 1877 and 1950, most white Americans and young African Americans have very little to no knowledge of this brutal campaign of racial violence. For this dance/theater work, the facts of lynching act as a springboard into an interior space, a state of mind. Strange Fruit tracks Artistic Director Donald Byrd's feelings as a response to these acts of terror and plays out as a series of dance/theater vignettes. The piece is abstract but informed by the reality of these brutal acts of violence and terrorism.

Length: 40 min.
Premiered: April 25, 2019 | Washington Hall (Seattle, WA)
Seeking: Tour support
Co. Contact: Donald Byrd | Booking: David Lieberman Artists’ Representatives
Website: www.spectrumdance.org

Watch Video Pitch | Password: spectrum800
Imminent Drift is inspired by the plight of those immigrants whose home countries are destroyed or closed. Clairobscur Dance’s Resident Choreographer Laurie Sefton was motivated to draw close connections between the Syrian refugees and her own Cuban/American heritage, feeling that descendants of current refugees may not be able to return to their homeland, much like she has not been able to return to Cuba. The roots of this work began as an exploration of that loss of cultural heritage. In the process of creating the choreography, the work expanded to include themes of journey and finding home. Imminent Drift is, in fact, a journey of leaving home, arrival, missing home and assimilation.

Set to a score by Bryan Curt Kostors and Victoria Vast for synthesizer, trumpet, piano, cello, and nine voices, this work can be played live, with the musicians and singers incorporated into the work on stage, or it can be performed to the recorded score.

**Imminent Drift**

*Length:* 30 min.

*Premiered:* March 9, 2019 | Nate Holden Peforming Arts Center (Los Angeles, CA)

*To be Presented with:* Supremacy Ride (23 min.) and Experience in Defiance (with guest hip-hop poet Jason Chu, 14 min.)

*Seeking:* Post-production and Tour Support

*Co. Contact:* Laurie Sefton | Website: www.clairobscurdance.org

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The world premiere of *Four Easy Movements (Double Quartet)* at the Bing Concert Hall, produced by Stanford Live in Palo Alto, CA, will feature eight dancers of Jonah Bokaer Choreography, an original design by architect Charles Renfro / Diller Scofidio + Renfro and live music composed by Philip Glass, interpreted by renowned violin duo Angela & Jennifer Chun. Charles Renfro / DS+R creates the performance’s immersive environment which integrates space, light and sound.

A thin armature cantilevered at center stage will divide upstage from downstage, emerging from the stage floor, transforming in stages: from benign intruder to amusing playmate, useful collaborator, infuriating obstacle and divider, until its final stage as a menacing weapon.

DS+R Partner Charles Renfro commented: “From protagonist to antagonist, the design plays a central role that demands attention and reaction from both dancers and musicians. It produces a solid, palpable line of light that divides stage, performers and, then, audience, unwittingly pitting each side against the other.”

A concurrent exploration of the stage through curtains, scrim and video further implicate the theater as a force in navigating the binaries of our time, while constructing new space for performance.

**Length:** 60 min.
**Premiere:** October 3, 2020 | Stanford Live - Bing Concert Hall (CA)
**Other Partners:** Stanford Live - Bing Concert Hall: Co-Producer; Diller Scofidio + Renfro: Co-Producer; Jonah Bokaer Arts Foundation: Co-Producer; UNC DisTIL Fellowship, CPA UNC Chapel Hill; and, NYC Venue (To Be Confirmed)
**Seeking:** Commissioning, Production and Tour Support
**Co. Contact:** Aaron Levi Garvey | Booking: Julie George & Damien Vallete-Paris
**Website:** [www.jonahbokaer.net](http://www.jonahbokaer.net)

[Watch Video Pitch](#)
FOCUS: USA

Announcing a special new project for Fall 2019

FOCUS: USA, a platform of American dance from 3-6 October 2019, in Yerevan, Armenia is hosted by the HIGH FEST International Performing Arts Festival with the cooperation of American Dance Abroad. HIGH FEST, established in 2003, celebrates its 17th anniversary in 2019. It is organized by the Armenian Actors Union NGO. The organizers aim to bring the best and most innovative companies to Yerevan, presenting the rich palette of worldwide art. At the same time, the Festival promotes Armenian culture on the international landscape, making it closer to the world of performing arts.

For three days, HIGH FEST will offer performances and workshops by American dance companies, a showcase of Armenian choreographers, and a symposium that will explore how both cultural policy and the making of art have changed since 1989.

HIGH FEST and American Dance Abroad are closely collaborating on this project, and together are inviting and hosting a small, select group of international dance programmers from Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. The American companies selected by HIGH FEST to perform include three extraordinary companies: Doug Varone and Dancers; Bridgman/Packer; and Heidi Latsky Dance. These companies exemplify a diversity of styles and artistic voices.

Support to American Dance Abroad for FOCUS: USA is being provided by the Embassy of the United States of America, Yerevan, the Trust for Mutual Understanding, and AGBU (Armenian General Benevolent Union).
About Pitchbook

American Dance Abroad is honored to bring you Pitchbook: Volume VI, a compilation of new projects from 10 dance companies across the U.S.

As dance professionals, we all know that seeing performances live is key to understanding a choreographer’s work. Unfortunately, the U.S. and its artists are isolated from colleagues around the world; American choreographers are challenged to have their work seen and rarely get to “pitch” new works to international colleagues.

American Dance Abroad created Pitchbook to introduce and inform international colleagues about the extraordinary work being created by U.S.-based choreographers today. Pitchbook’s goal is to jumpstart new relationships for U.S.-based choreographers within the international dance community and to encourage international programmers to understand, appreciate and present American dance.

New editions of Pitchbook are available biannually, in hard copy and digital formats. Visit www.americandanceabroad.org/pitchbook to view the digital versions of every volume of Pitchbook, which include links to short video pitches from each choreographer. We hope you will use Pitchbook as a unique resource to find projects of interest for your venues that you may not otherwise be aware of.

Pitchbook supports American Dance Abroad’s mission to expand international visibility for American dance, fostering parity by increasing opportunities for individual artists and companies. We help them enter and navigate the global marketplace where they can build their own, long-term, mutually beneficial relationships. To learn more about American Dance Abroad’s programs and services, visit www.americandanceabroad.org.

–Carolelinda Dickey and Andrea Snyder
Co-Directors, American Dance Abroad

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