

## A Note from the Dance Program

We are excited to share the achievements of our dance students, faculty, and the program as a whole for the 2016-2017 academic year. It has been another busy year full of rigor and artistry. Highlights of our year include 12 performance events, four guest artist residencies, and participation at two dance festivals. As this year comes to a close and we say goodbye to a great group of senior dancers, we wish them the best as they head out into the professional world.



### In This Issue:

- 2016-2017 Performances
- Dance Class Showcase
- Guest Artist:  
Matthew Farmer
- Dance Conferences
- Dance Research
- Shim Sham Shimmy
- NDEO Student Chapter

## Artist In Residence

Christa St. John is a professional ballet dancer, choreographer, and pedagogue. Throughout her 12 year ballet performance career, she has danced diverse repertoire and has particularly enjoyed performing roles with a dramatic flair. She continues to serve as a master teacher, guest artist, and choreographer across the United States. Christa set choreography on the WKU Dance Company for performance in various productions prior to joining us as an artist in residence for the spring 2017 semester. She taught four levels of ballet technique, pointe class, and choreographed to Vivaldi's *Spring* for our *Evening of Dance* concert. We are thrilled that she will continue her residency this fall.

# Performance

## *WinterDance featuring Adventures in Toyland*

WinterDance is the fall mainstage dance concert produced by the Department of Theatre & Dance and performed by the WKU Dance Company. The 2016 production, held in Van Meter Auditorium, was a story of fantasy and magic told through ballet, jazz, modern, and tap dance. It was a wonderful start to the holiday season for audiences of all ages. Featuring elves in Santa's workshop and dancing dolls, soldiers, and marionettes, this spectacular performance offered magic and joy, creating the perfect, family-friendly, holiday themed production. Reflecting the concert's theme, *Adventures in Toyland*, the Dance Program sponsored a Toys for Tots toy drive. The event encouraged audience members to bring a toy to donate, which in turn would benefit a child during the holiday season.



## *Student Choreography Showcases*

The Department of Theatre & Dance produces three opportunities for students to showcase their completed choreography or works in progress. Last Chance to Dance, an informal showcase, occurs at the end of each semester. Dance Project, a formal showcase, occurs in February. These concerts are a great opportunity for students to develop their own artistic voices through a faculty mentored creative process.

# Performance

## Evening of Dance 2017



WKU Dance Company's 2016-2017 season closed with *Evening of Dance*. The concert featured the work of guest artists Matthew Farmer and Andrea Dawn Shelley along with faculty members Amanda Clark, Meghan McKinley, Kylene Stephens, and Christa St. John. Student choreography by senior dance major Charles Buckner was also performed.



## Dance Class Showcase

A Dance Class Showcase occurred at the end of each semester and displayed the work of students from various technique courses. Held in Gordon Wilson Hall, ballet, jazz dance, modern, and tap dance students from all levels performed combinations learned within the various classes. In addition to technique-based phrase work, selected student projects were featured. In the fall, sophomore dance major Lilly Comstock shared her project from Modern II entitled, *Ain't I a Woman*, a work choreographed after dancer Bill T. Jones. The spring showcase included a project by Honors Ballet V and VI students, Kelby Auten, Miriam Gaines, Hannah McCarthy, and Hannah Scott, who created a dance composition inspired by the contemporary ballet *Carmen*. Dancers from the pointe class performed "Four Little Swans," an excerpt from *Swan Lake*. The Dance Class Showcase is a great opportunity for dancers in all technique classes to perform their hard work in an informal setting.



# Professional Opportunities

## Guest Artist: Matthew Farmer

Matthew Farmer is the chair of the Dance Department at Hope College, the co-artistic director of R.G. Dance Productions, and the co-artistic director of H2 Dance Co. Previously, he was associate director and company member of Lehrer Dance, and he has performed in Dance Chicago, Chicago Dance Festival, Dance in the Desert Festival, and many other festivals. In February, Farmer completed a guest artist residency here at WKU where he taught modern and jazz dance master classes. The culmination of his residency was a new work he choreographed for the WKU Dance Company titled, *Empty Chaos/Ghostly Silence*. The piece was performed in *Evening of Dance*.

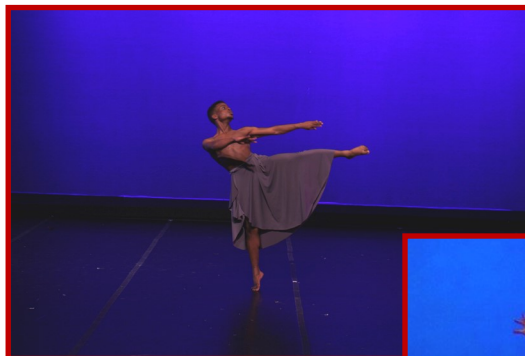


# Dance Conferences

## American College Dance Association

In March, 19 Dance Program students attended the 2017 American College Dance Association South Conference at Auburn University. Over the course of four days, dancers had the opportunity to take master classes in several dance genres as well as courses in choreography and somatic practices.

Senior dance major Charles Buckner choreographed and performed a solo *Stand* in an informal concert. The WKU Dance Company performed guest artist, Andrea Dawn Shelley's *Window of Appearances* (2016) in a formal adjudicated concert. Junior dance major Trevor Edwards also presented his work, *Compulsive*, for formal adjudication. All performances of the WKU Dance Company were well-received by those in attendance.



## Tennessee Association of Dance Festival



Students and faculty traveled to Middle Tennessee State University to participate in the Tennessee Dance Festival in September 2016. Assistant Professor Meghen McKinley as well as junior dance majors Hannah McCarthy and Trevor Edwards presented choreography in formal and informal concerts respectively. Dancers Kelby Auten, Abbey Lutts, and Sabrina Sieg performed Meghen McKinley's piece, *Peachy Keen*. Trevor and Hannah received special recognition for their duet, *Jerry and Judith*.

# Dance on the Hill

## Research Opportunities

Senior dance major Charles Buckner received a Faculty Undergraduate Student Engagement (FUSE) Grant to conduct research in concert black dance. His research included attendance at the International Association of Blacks in Dance Conference in Dallas, Texas where he observed live performances of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Dallas Black Dance Theater, Lula Washington Dance Theatre and Dance Theatre of Harlem

along with other prominent black dance companies. His perspective of dance and black culture was further shaped through conversations with leading black artistic directors, dance historians, and dance educators and through the various master classes in which he participated. Buckner then conceived and directed *Black Arts Matter*. This production, sponsored by the Department of Theatre & Dance and the African American Studies Program, was a celebration of art inspired by past and current African American experiences and featured his original choreography, *United We Stand*. Five additional dance students, Trevor Edwards, Hannah McCarthy, Hannah Scott, Miriam Gaines, and Lilly Comstock have also received a FUSE grant and will continue to work on their own research and creative projects in the upcoming year.



## Shim Sham Shimmy



Associate Professor Amanda Clark directed a tap video project to celebrate National Tap Dance Day on May 25th and to bring recognition to this great American art form.

Students from Tap II, the Department of Theatre & Dance, and the WKU community performed the historic Shim Sham Shimmy, the national anthem of tap dance, in various locations on the WKU main campus. The video was then published on social media on May 25, 2017. You can find the video on the WKU Dance Program Facebook page or by searching “WKU Shim Sham” on YouTube.

# WKU Student Chapter of NDEO

## National Dance Education Organization

The National Dance Education Organization WKU Student Chapter had another successful year of sharing dance education on the WKU campus and within the Bowling Green community. Over the course of the school year, the chapter hosted several events. Members taught a dance class for the members of Arc of Barron County and continued a partnership with the Best Buddies Organization to lead bi-annual dance experiences. The chapter hosted "Santa's Workshop," a children's dance camp that allowed students to explore dance and perform a short showcase for family and friends and participated in Potter College's SWAG camp by teaching an 80s inspired jazz dance class for at risk youth. Other events included sponsorship of a Resume and Reel workshop for Theatre & Dance students, and Dance Craze events, free themed dance classes for WKU students. The chapter supported member travel to the American College Dance Association South Conference, sponsored guest artists Matthew Farmer and Erin Law, and provided two NDEO scholarships to members.



**WKU  
SUMMER DANCE  
INTENSIVE  
2017**

Featured Guest Artist, Jon Lehrer  
Founder and Artistic Director of Lehrer Dance Company  
WKU Dance Faculty

**JUNE 18 - 24**

**WKU  
Dance  
INTENSIVE**

To stay up to date with the WKU Dance Program, find us on Facebook at "Western Kentucky University Dance Program," or follow us on Instagram, @wkudanceprogram