

Dance on the Hill

NOTE FROM THE COORDINATOR

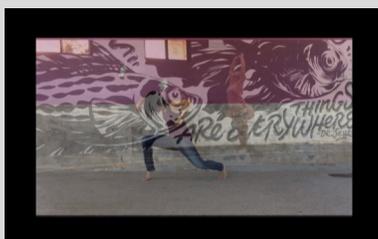
As the academic year ends, I'd like to share the highlights from another productive season within the WKU Dance Program. We have continued our mission of Creating Thinking Artists through a variety of performance experiences, creative research endeavors, and collaborative projects. As we say goodbye to a wonderful group of graduating dance majors and minors, we look forward to the new group of students that will soon join our family!

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Assistant Professor Anna Patsfall attended the World Dance Alliance Regional Conference in El Paso, TX with her graduate professor and mentor, Ilana Goldman. There, Patsfall performed a solo, *Atropos*, choreographed by Goldman, which was originally presented as a part of Patsfall's master's thesis at Florida State University.



Throughout the year, Assistant Professor Meghan McKinley has danced as a company member with Found Movement Group. She performed at the Bookings Festival: Jazz at Lincoln Center, NYC in January as well as in their full length concert "The Way I see It" at Track One, Nashville, TN in March.



Her dance film *Ardent Stillness* has been selected for Defy Film Festival in Nashville, TN and Artfields Festival in Lake City, SC.

WELCOME ROBERTO!



We were thrilled to welcome Cuban-born, Artist-in-Residence Roberto Sifontes to our faculty as a part-time instructor in dance. Roberto has taught several levels of ballet technique classes and set his original choreography, *Inside Out*, during a choreographic residency with the WKU Dance Company. This work embraced Roberto's Cuban roots, challenging our dancers both technically and artistically, and was performed in *Evening of Dance*.

WKU's International Year of...CUBA!

FACULTY RESEARCH

Assistant Professor Anna Patsfall was one of six professors chosen to take part in a three-week trip to Cuba sponsored by WKU's *International Year of...Cuba*. They visited Havana, Santa Clara, Cienfuegos, and Trinidad while learning from experts on Cuban culture and economics. As a part of her charge to share her research with the WKU community, Patsfall presented her experiences through *Pasajes*, her original choreography performed in *Evening of Dance*.



JEWEL OF CUBAN BALLET

In September, Aurora Bosch, one of the four jewels of the National Ballet of Cuba, presented lectures and masterclasses at the Kentucky Ballet Theater in Lexington. Students traveled with Asst. Prof. Anna Patsfall to participate in this once in a lifetime opportunity where they were able to watch a never-before screened documentary about Cuban ballet, including personal comments and feedback from the great ballerina herself.



SPRING GUEST ARTIST RESIDENCY

The WKU Dance Program was proud to have Juan Enrique Jimenez Sanchez as our guest artist this spring. Juan was born in Cuba, where he trained at the Academy of Art and Dance in Camaguey. He has since performed internationally with companies such as Bejart Ballet Lausanne, Teatro Nuovo di Torino, and Victor Ullate Ballet. While in residence, Juan choreographed an original work, *Symbiosis*, for the WKU Dance Company to perform in *Evening of Dance*. He also taught several master classes and co-taught a Cuban folkloric masterclass which was open to the WKU community.





Dancing Beyond the Hill

Students enjoyed opportunities to take multiple master classes from career professionals as well as travel to various cities to perform and attend professional performances. One master teacher, Kate Wesler, took time from her schedule while on tour with Broadway's *Chicago* to teach tap and jazz masterclasses in our studios. Students learned choreography from *The Producers* as well as *Chicago*'s iconic number "All That Jazz." We also welcomed our Spring 2018 Guest Artist, Robert McKee, back to the hill for another jazz dance master class.

STUDY AWAY in NYC

In January, the WKU Dance Program held its first ever Study Away trip for Dance Appreciation and Performing Arts Practicum courses. 17 students travelled with Professor Amanda Clark and Assistant Professor Anna Patsfall to New York where they experienced many aspects of dance in the city. Students attended nightly performances by professional dance companies, Broadway productions, master classes at Broadway Dance Center and Steps on Broadway as well as mock auditions with New York master teachers. While in town, students explored tap dance legend Brenda Buffalino's exhibit before its opening in the Library of Congress. They also met with WKU Alumni to chat about life after graduation and living and working in NYC. Upon returning to Bowling Green, students completed their course work by presenting projects based on their experiences.



ACDA in OXFORD, MS

In the spring, 16 students and 4 faculty members travelled to Oxford, Mississippi to attend the American College Dance Association South Region Conference. Students took technique classes in all genres and attended lectures on various intriguing topics in dance. Dance majors Kelly O'Daniel and Lexi Rice each presented their choreography *Dichtomy* and *Point of View*, respectively. Assistant Professor, Meghen McKinley also presented her work *Inside These Walls*, which was chosen to close the Gala performance. Our students were praised by the concert adjudicators and faculty from throughout the region. We are very proud of how they represented our University, our department, and our program.

Performance Review

WINTERDANCE: TOYLAND

The WKU Dance Company presented the department's annual fall concert, *WinterDance*. This year's theme of *Toyland* featured faculty choreographed works in ballet, tap, jazz, modern, and hip-hop genres. The NDEO WKU Student Chapter held a Toys-for-Tots drive at the event. This family-oriented concert is quickly becoming a holiday tradition!



EVENING OF DANCE

In April, the WKU Dance Company celebrated its 45th Anniversary of the *Evening of Dance* concert. This production featured faculty and student choreography as well as three Cuban-themed works from faculty and guest artists in celebration of WKU's International Year of Cuba.

"THE GREATEST SHOW"

WKU Dance Company members has the unique opportunity to participate in a professional video shoot and live performance in support of a fundraising gala for The Medical Center. Find the video on our YouTube page!



WKU SYMPHONY

We were grateful to participate again with the WKU Symphony last fall. Conductor and Professor Brian St. John invited the WKU Dance Company to perform an encore performance of "Thriller!"



Performance Review

STUDENT RESEARCH



On April 12th, dance majors Tori Beck, Lilly Comstock, Abbey Lutts, Jill Terry, and Elise Wilham presented choreography based on FUSE Grant and Mahurin Honors College Capstone Experience/Thesis research in *Contemporary Connections: A Dance Research Showcase*. Throughout their research, dancers were able to travel to Tel Aviv to study Israeli dance forms, New York City to attend the Big Apple Tap Festival, and New York City and San Francisco to study contemporary ballet. As FUSE Grant recipients, Beck, Lutts, and Wilham also presented their research during WKU's Reach Week. Lutts and Terry defended their theses both passing with honors.

DANCE CLASS SHOWCASE

At the conclusion of each semester, students from all dance technique classes perform classroom combinations for their peers and other members of the department and community. This is an opportunity for students of all levels and in all dance genres to gain dance performance experience. Selected students also present classroom creative projects.



THE DANCE PROJECT

Student choreographers created during original work during the fall semester. Following a faculty adjudication process, select pieces were invited to perform in the annual formal student choreography concert, *The Dance Project*, in February.



LAST CHANCE TO DANCE

Each semester, the choreography class presents their final projects in *Last Chance to Dance*. Other students can submit works in this informal showcase as well. The spring performance also featured visual media projects from the Choreography Production class.

Student Spotlights

NDEO WKU STUDENT CHAPTER

This year National Dance Education Organization WKU Student Chapter sponsored multiple master classes including a Hip-Hop class with Millennium Dance Complex of Nashville's Jerigray Edauve and an Afro-Modern class with WKU Dance Alumni Charles Buckner. They also held fundraisers, such as a closet exchange, trivia night, and restaurant collaborations. Continuing with tradition, members taught classes to the students of WKU's Best Buddies organization. New this year, students led improvisational dance exercises for middle and high school students at WKU's Idea Festival. The highlight of the year was another new event, *Kick the Clock Dance Festival*, where students created brand new, 2-5 minute dance pieces and performed them within 24 hours. The following students were inducted into the National Honors Society for Dance Arts: Victoria Beck, Cherokee Bennett, Alexandra Lamm, Katherine Mellon, Abigail Palmiter, and Kathryn Rice. The following seniors graduated with honors through NHSDA: Ar'Meishia Burrow, Lilly Comstock, Abbey Lutts, and Jillian Terry.



NHSDA and THE GATTON ACADEMY

NDEO WKU Student Chapter's National Honors Society for Dance Arts has partnered with WKU's Gatton Academy for three years on combining dance and scientific research. This year, NHSDA Administrator Tori Beck worked with students to create 2 pieces based on scientific ideas and principles. *Indole* was based off of the organism which plants use to communicate with one another in times of stress and *Samsara* created to represent the natural cycle of life depicted in the growth, death, and regrowth of a forest. Both works performed at the Gatton Academy banquet as well as in our *Last Chance to Dance* concert this spring.



CONGRATULATIONS!

Sophomore dance major Emily Caldwell was selected to serve on the Potter College of Arts & Letters Dean's Council of Students, a group of student ambassadors for Potter College, for the 2019-2020 school year. Seniors Mimi Burrow and Jill Terry will be leaving the council. We are excited for Emily to continue representing our program!



Congratulations to 2019 BA in Dance graduates Mimi Burrow, Lilly Comstock, Matthew Dant, Abbey Lutts, Jena Thompson, and Jill Terry. These thinking artists held secondary majors or minors in Spanish, Exercise Science, Musical Theatre, and Performing Arts Administration. We are proud to send them on to perform, teach, and further their studies in graduate school and look forward to seeing what they will accomplish next!