



2025 DANCE FESTIVAL

SEPT. 6-7



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UNIVERSITY OF DENVER



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- OUR STORY -

Presenting Denver was founded in 2013 with a commitment to define Denver as an innovative dance hub. As a 501(c)(3) organization based in Denver, Colorado, our mission is to support the art of dance through increased public exposure and the appreciation of movement as an innovative art form. Presenting Denver's projects enhance the lives of Colorado residents by increasing the accessibility of dance. We do this through live performances each year and robust content on our website. Presenting Denver could not exist without a variety of volunteer efforts and by your generous donations. Presenting Denver could not exist without people like you.

- MISSION -

The Mission of Presenting Denver is to create connections and opportunities for dance artists, and increase appreciation and recognition of dance by curating compelling dance experiences in the Denver metro area.

- VISION -

The Vision of Presenting Denver is to inspire individuals to connect and reconsider their world through the art of dance.

- ABOUT THE ROBERT AND JUDI NEWMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS -

The Robert and Judi Newman Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA) at the University of Denver (DU) was founded in 2002 and is now considered one of the nation's finest performing arts centers. NCPA is dedicated to showcasing cultural diversity, stretching the imagination, and stimulating dialogue through the performing arts. NCPA's most prominent series is Newman Center Presents- a multi-disciplinary multicultural performance series and has served as an artistic center and an economic engine elevating Denver's reputation as the Cultural Capital of the West.



THE ROBERT AND JUDI NEWMAN CENTER FOR PERFORMING ARTS

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ABOUT THE DANCE FESTIVAL

2025 DANCE FESTIVAL ARTISTS

Nyna Moore and Keenan Fletcher

Colorado West Performing Arts Company

Jose Rosales and Alfonso Meraza

Presenting Denver Dance Ensemble

INTERMISSION

Hannah Kahn Dance Company

Mary Jo Lasky and Rachael Harding

Cleo Parker Robinson

Lighting Director

Anastasia Coney

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Anastasia Coney

Assistant Stage Manager

Rachael Harding

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- NYNA MOORE & KEENAN FLETCHER -

TITLE - The Oohs and Ahhs of Losing

DANCERS - Nyna Moore, Keenan Fletcher

MUSIC - Ya No Padia Salir by Blk Odyssey, Opus 20 by Dustin O'Halloran

ABOUT THE WORK - A momentary look into the ups and downs of lives lived together. An entangled journey of love and loss, and the impact the world has on how we handle different situations. How did you become who you are today? Where and with whom do you feel safe? Can we truly break free from generational trauma and create a new way to live and love?

BIO -

Nyna Moore

Nyna Moore (She/Her, Denver, CO) received her formal education at the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Academy as a part of the youth ensemble under the direction of Bashir Page-Sanders. In 2022, she graduated Summa Cum Laude with her BFA in Dance from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, under the direction of Donna Faye Burchfield. She has worked with the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble and as a member of Contemporary Modern Company, Nu-World Contemporary Dance Theater (2016-2022). Nyna is a dance artist with Saint Louis Dance Theater and has worked with many notable artists, including Tommie-Waheed Evans, Sidra Bell, Jamar Roberts, Jessica Lang, and Kirven Douthit-Boyd. She is passionate about individuality and authenticity in her work and enjoys collaboration and the power of storytelling.

Keenan Fletcher

Keenan Fletcher (He/ Him, Kingston, Jamaica) was born and raised in Jamaica and began formal training at Vickers Dance Studio in Kingston, Jamaica, and trained there for 2 years before leaving to study at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) in partnership with Scottish Ballet. During his final year at RCS, he toured with Scottish Ballet's The Nutcracker, chor. Peter Darrell. He then landed a spot in Matthew Bourne's New Adventures Swan Lake '18-'20, which toured the UK extensively, U.S., and Asia (incl. Japan, China & South Korea) performing as a cygnet and covering the role of the Prince. He went on to perform the role of Cupid in Matthew Bourne's Nutcracker!. Keenan has now joined St. Louis Dance Theatre (formerly The Big Muddy Dance Company) under the artistic direction of Kirven Douthit-Boyd and has performed works by Jiří Kylián, Jessica Lang, Kirven Douthit-Boyd, Norbert De La Cruz III, Omar Román de Jesús, Jamar Roberts, and others.

PHOTO CREDIT - Carly VanderHeyden Photography



- COLORADO WEST BALLET -

TITLE - UNTETHERED

CHOREOGRAPHY - James Wallace

DANCERS - Serenity Blee, Val Garcia, Katherine Grace-Shamburek, Zephan Holt, Hikari Jacobson, Caleb Knight, Alyssa Pankey, Mindy Lasko, Juan Magacho, Shannon Mullaney, Jeremy Rohm

MUSIC - Faceshopping by SOPHIE, Infra 1 by Max Richter with Louisa Fuller, Natalia Bonner, Nick Barr, Ian Burdge, Chris Worsley, Whole New World/Pretend World by SOPHIE

BIO - Colorado West Ballet is the first and only professional ballet company on Colorado's Western Slope, headquartered in Grand Junction. Established in 2022 by Theresa Kahl and Nicole Wilkinson, the company was created to bring high-caliber ballet to rural communities that previously lacked access to professional performances. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, Colorado West Ballet blends international talent with local dancers to present a diverse repertoire that includes full-length classics like The Nutcracker, Coppélia, and Alice's Wonderland, as well as contemporary showcases such as Classics, Romantics, and Modern Day Works.

Beyond the stage, Colorado West Ballet is committed to community engagement and education. The company offers outreach programs for students across the Western Slope, a pre-professional training track, and seasonal intensives designed to nurture aspiring dancers. With performances spanning venues from Grand Junction's Avalon Theatre to the Montrose Pavilion and Telluride's Palm Theatre, the company has become a cultural cornerstone in the region. Its mission is to make ballet accessible, inspiring, and sustainable for audiences and artists alike in Colorado's rural communities.



- JOSE ROSALES AND ALFONSO MERAZA OF ARTISTICO -

TITLE - Forbidden Love/Amor Prohibido

CHOREOGRAPHY - Alfonso Meraza and José Rosales

DANCERS - Jose Rosales, Alfonso Meraza

ABOUT THE WORK - In a village where tradition speaks louder than truth, two hearts find each other beneath the music of celebration and the weight of silence. Amor Prohibido is a poetic tribute to forbidden love — a story danced through longing glances, whispered prayers, and the vibrant pulse of Mexican folklore. From the warmth of a village fiesta to the quiet light of a Día de Muertos altar, the piece honors the courage it takes to love openly in a world that doesn't always understand. It is both a lament and a celebration — a memory kept alive through movement, color, and spirit.

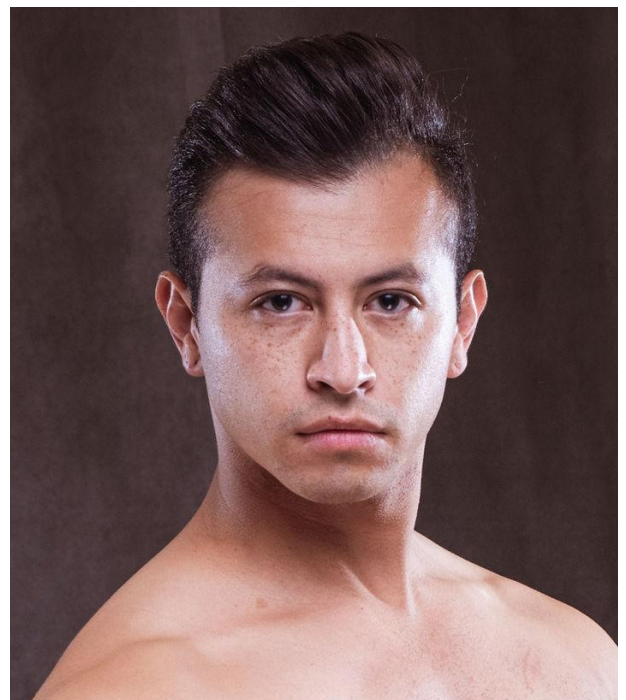
BIO -

Alfonso Meraza Prudente

Founder & Artistic Director: Alfonso Meraza Prudente was born in San Jerónimo de Juárez, Guerrero, Mexico, where he discovered his passion for dance at an early age. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Mexican Arts and Dance from the Instituto de la Danza Mexicana in Acapulco and moved to Mexico City to pursue his professional dreams. In 2019, Alfonso moved to Denver, Colorado, where he began a new chapter in his career with Kim Robards Dance, while developing the vision that would become ArtistiCO. As Artistic Director of ArtistiCO, Alfonso merges classical ballet, contemporary dance, and Mexican folklórico to create performances that are both innovative and deeply rooted in tradition. Of all the stages he has graced across the globe, his greatest joy lies in building a cultural legacy in Colorado, where he shares the richness, discipline, and pride of Mexican heritage with new generations.

José “Chepe” Rosales

Founder & CEO: José “Chepe” Rosales is a dynamic millennial cultural leader, passionate about the performing arts and the power of cultural advocacy. As the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of ArtistiCO, he has become a driving force behind the organization's mission to promote Mexican heritage through dance, education, and community engagement. His entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to equity have led him to collaborate with many of Colorado's leading cultural institutions, producing inclusive and multicultural programming that reflects the diversity of Denver's communities. Throughout his career, José has collaborated with some of the most prominent companies and artists in the U.S. and Mexico, including the National Ballet Company of Mexico, Kim Robards Dance, Cleo Parker Robinson Dance, the Colorado Symphony, the National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico, and Mariachi Vargas, among others. His artistic foundation is rooted in Mexican folklórico, yet his training spans a wide range of styles, including ballet, jazz, African, hip-hop, modern, and Middle Eastern dance. This versatility enriches his choreographic voice and defines the interdisciplinary strength he brings to every production.



- PRESENTING DENVER DANCE ENSEMBLE -

TITLE - Until Again, You

COLLABORATORS - Josh Dwyer, Chela Portillo, Cadey Turner, Seamus Isaak Peart, Danielle Beeman Balestri, Taylor King, Khansong Nyugen, Larah Pamplin, Rebecca Allen, Cassy Clark, Katie Carothers

MUSIC - The Ink Spots, Greg Haines, Kimberly Chmielewski

ABOUT THE WORK - Until Again, You, speaks to the quiet ache of grieving deep loss while moving through the world as though untouched. It is the weight we carry silently, the way sorrow lingers just beneath the surface. Grief becomes a private language, spoken in glances, filling the silences with weight. It's felt deeply even in crowded rooms, where we mourn alone together.

BIO -

Kimberly Chmielewski/Choreographer

A native of Chicago, Illinois, Kimberly Chmielewski is a working professional dancer, choreographer, and teacher in Denver, CO. For over a decade, Ms. Chmielewski has been cultivating and enriching her artistic voice through multi-disciplinary performances, choreographic creations, and an elevated teaching curriculum.

Currently, Kimberly is the founder and co-artistic director of jk-co and Director of the Conservatory Division at Rocky Mountain Ballet Academy. In Denver, Kimberly has danced for Hannah Kahn Dance Company, New Breed Contemporary Dance, Moraporvida Contemporary Dance, Maureen Breeze Dance Theater, Lemon Sponge Cake Contemporary Ballet, Kim Robards, Nu-World Contemporary Dance Theatre, Apex Dance, and guest with many other companies. As a teacher, she has won "Outstanding Choreographer" and "Outstanding Teacher" Awards at Youth American Grand Prix (2018, 2020, 2021, 2023, 2024), "Outstanding Choreography" and "Outstanding Ensemble" at Universal Ballet Competition (2023, 2024), and "Outstanding Choreographer" at World Ballet Competition (2018). Kimberly received her BFA and Honors in Dance and BA in Sociology from The University of Iowa.

Josh Dwyre/Assistant Rehearsal Director

Joshua Dwyre received his BFA in Dance from the Conservatory of Dance at Purchase College where he performed works by Doug Varone, George Balanchine, Loni Landon, MADBoots Dance, Kyle Abraham, Kevin Wynn, and other artists. Dwyre worked with Springboard Danse Montreal and performed works by Ohad Naharin, Sharon Eyal, and other artists. Dwyre performed with Hannah Kahn Dance Company from 2017 to 2019. In collaboration with Kimberly Chmielewski and Jenny Gram, Dwyre has co-directed JK CO Dance since 2020. Josh Dwyre has been teaching, performing, and creating since returning home in 2016.

Danielle Beeman

Born and raised in Denver, Colorado, Danielle graduated from Uofl, receiving her BFA in Dance, Professionally Danielle has trained with River North Dance Chicago, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Alvin Ailey and Giordano Dance Chicago. Danielle has performed/toured throughout the US and has danced as a primary company member for the Hannah Kahn Dance Company, the Maureen Breeze Dance Theater, Moraporvida, Symbiosis Arts and JKCO. Additionally, Danielle competes and performs at the International Latin Ballroom, teaches for several dance studios around CO and is also certified in and teaches Yoga, Barre and HITT. Photo credit: Angelli Nguyen

Larah Pamplin

Born and raised in San Antonio, TX, Larah has been a dancer and choreographer in NYC for over 10 years. A graduate of the Pace University BFA program, a company dancer for SynthesisDANCE directed by Tracie Stanfeild and touring with Holland America Cruise Lines, Larah has now planted roots in Denver, CO as the Assistant Director and co-choreographer of Animus Movement and company dancer for T2 Dance. Some of her credits include dancing in the award winning feature film "Amy's Victory Dance", performed in many NYC dance festivals and was a company member for CoreDance Contemporary and Sosa Dance.

Khansong Nguyen

Khansong graduated from Colorado College with a BA in psychology and moved on to Smith College to pursue a Masters in Social Work. She currently works as a mental health therapist, working specifically with people who hold identities in both BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities. Her passion for dance began at the Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities and she continued her dance study at Colorado College. She has had the opportunity to dance with many companies in the Denver area including: The Damsels Dance Company, Avatar Movement, Davis Contemporary Dance Company and Nu-World Contemporary Dance Theatre.

Khansong is thrilled to join the Presenting Denver Ensemble this season! | *Photo Credit: Ranjani Groth*

Cadey Turner

Cadey Turner (she/her) grew up in Littleton, Colorado where she trained at Rocky Mountain Ballet Academy. She recently graduated Summa Cum Laude from the Alonzo King LINES Ballet BFA at Dominican University of California in May. During her time there, she performed works by Maurya Kerr, Brett Conway, Katie Scherman, Gregory Dawson, Laura O Malley, and Carmen Rozesraten. She has also had the opportunity to participate in summer programs such as Orsolina28, B12 Research or Die, Flockworks, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and Bolshoi Ballet Academy. Cadey is thrilled to be joining the Presenting Denver Ensemble this summer.

Graciela Portillo

Graciela (Chela) Portillo is an artist, dancer, and choreographer from Denver, Colorado. She began her training at Colorado Ballet Academy with Heather Prokhnitski, and later graduated from Rocky Mountain Ballet Academy under the direction and teaching of Alexei Tyukov, Maria Tyukova, and Kimberly Chimelewski. She is a 2024 Juilliard graduate, where she performed works by Bobbi Jene Smith and Or Shraiber, Hofesh Shechter, Ohad Naharin, Trisha Brown, Omar Roman De Jesus, and Jamar Roberts, among others. Graciela began choreographing in her time at Juilliard and was one of seven selected to choreograph for their Senior Production. Interested in discovery of the self through connection with others, her work explores how sensation and experience can be investigated through movement. Graciela is currently a freelance creative based in New York and Denver. | *Photo Credit: Joan Dwiartanto*

Taylor King

Taylor King is a movement artist, collaborator, and former educator with deep roots in dance, having trained for over two decades in a range of forms including modern, contemporary, improvisation, african, jazz, ballet, and tap. Her dance journey began as a child in Denver, Colorado, where she studied at The Academy of Colorado Ballet and later majored in dance at Denver School of the Arts. She went on to earn her BFA in Dance from the University of Colorado Boulder, where she trained under influential artists including Gesel Mason, Erika Randall, and Helanius Wilkins. Her movement language has been further shaped by artists such as Lux Boreal, Millicent Marie Johnnie, and Donna Mejia, reflecting an expansive, multidisciplinary lens. She has taught ballet and modern in community studios and continues to facilitate embodied practices through vinyasa yoga classes in Boulder. She is most excited by work that is healing, poetic, and emotionally honest—spaces that honor both play and depth, presence and transformation.

Cassy Clark/Understudy

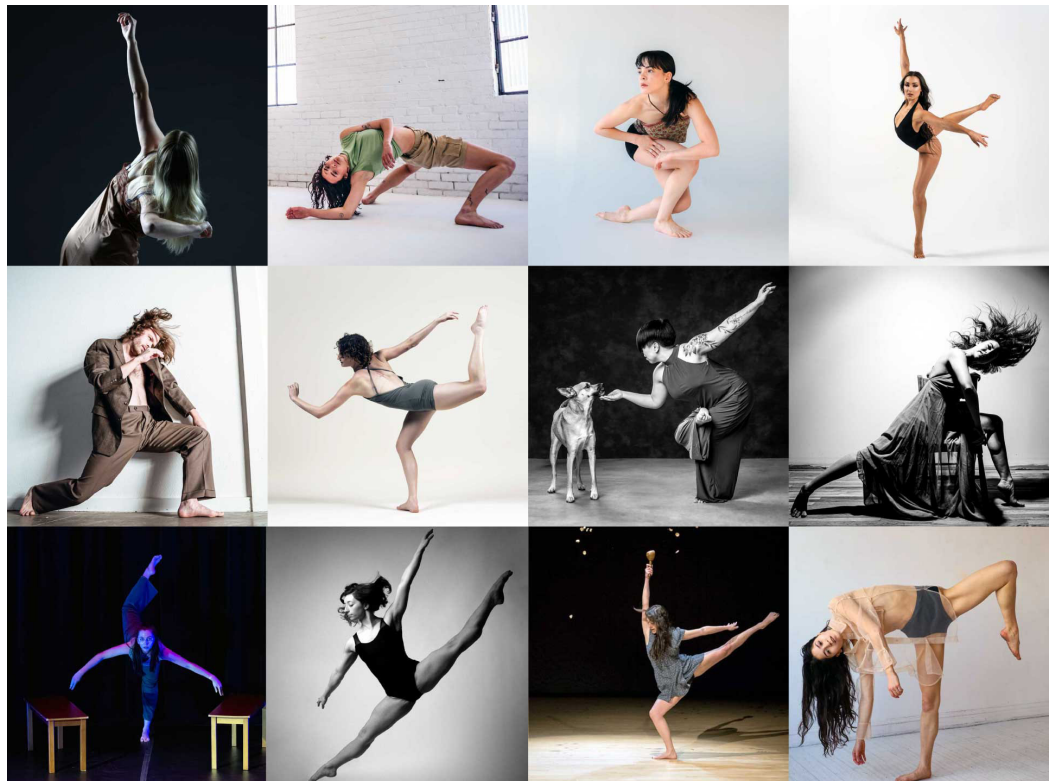
Cassy Clark is a dancer and choreographer based in the Denver/Boulder area. She earned her BFA in Dance from the University of Colorado Boulder. She currently dances with Nosilla Dance Project and teaches at Live Love Dance in Broomfield. | *Photo Credit: Jessica Dhea Photography*

Katie Carothers/Understudy

Katie Carothers grew up in Littleton, CO, where they received their primary training at Denver Academy of Ballet. Katie was invited to perform with Cleo Parker Robinson's second company in August 2023, and has spent two seasons with Cleo II. | *Photo Credit: Martha Wirth*

Rebecca Allen/Understudy

Rebecca, a New York City native, is a graduate of LaGuardia H.S., and the Dance Conservatory at SUNY Purchase. She also created and is the artistic director of Animus Movement as well as dancing for T2 Dance Company. She is super excited to be included in the 1st ever Presenting Denver Ensemble!



- HANNAH KAHN DANCE COMPANY -

TITLE - Excerpt from "Sonata"

DANCERS - Claire Fisher, Emily Scott, Julia Stwalley

MUSIC - Composer Robert Schumann

ABOUT THE WORK - "Sonata" was choreographed in 1988. It is a passionate and non-narrative response to the urgency and beauty of Schumann's music.

Excerpt from Sonata No.1 for Violin and Piano in A Minor

BIO - The Hannah Kahn Dance Company has been bringing the critically praised choreography of Artistic Director Hannah Kahn to the Denver community since 1988. Kahn's work has been described by dance critics as "liquid and lyrical", "effervescent and witty" and "revealing complexity and emotional richness". Her superb company has also been committed to providing inspiring dance experiences to public school children in the Denver area for over thirty years. Kahn is a master teacher who brings her knowledge and love of dance to the community through ongoing modern dance classes from the company's home base in Denver's Baker Neighborhood.

PHOTO CREDIT - Martha Wirth Photography



- MARY JO LASKY AND RACHAEL HARDING -

TITLE - I Did It For You

CHREOGRAPHY - Mary Jo Lasky

DANCERS - Mary Jo Lasky, Rachael Harding

MUSIC - Tom Misch, Song 1: Before Paris, Song 2: I Did It For You

ABOUT THE WORK - This piece is a reflection on the power of a teacher's influence — how one person's guidance, belief, and care can change the course of a life. I've been fortunate to experience that through Rachael Harding, whose support has shaped my journey in ways words can't fully capture. My hope is that this work reminds each of us of the mentors who have left their mark on our hearts and paths.

BIO -

Mary Jo Lasky

Mary Jo Lasky is a tap dancer, choreographer, and educator currently based in New York City. Originally from Thornton, Colorado, she began her dance training at the age of three and has since built a dynamic career that blends performance, teaching, and advocacy. Mary Jo earned her BA in Studio Art with a concentration in Painting from the University of Northern Colorado, where she also completed minors in Dance, Chemistry, and Criminal Justice, and received certificates in both Criminal Investigation and UX/UI Design. Mary Jo is a company member with juxTAPosition, a new tap dance company that unites artists of all backgrounds to showcase their unique perspectives through rhythm and movement. Prior to relocating to NYC, she was a longtime member and choreographer for Rocky Mountain Rhythm, where she deepened her passion for tap and live performance. She has also taught and choreographed at studios including Loveland & Conservatory Dance and Miss Rachael's Dance in Colorado. In addition to her work as a performer, Mary Jo serves as the Training & Development Manager for Feel the Beat, a nonprofit dedicated to making dance accessible to people with and without disabilities, including those who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. Since joining the organization in 2021, she has helped develop inclusive training programs, studied American Sign Language, and led workshops and classes focused on adaptive dance education. She continues to support the organization remotely and is proud to be helping expand its reach to NYC. With a background in both visual and performing arts, Mary Jo is passionate about storytelling, accessibility, and creating community through rhythm and movement.

Rachael Harding

For the past twenty-plus years, Rachael Harding has built her career around dance—as a professional dancer, teacher, and choreographer. She received her B.F.A. in Dance and a B.S. in Business Management from the University of Arizona and a M.F.A in Dance from the University of Colorado, Boulder. She began her professional career as a dancer in Denver's Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble. She is currently the resident choreographer for Denver's professional jazz dance company, Davis Contemporary Dance Company, a performer with Nu-World Contemporary Dance Theatre, co-owner/director of Boulder Jazz Dance Workshop, and owner/director of Miss Rachael's Dance in Denver, where she is inspired to share her passion for the arts with young dancers every day. She has had the distinct honor of dancing in past Opera Colorado productions, including Nixon in China, The Pearl Fishers, Rusalka, and Josephine, and choreographing for Rusalka, Aida, The Barber of Seville, Josephine, and The Shining.



- CLEO PARKER ROBINSON -

TITLE -The Love We Carry...

CHREOGRAPHY - Christopher Page-Sanders

DANCER - Cleo Parker Robinson

MUSIC - Miriam Makeba, Somi featuring Nduduzo Makhathini

ABOUT THE WORK - The Love We Carry... is a meditation, a celebration, and an affirmation of the love that Cleo Parker Robinson shares with Tom Robinson and in parallel, how that love ripples into the family, the community, the company, and the world. This work aims to be both a portrait and a tribute: a celebration of Cleo's artistic legacy and a deeply personal testament to the power of love, resilience, and transformation. It is a reminder that when faced with death, deeply rooted love does not end. It expands. It carries. It lives on in movement, in memory, and in legacy.

BIO -

Cleo Parker Robinson

Cleo Parker Robinson is founder and artistic director of the 54-year-old Denver-based artistic institution, Cleo Parker Robinson Dance (CPRD), leading a professional Ensemble (CPRDE), Cleo II (her 2nd company), a Youth Ensemble, an Academy of Dance, an International Summer Dance Institute, a 240-seat theatre, and numerous community outreach programs nationally and internationally. She has received honors and awards from corporate, civic, community, and artistic entities world-wide, bringing CPRDE to myriad organizations and venues for performances, teaching residencies and community engagement programming. A master teacher/choreographer and cultural ambassador, she and CPRDE have performed nationwide and throughout Europe, the Caribbean, Asia, and the African continent, with their most recent international tours taking them to Bogota, Colombia in Spring of 2019 and Mexico in Fall 2019 and again in Fall of 2024.

Christopher Page-Sanders

Originally from St. Louis, MO, Christopher is the Founding Co-Artistic Director of NU-World Contemporary Dance Theatre. He received formal dance training from the Center of Creative Arts and the University of Missouri – Kansas City as a BFA Dance Major in the Conservatory of Music and Dance. With a background that spans both theater and concert dance, his journey as a performing artist has taken him across the globe, gracing stages with renowned dance companies such as the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble, Dianne McIntyre Group, Hannah Kahn Dance Company, and the OwenCox Dance Group, as well as notable theatre companies such as the Fulton Theatre, Mastervoices, Maine State Music Theatre, The MUNY, and the St. Louis Black Repertory Theatre Company. As a choreographer in concert dance, his choreographic commissions include **Chloe-Grant Abel, Cleo Parker Robinson Dance, COCADance, Davis Contemporary Dance Company, Dance Lab New York, Deeply Rooted ECS**. His choreography has been presented nationally and as an educator, he has had the privilege to teach on faculty or as a guest artist at many prestigious dance institutions.

On the shoulders of my ancestors, I dance!

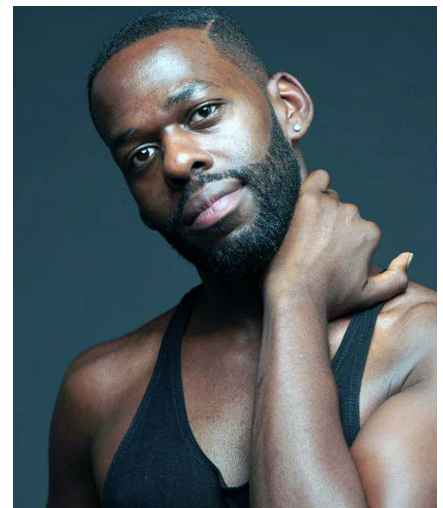


PHOTO CREDIT - Martha Wirth Photography



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