

Mary L. Durant

Born and raised in Miami Dade-County, Mary Durant fell in love with the art/discipline of dance, at the tender age of 7. Miami's dance culture is known to cross train dancers with multiple techniques of dance. As a result, Mary received training from the Thomas Armour Dance Conservatory (ballet), New World School of the Arts (Ballet & Modern), Travel Dance Company (Modern, Jazz, Contemporary, Hip-Hop), and Ailey Camp Miami (all above & West African Dance). A week after graduating high school she was sent off to college; where she received a bachelor's of fine arts with a minor in Africana Studies. She also was blessed with the opportunity to study dance abroad in Paris, France. Currently, Mrs. Durant is a freelance choreographer in the Tampa and St. Petersburg Area. She also dances with Kuumba Dancers & Drummers, a West African Dance/Drumming company; and is a contemporary dancer of the Legacy Dance Ensemble of Tampa Heights. Mrs. Durant's desire to evoke change in the world through art in culture, is her motive as an artist. She understands that our youth are our future leaders & educators, and enjoys reinforcing this through her teaching/choreographic techniques.

Alexander Jones

Alexander Jones, founder and executive artistic director of the downtown St. Pete international nonprofit dance+ company project ALCHEMY, is a graduate of University of South Florida, recent MFA graduate Hollins University studying dance. Jones received training from the LINES Ballet BFA Program under direction of Marina Hotchkiss. He has had the opportunity to work with Alonzo King, Bill T. Jones in Serenade/The Proposition, and Doug Varone in The Rite of Spring. He has performed in Tunisia, Africa with the University of South Florida on behalf of the American Embassy and the Tunisian Dance Federation. A native Floridian, Jones is a proud member of the Actor's Equity Association and current performer at Walt Disney World in stage shows such as Hocus Pocus Villain Spelltacular, A Totally Tomorrowland Christmas, Dream Along with Mickey, Beauty and the Beast Live On Stage . He is an alumnus of ArchCore40 in NYC and works closely with choreographer Jennifer Archibald as her choreographer assistant in the Florida Dance Festival. In 2012, he choreographed and directed his first evening length work entitled First You, Then The Rest at the Studio@620 in St. Petersburg, FL. In the Spring of 2013, Jones joined Yow Dance Company and had the honor of choreographing works for the company for both Spring Into Dance and the Orlando International Fringe Festival. Later that Fall, he returned to the Studio@620 to premiere his second evening-length work, Contact. Jones participated in Project GenYes! at the Studio@620 made possible by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation premiering his third evening-length work, Uncovered: Power of the Being at the Studio@620. In 2016, Jones became the Artistic Director of Collective Soles Dance making it his mission to connect the Tampa Bay area through collaboration. The following year Alex was one of the resident choreographers at the Florida Dance Festival where he premiered his latest work behind the Front. Jones is on faculty as an adjunct professor at the University of Tampa teaching techniques classes that help students prepare for both concert and commercial stages. Community and collaboration are at the forefront of Jones's dance works with the company, as well as in and around St. Pete. He serves as the Dance Artists in Residence at the Studio@620, assisting in dance programming alongside Bob Devin Jones.

Bliss Kohlmyer

Bliss Kohlmyer is the Co-Artistic Director of project agora. The company was in residence at the prestigious Bates Dance Festival Summer '15, premiered the work Threshold, Suspended... at the San Francisco International Arts Festival, performed at Dance Gallery and Breaking Ground, Summer '16 performed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, created Connective (T)issues at DZINE in San Francisco, and most recently created the film Heavy Hopefulness with Péndulo Cero Danza Contemporánea. Her collaborative work with pianist Svetozar Ivanov (Sound Moves Duo) has been presented in Florida, New York, Michigan, Colorado, England, Austria, Czech Republic, and the Netherlands. Gega New released a DVD of Sound Moves Duo's Perpetual Tango January 2018 and excerpts of this work have continued to be presented in various forms at universities throughout the country and online performances, notably True Art TV in London. Bliss' choreographic work has been commissioned by LINES Ballet Summer Program, Dickinson College, Florida State College, Loyola Marymount University, Jacksonville University, Florida Dance Festival, Sam Houston State University, SUNY Fredonia, Beijing Normal University, Moving Current Dance Collective, Jacksonville Dance Theatre, Péndulo Cero Danza Contemporánea (Mexico), Tampa City Ballet, and Robert Moses' Kin (San Francisco), among others. Her tutorial on "Dance Making and Watching" was published by Human Kinetics in 2021. And, her collaborative film, Murmurs of the River, premiered March 2023. In New York City, she danced and toured internationally with Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company and the Sean Curran Company. In San Francisco, she danced with Janice Garrett and Dancers, Robert Moses' Kin, and the San Francisco Opera Ballet, among others. She received her MFA in Dance from the University of Washington in 2011 and is currently an Associate Professor of Dance at the University of South Florida.

Paula Nuñez

Paula Nuñez is faculty at the University of South Florida and the founder and Artistic Director of the Tampa City Ballet. Nuñez is a former principal company member of the International Ballet of Caracas, Ballet Nuevo Mundo, and the Cleveland – San Jose Ballet. Since moving to Tampa, Nuñez has opened America's Ballet School, and has formalized "On Your Feet", a program that provides arts education and cultural experiences to the community. Grounded in this vision, Nuñez created the non-profit Tampa City Ballet, a professional, collaborative, creation-based contemporary dance company. Since establishing Tampa City Ballet in 2018, the company has been contributing to the social and cultural life in Florida. Nuñez launched seven world premieres and has collaborated with the Florida Museum of Photography, the Glazer Children's Museum, The Contemporary Art Music Project, University Area CDC, Carrollwood Cultural Center and Ybor City Community Development Area. The contemporary version of "Pulcinella" in collaboration with the Florida Orchestra and The Museum of Fine Arts sold out all the performances at The Straz Center and Mahaffey Theater.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Nuñez created "102 Degrees" a short film that was selected and featured in local, national and international festivals.

Nuñez received YAGP and ADC's best teacher and choreographer awards several times, USF's Hispanic Woman of the Year award, Best of the Bay's Best Dance Company and Choreographer

award and was nominated for the City of Tampa's Hispanic Heritage Award. Since December 2022, Tampa City Ballet is part of the collective art space at the Historic Ybor City Kress Building in the new Gas Worx District.

Katurah Robinson

Katurah Robinson is a dancer, choreographer, kinesthetic motivator and fiber artist. Her performance credentials include Fred Johnson's Sound Sculpture, The Diavolo Veterans Project, Chen & Dancers of New York, Kuumba Dancers & Drummers, Health & Healing Convention Puerto Rico, and Live The Rhythm Company. Currently, at The Straz Center for the Performing Arts, Katurah serves as Artistic Director of The Veteran Civilian Dance Ensemble and Co-Director of Arts Legacy. She is also an active auxiliary teacher and choreographer for the University of South Florida dance program.

Elsa Valbuena

Elsa Valbuena is one of Colombia's contemporary dance pioneers. She studied music and visual arts before dedicating most of her life to contemporary dance.

In 1982 Elsa founded Gaudere Danza in Cali, Colombia, where she was born.

Gaudere's objective is creation, collaboration and communication through the language of the human body. Thru Gaudere Danza, Elsa's work has been presented in numerous national and international dance venues and festivals in Colombia, Costa Rica, Italy, Spain, Venezuela and the United States. The continued collaboration with artists both in her field and in other mediums is essential in her work. In 2014-2015 the Colombian Ministry of Culture commissioned a full evening work.

"Impronta en Sus Ojos" was created and toured five mayor cities in said country and culminated in Spain at the renowned ITALICA International Dance Festival, Sevilla- 2015.

In the spirit of Gaudere, Elsa's position as Resident Choreographer of Tampa City Ballet(2018-2020) allowed her to continue exploring an interesting exchange between the classically trained dancers and that of her own movement interests.

As of 2020, space to study , continueing to move , explore , connect, create, learn and grow have been in the forefront.

"Traveling in Flower Form " is dedicated with love to my oldest brother Fernando.

Mary Williford-Shade

Mary Williford-Shade has been hailed by Deborah Jowitt of the New York Times as "extraordinary" and by Alan Kriegsman of the Washington Post as "...incisive, electric, with deep undercurrents of sensuality,wild, willful, and mysterious," Mary Williford-Shade was a principal dancer with Mark Taylor, Mark Dendy, Pittsburgh Dance Alloy, and Maryland Dance Theater. Some of her company repertory includes works by Marta Renzi, David Rousseve, Susan Marshall, Bebe Miller, Doug Elkins, Sean Curran and Molissa Fenley. Since then, she and her Baltimore-based partner, Sandra Lacy, created a solo-duet repertory company called "Lacy & Shade." They created their own work as well as commissioned works by such choreographers

as Irene Hultman, Lisa Race, Gabriel Masson, Jeanine Durning, Jose Luis Bustamante, Sarah Sweet Rabidoux, Tonya Lockyer, Melissa Briggs and Michael Foley.

For her next venture Shade performed with six professional women soloists in a dance project created and curated by Andee Scott called SOLA. The project was produced in such spaces as Dance Complex in Boston, MA, Sarasolo Festival in Sarasota, FL, The Out of the Loop Festival in Addison, TX and The Dance Café in Uppsala, Sweden as well as Middlebury College, University of Michigan, University of Southern Florida, and New York University.

Currently, I am rehearsing and performing a quartet that was the inspiration of a professional choreographer and performer working as professor from University of Southern Florida. Andee Scott was driven to work on a piece to be created and directed by Jeanine Durning. Durning from New York City. She is a well-known creative movement artist and "an Alpert Award winning choreographer, director and performer whose work has been described by The New Yorker as having both "the potential for philosophical revelation and theatrical disaster." While we have been interrupted by 2020 COVID, we continue to be mesmerized with her creative ingenuity and patience. she has been amazing to work with.

Shade has a MFA from Ohio State University and is a Certified Laban Movement Analyst and a nationally/ internationally recognized master teacher with teaching credits that include The Klutz Pedagogic Tanz Schule in Hamburg, Germany, Mukagowa University in Osaka, Japan, University of Quebec, Connecticut College, George Washington University, the American Dance Festival and the Bates Dance Festival.

Andee Scott

Andee Scott is an interdisciplinary dance artist based in St. Petersburg, FL. In recent years, her focus on dance as public art has led to her creating, curating, and producing large-scale, site-specific dance performance events including Our Town and Our Trail, as well as Dance in the Time of Coronavirus, a socially-distanced dance performance series which was featured in Dance Magazine.

As a choreographer, Andee is re-thinking what it means to both make a dance and watch a dance, devising innovative performance experiences for both dancers and audience. Her multi-media work has been performed nationally and internationally, most recently in Sweden, Mexico, and China, and she has received commissions to create new works for both dance companies and university programs. She was a resident artist at the Djerassi Resident Artist Program in 2011.

As a dancer, Andee is deeply invested in improvisation as a physical practice. She is currently in rehearsal with a collective of nationally-based independent performers working with Alpert-award winning choreographer Jeanine Durning on a new dance work set to premiere in Berlin, Germany in July 2023. She was a company member of Sharir+Bustamante Danceworks and a founding member of Blue Lapis Light in Austin, TX. She was a member of Deja Donne in Italy,

and has performed as a guest artist with David Dorfman Dance and AlienNationCo., under the direction of Johannes Birringer.

As an educator, Andee has conducted choreographic and performance residencies and taught master classes around the world. Prior to joining the dance faculty at the University of South Florida in Tampa where she is currently an Associate Professor, she was Assistant Professor at the University of Texas at Austin.

Sadie Lehmker

Sadie Lehmker is a choreographer and dancer currently based in the Tampa Bay area, where she is an active member of the dance community.

In 2017, Sadie received her MFA in Dance at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and additionally received a Graduate Certificate in World Performance Studies from the University of Michigan in 2016. Through her time at the University of Michigan, she worked with Charles Gushue/Gushue Moving Arts, Xan Burley + Alex Spring/the Median Movement, and Meredith Monk, as well as university faculty.

In 2010, Sadie received her B.A. in Dance Studies magna cum laude from the University of South Florida with a focus in Dance History and Honors College Distinction. While at USF, Sadie performed in the 2010 USF School of Theatre and Dance's production of the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company's Serenade/The Proposition. She also had the opportunity to study abroad and perform in France in 2008 and returned in 2009 and 2016 for solo creative research ventures.

Beyond her studies, Sadie has been invited to perform across the nation through performances and festivals in Florida, in New York City, in Michigan, and in California. She has also performed internationally in Paris, France, and in Vietnam.

Sadie has set her choreography throughout Central Florida at Florida Southern College, St. Petersburg College, Moving Current Dance Collective, Florida Dance Arts, America's Ballet School, Florida Dance Festival, and Shoes at the Door Dance. Her choreography has been accepted into several festivals in Florida, and has been showcased in southeast Michigan. In 2013, Sadie was selected as a Choreographer-in-Residence for the annual Florida Dance Festival.

Additionally, she has extensive project and production management through different non-profit organizations in the Tampa Bay area, and works as a stage and house manager at both the University of South Florida and Florida Southern College. She is also the American Ballet Theatre at USF Summer Intensive Coordinator. Sadie works as a freelance dance stage manager for local professional companies and for the USF dance department's concerts.

Currently, Sadie is an Adjunct Professor at the University of South Florida, at Florida Southern College, and at Eckerd College.