



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- A Note from Micki 1
- Dance Theatre Group Happenings 1
- AXIS Residency 2
- Motion Art 3
- American College Dance Association 3
- Alumni Updates 4
- Faculty Updates 5
- Visions Preview 5

A Note from Micki

Greetings DTGers,

We just completed a fabulous week with AXIS Dance Company. Their residency has made me think more about how can we educate and create a welcoming environment for people of all ages and abilities. This is not a new concept — we've seen classes for people with Parkinson's, dance for those with cognitive disabilities and even 300 pound dancers in Bill T. Jones' dance company — though too often it feels like these examples are the exception. We've seen more studies showing how dance can be beneficial for developing children and those with dementia, helpful for healthy aging, and therapeutic self-expression for those who have suffered trauma. The international folk and contra dance world I grew up in was a safe place for people of all walks of life. People of all ages and stages of social awkwardness, and even those with two left-feet, were welcome in the circles I frequented.

AXIS has demonstrated that it's possible to become a professional dancer with a physical disability. Their disabled and able-bodied dancers use improvisation to build new vocabulary. Their "unison" and partnering doesn't attempt to look the same as everyone else, but rather to change our perceptions and expectations.

So, could we have a TV show called *Dancing with Everybody*? It might not be feasible, though I was encouraged by the AXIS symposium, classes and performances to think we might encourage more inclusion. Rather than try to make everyone look the same, we should see dance as providing equal access to all that we know and love about dance - the joy, discipline, mind/body connection, connection to others, music, and expressive nature of moving.

I hope you all are finding your love of dance continues as movers and viewers. Check out www.axisdance.org for more info, and thanks to BU Friends of DTG and BU Arts Initiative for making this experience possible.

Sending love and best wishes,

Micki

BEHIND THE SCENES

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- Micki Taylor-Pinney
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Dance Theatre Group Happenings

Stephanie Shin, DTG President ('19)

Another great semester is flying by for DTG! Things are running smoothly, thanks to all your amazing donations and contributions. As busy as school and life get, it's so nice to have DTG to come back to each week.

We began our semester as we always do— with a modern class taught by Micki and an afro-jazz class taught by Ann. Our first and second showings quickly came upon us! January and February flew by. We had a jazz class with Adrienne Hawkins, a modern class with DeAnna Pellicchia, and now we will soon have a musical theater class taught by Todd Shanks! We also had a small bonding event in February, where some of our members came and supported DTG dancers in The Dance Complex's Tiny and Short show. It was great to see more works of the Boston dance community.

March was another fun month for DTG! First, we traveled a whole six hours to Potsdam, NY to attend and dance in the ACDA New England regional conference. As always, it was such a great opportunity to watch dance from other schools around the area — all thanks to your incredible donations! The week following ACDA, we had our annual Motion Art event in the 808 Gallery on campus. This event is always so special and Carli DiMeo, our vice president, did an incredible job putting it all together. It really makes us remember why we love to do what we do, and shows us why art is so important in uniting us all!

Beginning to get ready for Visions can't help but feel bittersweet. It's been a great, packed semester, and I don't want it to end (or to have to say goodbye to our graduating seniors). Nevertheless, Visions is sure to be another great production, and we hope to see some of you there!

AXIS Residency

Brittany Kubicko ('19)



Photo by David DeSilva



Photo by @BUArtsInitiative



Photo by @AXISDanceCo

Every year, the Boston University Dance Program invites a choreographer or company to guest teach classes for a week. This year's residency, however, was a little different than those in years past.

From March 13-18, AXIS Dance Company was in residence at Boston University in collaboration with the BU Arts Initiative, Sargent College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, the BU Dance Program and the BU Office of Disability Services. Based out of Oakland, California, AXIS Dance Company is a contemporary dance company consisting of both able-bodied and disabled dancers. As a company, its goal is to change the face of dance and disability through artistry, engagement and advocacy. For the past 30 years, AXIS has collaborated with many choreographers, including Bill T. Jones and Yvonne Rainer, making the company a leader in physically-integrated dance in the United States.

During its week at BU, AXIS held classes for the BU Dance Program and Dance Theatre Group and also conducted classes and discussions of dance and disability for the community. The array of offerings provided a fun week filled with conversations about physically-integrated dance.

AXIS's residency began on Monday, March 13 with a symposium titled "Performing Arts and Disability: Leadership, Inclusion, and Training" at BU Hillel. Speakers discussed issues regarding dance and disability and how to advance disability inclusion in the performing arts.

Other talks held during the week included a "Redefining Dance and Disability" discussion on March 15 at the BU School of Medicine, and an online video conference on March 14, after a snowstorm caused the cancellation of one

of the classes.

The company also taught a Physically-Integrated Dance class on Wednesday, March 15 for the BU Dance Program. This class explored physically integrated dance with both able-bodied and disabled dancers. This class was open to both BU dance students and the general public. *(Editor's Note: Our Executive Director joined the class, too!)*

Dance Theatre Group had its own Physically Integrated Dance class, taught by AXIS artistic director Marc Brew and company members James Mario Alarcon-Bowen and Dwayne Scheuneman, on Thursday, March 16 in the BU Dance Theater. The class consisted of a warm-up of walking, stretching and swinging, and the chance to learn repertory from the work "Divide", choreographed by Marc Brew. All the dancers had fun learning the choreography and adapting it to fit their own bodies.

To conclude its residency, AXIS held a public performance at the BU Dance Theater on Saturday, March 18. AXIS performed three works — "Divide", a duet titled "Dix minutes plus tard" choreographed by Sonia Delwaide, and "to go again" choreographed by Joe Goode — to a sold-out audience. Immediately following the performance, the company held a Q&A session with the audience to discuss physically-integrated dance, the choreography and other topics in dance and disability.

AXIS Dance Company's residency at BU was a memorable week for those who participated. Everyone left the residency's talks, classes and performances with a better understanding of disability in dance as well as inspiration for possibilities of dance in the future. AXIS Dance Company showed us that there are truly no limitations to the wonderful art of dance.

Motion Art

Carli DiMeo ('18)

With support from the Boston University Arts Initiative, we held our fourth Motion Art event at the 808 Gallery on March 30. In true Motion Art tradition, the event focused on collaboration, pulling together artists from all over campus.

The audience was greeted by a performance by the Treblemakers a cappella group. As the Treblemakers exited the space, Liz Roncka's improv class began a pedestrian piece beginning as audience members. Having head phones in, audience members were first confused with the sudden dancing, but ended up being wowed with the performance.

The audience moved around to view art all over the gallery, including performances by BU Ballroom, BU on Tap, the West Coast Swing Club and even a sketch artist and painter who created drawings in the gallery as the show went on. The E-board of DTG also performed an improv piece to a cellist as they traveled down the side of the gallery, bringing the audience along.



The amazing repertoire of performances also featured choreography from *Origins 2016* by Carly Chinitz, Lauren Sava and Shannon Steele. Sava's piece was danced alongside BU's spoken word poetry group, *Speak For Yourself*, performing an original poem. Steele's piece was also collaborative, as it was performed to the Treblemakers singing their rendition of The Cinematic Orchestra's *To Build a Home*.

As audience members traveled around the gallery, they were asked to place post-it notes on the walls answering the question "what do you love to make?".

Answers ranged from artistic pursuits like dance and music to everyday activities like pizza and noise, highlighting how participants at the event all valued the art of creation. The show ended with a performance by DTG members of a piece taught by mentor Peter DiMuro.

Despite being put together just one hour before the event, the finale was a crowd favorite and the cast had so much fun performing it. We were fortunate to be joined by so many talented performers for Motion Art. Our collective and supportive love for all the different collaborative arts truly made it a night to remember!

ACDA in Potsdam, NY!

Haley Abram ('19)



Dancers from "Pepper" (above) and "Unraveling" (below)



This semester Dance Theatre Group had the privilege of attending the American College Dance Association's New England regional conference at SUNY Potsdam in Potsdam, New York. We performed two pieces for adjudication choreographed by DTG members Stephanie Shin and Antonia Calcaterra. We also took several wonderful classes and watched the concert performances of our college peers. This was my first experience at ACDA, and I really didn't know what to expect, but it turned out to be one of the most fulfilling and inspiring weekends of my college career, both artistically and socially.

The SUNY Potsdam performing arts center was absolutely beautiful. It had a gorgeous theatre and spacious studios that made being in the cold rain and snow more bearable. The school's staff and tech crew were so accommodating, and it was truly an honor to be able to use their fantastic facilities. On top of a beautiful space to dance in, we also had an incredible range of classes to take. From Laban analysis and classical modern technique to contact improvisation and West African jazz, I was constantly reminded of the beauty and diversity of this art form.

The adjudication feedback session

was also a unique experience. Hearing the feedback for our own pieces as well as for others in our concert allowed us to think critically about the choreographic process and inspired me to think of new ways to create and perform. After the other concerts, we returned to the hotel with our mentors Micki Taylor-Pinney and Ann Brown Allen to have our own "adjudication" session to discuss how we felt about the pieces we saw.

In addition to being an informative and educational experience, ACDA was an amazing time for bonding with my fellow DTG members. Throughout the six-hour drive to and from Potsdam, as I sat in the third row of a mini-van, we shared stories, laughed and, of course, danced to our favorite songs. The memories I made with my wonderful and inspiring friends are ones I will cherish for many years to come.

Overall, DTG had a great weekend bonding and dancing at ACDA. We are so lucky to be able to participate in events like ACDA that provide great environments for meeting other dancers, challenging our current opinions and perceptions on movement and inspiring us to widen our perspective and try new things. ADCA 2017 was most definitely a success!

Alumni Updates

Heather Harrington ('91) will graduate with her MFA from the University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee in May 2017. She had her first article published in the Dancer Citizen (<http://dancercitizen.org/issue-2/heather-harrington/>). She will be presenting two lectures (The importance of site in protest dance in Tunisia after the Arab Spring uprisings and the Embodiment of Feminism in the 21st Century: Perspectives from the East and the West) at the Dance and Democracy conference at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden from June 14-17, 2017.

Rashmi Nemade ('93) is using her previous dance experience in an unusual way. She has branched into voiceover work, which allows her to use some movement to emote language. After decades of experience in the biomedical sciences and technology - both in the laboratory and professional writing - *NOW you can hear her* as she breathes life into challenging copy with her engaging voice. You can hear her work at www.nowyouhear.me. She is ecstatic to be "performing" again.

Jessica Bishop (Stasulis) ('01) welcomed her son, Brennan Michael Bishop, into the world on 9/28/16. He is a beautiful, healthy baby who loves to be danced around!

Meredith Butulis ('01) pursued dance medicine as a Physical Therapist after graduation. She has a great free resource to share with everyone: www.DancePT.org (It's not a business, but rather a passion blog/website she's put together to help dancers with all things injury/health related.) She hopes others find this useful, and always welcomes questions, comments and guest bloggers!

Ayrin Zahner ('03) is getting married this fall and moving to Brussels next month! Ayrin has been dancing with the Washington Ballet's Mimmo Miccolis (go see her work if you ever get a chance) and is learning the Tango (with the wedding as extra motivation!). Big hugs to all the DTG alums!

Sigita Cahoon ('03) passed her

Obstetrics & Gynecology oral boards examinations and will be graduating from her Global Women's Health Fellowship and MPH program this summer!

Sarah Foster ('04, '09, '10) is working with Sandra Parks on a new duet for her company MoveWorks. She's presenting a split bill performance next month in Queens. Also, she just returned from an incredible trip to Argentina!

SAVE THE DATE!

Laura (DiSerio) Nunneker ('05) and her husband welcomed their second child -- a boy, Benjamin -- at the end of September. He and his big brother Will are doing well! Other than that, she is back to dance class and still working at George Mason University's Center for the Arts part time.

Claire Enterline ('06) has moved back to Maine. Her marine biology job involves seafloor mapping, which she thinks is very fun. She is expecting her first child in May. She is still teaching yoga and just got her pre-natal yoga teaching certification. She wrote "love having that as part of my life!"

Gracie Novikoff and Natalie Schiera

('12) are continuing to direct and choreograph for their company, Nozama Dance Collective, which is building momentum! Their second full-length production will be August 4th and 5th, 2017 at Green Street Studios. The show, "Bodies and Choices", will explore the themes of female empowerment and how much stronger women are when we motivate one another and come together as a collective.

Jerusha Aman ('12) is currently living in Sydney, Australia studying dance at Hillsong International Leadership College. After 4.5 (fantastic) years with Urbanity Dance, she decided to fulfill her lifelong dream of living abroad for one year. She is still leading and teaching in the dance education sphere, while also performing as part of the Hillsong Platform Dance Team.

Kristin Wagner ('12) is celebrating her 5th anniversary dancing with KAIROS Dance Theater! She is keeping very busy taking class, producing her own choreography, teaching at a variety of local studios and coordinating various creative programs at The Dance Complex in Central Square.

Shannon Luchs ('13) recently moved to New York City and is working full time as a social worker doing homeless outreach in the streets of Manhattan. Shannon is also dancing with Kelley Donovan's contemporary company, which performs in both New York City and Boston, and has been back to Massachusetts to teach at Mass Motion Dance in Sturbridge, MA.

Katie Logan ('15) is still living in Boston and is now dancing with both Nozama Dance Collective and Onstage Repertory. It is very exciting for her to continue her passion for dance after BU! She is also working full-time at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

Genny Mudd ('15) is working as a pediatric Occupational Therapist in early intervention serving children 0-3 and their families in the South Shore of MA. She is also teaching adult community dance classes and performing with Urbanity Dance with a few other DTG alums.

Faculty and Staff Updates:

Ramelle Adams is still working 7 days/week and loving her various jobs. She has to admit that Monday holidays with no work scheduled are pretty fabulous as well! At BU she manages noncredit instructional programming, teaches yoga and manages both the credit and noncredit Mind/Body programs. On Saturday mornings, she often substitutes at JP Centre Yoga. Weekend evenings are at the Dance Theatre, and Sundays are at the skilled nursing rehabilitation unit. Starting next week, she is embarking on a new yoga experience at the Gardner School, courtesy of Micki. This will be a true opportunity to mix dance and yoga because the yoga class is under the umbrella of dance arts. She is inspired by the talented and hard-working colleagues at all her jobs, who inspire her and keep her moving ahead even on challenging days.

"For those of you who still remember my children hanging out in the dance studio: Kaitlyn is still happy working in the Boston financial district for North Run Capital. She moved closer to work at the beginning of March, and now is happy in her own apartment in South Boston. Southie has become an up and coming neighborhood recently, but since it is March she is getting the flavor of older Irish Boston with the Saint Patrick's Day parade coming up this weekend. Jesse is balancing music, working at Café Nero and weekend work at the Dance Theater."

Ann Brown Allen is having a great spring semester teaching beginning ballet, two levels of Pilates mat and two levels of Pilates Apparatus. She is choreographing 'Buzz On' for her children's theater group. This was the first children's musical she

choreographed 30 years ago at her summer arts program, from which she is officially retired. Ann is in rehearsals with Lise Brody, Lynn Modell and Peter DiMuro for a variety of projects this spring. It is so exciting for her to see so many BU faces represented in the Boston dance community. In the last six months, she's seen alum at Green Street Studio, The Dance Complex and Boston Center for the Arts. Ann is very proud of her association with Dance Theatre Group and working with Micki and Peter.

Margot Parsons: As always the BU dancers are a terrific group who are focused, eager to learn and enjoy the exhilaration of dancing. The Ballet Rep class will present a jazzy new work as part of the DTG's April show. In January, her company DanceVisions, Inc., presented two new works at The Dance Complex in the delightful production of Tiny and Short dances organized by BU's own Kristin Wagner. This is the 35th year of her company, and to mark the date they will be presenting an evening of dance in The Dance Theater on June 16 and 17. She hopes if you are in Boston you will come to see it! She would love to see you!

"Thanks always to Micki and to Ann Brown and Ann Roe and to the faculty and to the lovely BU dancers who inspire and bring dance forward for the next generation. Keep dancing and bringing your heart to all that movement can do for the mind and spirit!"

Lynda Rieman is looking forward to a full spring season at the dance theater. Her biggest challenge was coordinating the technical needs for AXIS Dance Company, a company who works with dancers with and without disabilities, who were in

residence at BU from March 13-18, 2017. She is also working with Wellesley College to bring BANDALOOOP – a pioneer in vertical dance – to Massachusetts. The event date is set for October 2017. Creating the bungee piece with Colleen Roddy last semester was so hard but so much fun. There were so many choices to make, and she thanks everyone once again for the opportunity to explore with you. "Perhaps we will make another piece with different choices in the future!"

Micki Taylor-Pinney has moved to teaching more theory classes this semester. She isn't teaching low intermediate modern dance nor is she choreographing for DTG, but she is teaching a directed study in composition and a new freshman seminar for the Kilachand Honors College. She's enjoying finding ways to make aesthetics and dance appreciation accessible for non-dancers and dancers alike. She's also teaching dance history this semester, which is always a wonderful opportunity to make the events and seminal figures of the past feel relevant. While her time spent in the studio has been reduced, she loves working with her beginning modern dance students. Her time spent in the yoga studio has been ramped up to keep her active. But, there is no replacement for dancing, so taking class with AXIS was like coming home. She is gearing up for the Reach program this summer and looks forward to spending time with the teen apprentices as they prepare to go "on tour" throughout Greater Boston neighborhoods to work with children: <http://www.bu.edu/fitrec/dance/reach/>. She and her husband, Markus, are planning a trip to Amsterdam and Galway in June. Recommendations are welcome!

Visions Preview:

Olivia Blaisdell ('20, '22)

As a freshman at Boston University, I am so thankful that I found a home in Dance Theatre Group. I've fallen in love with the friendly yet professional atmosphere. Having participated in my first DTG production last semester, I've seen firsthand that our shows can leave the audience feeling impressed and inspired. I would be lying if I said that this semester's performance of Visions 2017 wouldn't offer the same.

Brittany Kubicko has tackled an arrangement from Jerome Robbins' West Side Story. Sticking to the classic vibe of the original musical, Brittany has successfully choreographed jazzy and playful movement. She has explored the many ways a movement conversation can carry on and how dancers might choose to communicate with the other dancers in the cast.

Rajita Menon has presented a piece about the

mechanisms of thought and memory. In her own words, "My dancers are fragments of memory, a means to show what it's like to forget." She has used lulling music to contrast her choreography, and in turn has created a beautiful product.

Antonia Calcaterra has presented us with one of her groovy specialties. This time around, she has been inspired by Candy Crush, a game made for smartphones. Her movement and music choice is reminiscent of this addicting app and may as well be just as addicting to watch as it is to play the game.

Visions 2017 has a such a diverse lineup for its audience this semester. Everyone who comes to support will discover something that sparks their imagination - so join us and invite family, friends and anyone who will celebrate a night of dance with DTG!

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Reunion!

Come join us the weekend of Visions,
April 21-23, for a fun, relaxing reunion!



There will be a dance class, social
gatherings, and the show!

RSVP to budance@bu.edu

Photos by Olivia Blaisdell

BU Friends of Dance Donation History 1996-2017

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