

REACH 2024 PEDAGOGY INTENSIVE: FACULTY



Leslie Butler Barron has performed, choreographed and taught in Europe, Africa, the Caribbean and the United States. She received her BFA in dance from the Julliard School of Music and her M. Ed from Harvard Graduate School of Education as a Conant Fellow. Here in Boston, Leslie's early years of dance study and performance was at the Elma Lewis School of Fine Arts. Highlights from her long list of credits include her role as a government choreographer for Bomas of Kenya in Nairobi, a dancer/singer on a weekly TV show in Cologne, Germany

and her appearance on Broadway for five years as a dancer, actress and singer in the Tony Award winning show, "The Wiz". In 1983 she started the dance program in the Boston Public Schools, creating curriculum, choreography and costume designs for grades 9-12. During this time, she also taught dance for the Concord Metco program, bringing urban and suburban students together. Throughout her seventeen years in the BPS, she coordinated programs with Celebrity Series bringing professional dance companies into the Boston classrooms. Leslie is now retired and dance continues to be a vibrant part of her life as she studies various dance genres.

- **Historical & Cultural Relevance - Her History & Boston Public School Dance:** July 10th 9:00-10:00am
- **H & C Relevance Panel:** July 10th 12:30-2:00pm



Yo EL-Cassell was born in Schenectady, NY with a nerve deafness and discovered that movement at the age of 3 was his organic expressive channel for his personal and creative identity. Instead of his hearing loss getting in the way, he allowed the loss to gratefully show him the way of connecting to all of the five senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell) of human life. His mission, as a performer, director, choreographer, movement director, educator, mentor, and human being, is to provide the same accessible physical entry point to other's inner

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selves that he supportively received as a child and throughout life. A recipient of the Lotte Kaliski Award for Gifted Artists, Yo-EL Cassell is currently Head of/Assistant Professor of Movement at Boston University College of Fine Arts School of Theatre. He was formerly Resident Choreographer of Commonwealth Shakespeare Company. His previous teaching experience also includes the NY Acting School for Film and Television, Harvard University Dance Department, New England Conservatory, Walnut Hill School for the Arts, Sunshine Cottage School For Deaf Children, Celebrity Series of Boston, Commonwealth Shakespeare Apprentice Academy, the Association for Theatre in Higher Education Conference, Boston Ballet, Dance Complex, and Skidmore College, where he served as a guest teaching artist/choreographer in residence for three years. His teaching for movement practice, through a thoughtful fusion of various movement and theatre approaches, stresses the importance of incorporating personal identity with an integration of a strong technical foundation. Thus, balancing the importance of owning, in equal measure, the ecstatic and informative self in and outside the walls of movement study.

- **Classroom Engagement - Journey of Youth (JOY):** July 9th 12:30-2:00pm



Judith Chaffee appeared as “Mother” in *Good* by C.P. Taylor at New Repertory Theatre, Boston Center for American Performance and again for the Potomac Theatre Project in NYC. Other credits include *An American Dream* (Colorado Arts Festival); Benjamin Britten’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *House of Bernarda Alba*, and *Agnes of God* (Boston University), and a recent film role in *The Inhabitants*. She danced and choreographed for Boston Dance Collective for 20 years and has choreographed theatre productions for Central Square Theatre, SpeakEasy, Huntington Theatre Company, New Repertory Theatre, among others in New England. She has two CDs on Period Styles through Insight Media, and co-edited, with Olly Crick, *The Routledge Companion to Commedia dell’Arte*. She is Emerita Professor at Boston University, where she was head of movement for theatre and opera before retiring in 2015. She joined the Board of TITO in 2019 and is currently adjunct professor in theatre at UMass/Boston.

- **Dancer Wellness & Injury Prevention - Serious Play:** July 11th 9:00-10:30am



Hannah Cyr was born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia. She moved to Natick, Massachusetts in 2013 and currently lives in Boston, Massachusetts. Hannah is a recent graduate of The Boston Conservatory at Berklee and a graduate of the Walnut Hill School for the Performing Arts. Hannah's interest in community outreach brought her the opportunity to intern for Boston University's REACH program, a summer dance community engagement program where she taught and performed for children ages three to seventeen. Gaining enriching experiences through international advocacy, she traveled with Juntos Collective to Guatemala

and Mexico to perform and teach classes to local children. Hannah was named the 2019–2020 Jan Veen/Faith Clark Dance Pedagogy Scholar at The Boston Conservatory at Berklee. She currently teaches creative movement, ballet, modern and contemporary to students ages three and up!

- **Lesson Planning - Learning Outcomes:** July 8th 11:00-12:00pm



Carli DiMeo, OT, OTR, OTD (she/her/hers) is an occupational therapist and dance professional in the greater Boston area. Carli is an adjunct professor of occupational therapy at Boston University as well as a practicing mental health clinician at The Home for Little Wanderers and Newton-Wellesley Hospital. She has been teaching at studios in the area for the last 10 years and her primary teaching home is The Studio Dance Complex in Revere, Massachusetts, where she grew up dancing. Carli has studied and performed a range of styles with beloved artists including Micki-Taylor Pinney, Lindsey

Leduc, Peter DiMuro, Ann Brown Allen, and Wendy O'Byrne. Carli has experience teaching movers of all ages and abilities and prioritizes creating inclusive movement environments in all of her classes. Carli is passionate about bridging the mental and physical experiences and uses her background as a dance educator in therapeutic work, supporting youth and families in learning to

use their bodies to shift their emotional experience and wellbeing. Carli completed her doctoral research at The Child Witness to Violence Project at Boston Medical Center, piloting a dance-based caregiver-child group to facilitate emotional safety and positive relationship building between caregivers and their children following experiences of domestic violence. Carli has provided trainings and disseminated research from this program nationally and continues to facilitate this group, seeking to bring dance as a healing tool to families across a range of backgrounds. Carli has experience teaching and training other teachers to work with dancers with various diagnoses and abilities and hopes to work toward a dance community that is welcoming for every body. Carli joined the Reach Pedagogy faculty in the Summer of 2023 and is so excited to be back this year!

- **Teach to the Whole Person - Adaptive Dance: July 12th**



Jason Jordan is a teaching artist who teaches dance full time at Orchard Gardens K-8 Public School in Roxbury, where he has also been the director of dance for the BPS Summer Arts Intensive and BPS Citywide Dance Company. His professional dance career in the US and Canada began with Feld Ballets NY and encompassed dancing with Twyla Tharp, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens De Montréal and Rubberbandance Group, Cedar Lake Dance Ensemble, and Buglisi/Foreman Dance Company, where he was a principal dancer. He choreographed *Stations* for Vision Festival XV at the Abrons Arts Center. Locally he has performed with Fukudance and in Tony Williams' Urban Nutcracker.

- **Classroom Engagement – Observation from the BPS classroom: July 9th 9:00-10:00am**



Izaiah Lawton is an enthusiastic and curious dancer looking to gain more knowledge in the dance community. Izaiah found his passion for dance when he was in the 1st grade while taking dance and musical theater as extra curriculums. He is always open to learn new styles of dance while still perfecting his craft in his roots of Step and Hip-Hop. Izaiah has performed on stages such as the Paramount Theater, Boston University REACH Program, Northeastern Step Fest,

and has participated in competitions such as Beantown Bounce and Bring Da Hype Dance Competition. He is teaching Hip Hop for children and teens for BU’s Dance Program, Urbanity, and in Boston Public Schools for Mass Movement, Inc. He also dances with the company Be Hear. World and HypeFem, an LGBTQ dance team.

- **Masterclass - Step:** July 9th 2:00-3:30pm



Lindsey Leduc is best known for her many years as a featured dancer with Giordano Dance Chicago. She has performed works and taught master classes nationally and internationally by Mia Michaels, Ron De Jesus, Alexander Ekman, Gus Giordano, Liz Imperio, and many others in Germany, Austria, The Netherlands, Mexico, and Costa Rica among others. Lindsey was honored to write a feature article for Dance Magazine’s “Why I Dance” in the January 2013 issue, and she appeared on the cover of Dance Magazine in March 2013. She has works in the repertoire of many dance companies including her alma mater GDC who perform her work around the globe. She continues to teach, choreograph, adjudicate, produce, direct, and emcee around the nation and internationally. In addition to teaching at Boston College, she also serves on the faculty at Boston University. Lindsey was raised in Southbridge, MA and began her early training under Terri Gordon. At 13, she became a Trustree Scholar at Wilbraham Monson Academy for her dance ability, exposing her to knowledge and cultural diversity that shaped and inspired her. Lindsey believes in the power of movement as a vehicle for connection, self-expression, and healing.

- **Masterclass – Contemporary Jazz:** July 12th 2:00-3:30pm



Chu Ling is a graduate from the Beijing Dance Academy. Ling is an accomplished performer and choreographer. She is the recipient of numerous awards in China, Japan and USA. She received a choreography commission for closing ceremony of the First East Asian Games in Shanghai. In 2002, Ling received the Artist-Humanist

Award from the Boston Cultural Council. Ling is the founder and director of the Chu Ling Dance Academy. She has taught and performed at many institutions in the greater-Boston area, including Wellesley College, Boston University, and Harvard University. In addition, Ling has been a recurring guest teacher and choreographer at Boston Ballet since 2001. She is a sought-after artist for her ability to offer inclusive quality dance and movement experiences for all. Her students range from inner-city youth to the elderly in suburban settings. Ling is dedicated to cultural exchange, merging eastern and western aesthetics through dance. In 2022, Ling received Traditional Art Award from Mass Cultural Council.

- **Historical & Cultural Relevance – Traditional Chinese Dance:** July 10th 11:00-12:00pm



McKersin Previlus: Resilience is the word that comes up when describing McKersin. He overcame a troubled environment and upbringing in order to become the dancer, educator, and artistic director that he is today. With Ethnic-Haitian dance as his base vocabulary, McKersin started building a bigger arsenal with Hip-Hop, Jazz, and Tap. Today, he leads workshops throughout various parts of the world orientated towards social justice and the roots of African American culture and movement. McKersin is

currently leading an international research project that involves the ties and spread of the African Diaspora in the western hemisphere as well as many projects throughout his community. His local projects promote emotional competency, healing, and conversation through the Arts all while running his non-profit Lakai Arts which aims to build stronger communities of color towards self-sufficiency using the arts, and Lakai Dance Theatre, a subdivision of his non-profit.

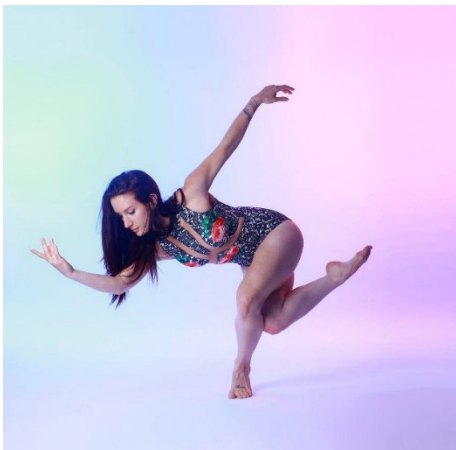
- **Lesson Planning – MA Ed. Curriculum Standards:** July 8th 10:00-11:00am
- **Historical & Cultural Relevance – Culturally Relevant Approach to Teaching Hip Hop:** July 10th 10:00-11:00am



William McLaughlin has performed with Ace Entertainment, Impulse Dance Company, Concert Dance Company of Boston, Prometheus Dance Theater, Marcus Schulkind and Friends, Granite State Ballet, and Boston Dance Collective. During his time with these companies, he performed works choreographed by Fred Benjamin, Donald Byrd, Allen Collier, Adrienne Hawkins, Bebe Miller, Diane Noye, Christien Polos, Dwight Rhoden, Desmond Richardson and Randy Warshaw, to name a few. William has also appeared in, and or choreographed, live/video industrials for Trak Ski's, Puma, Party Lite, EMC, and Dae Woo. William is currently Dance Department Chair at Boston Arts Academy, Boston's only high school for the performing and visual arts. In addition to Boston Arts Academy, William has served on faculty at many of Boston's most prestigious arts institutions including; Boston Ballet, The Boston Conservatory, Concord Academy's Summer Stages, The Jeannette Neill Dance Studio, Needham Dance Theater, and The Walnut Hill School. As a guest artist, William has both taught and choreographed throughout the greater Boston Area. He has also served as both Co-Director and Artistic Director of Boston Dance Collective's Summer Outreach Program, now known as the Boston University REACH Program. While on faculty at Boston Arts Academy, his choreography has been chosen for performance at the National High School Dance Festival's Gala and has been presented at The Calhoun School New York, NY, Harvard School of Education and for the Harvard Strategic Data Project. In 2011, he was invited by Boston Superintendent Carol Johnson to present his work at The Great City Schools National Convention. As a choreographer, he has produced several works including a solo performance entitled Boogie Man. In 2008, he was awarded a SURDNA Artist Fellowship, during which he returned to Jacob's Pillow for the fourth time, participating in the Choreographer's Lab, directed by Celeste Miller and J.R. Glover. In 2012, William was a Mass Cultural Councils 2012 Artist Fellowship finalist. In 2014, William was the recipient of the Outstanding Educator Advocate Award in Dance, as part of the Arts/Learning Artful Stem Symposium. William received his BA from Cambridge College.

- **Classroom Management – Social Emotional Learning and Metrics:** July 9th 10:00-11:00am

- **Classroom Management – Breakout groups:** July 9th 11:00-12:00pm



Wendy O'Byrne began her training with the Robertson's School of Classical Ballet (Seacoast Ballet Company) under the direction of Colleen and Larry Robertson. After ten years of exclusively studying ballet, Wendy's interests shifted to musical theatre. She had the privilege of working for Seacoast Repertory Theatre, the Palace Theatre, Ogunquit Playhouse, North Shore Music Theatre and several other regional theatre companies. In 2007, Wendy moved to Boston to continue her dance training

when she became a member of MAVI Dance and Unyted Stylz. Wendy was also the former Assistant Director to former hip hop company, StreetHYpE. In 2010 Wendy founded Contemporarily Out of Order (COOco), a contemporary company aimed to create performance opportunities for children and adults under a professional setting. Wendy is currently the Director for COOco's adult and youth company. Wendy is currently a faculty member at the Greater Boston School of Dance, The Studio Dance Complex and Mass Motion Dance. In addition to her studio commitments, Wendy is proud to be an instructor at Boston University and a professional at BU's Summer REACH Program.

- **Teaching to the Whole Person – Incorporating Social Emotional Learning in Teaching:** July 12th 10:30-12:00pm
- **Masterclass – Contemporary:** July 8th 2:00-3:30pm



Jessica T. Pearson is an Assistant Professor of Dance at Rhode Island College. Ms. Pearson is a dancer, educator and choreographer who danced with the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble, Gesel Mason and Concepts In Motion, Bermuda. This sought-out educator has been invited to teach at Ballet West Summer Intensive, numerous private dance studios and taught in Bermuda for two years. Ms. Pearson recently performed at Dixon Place and held residencies at Annapolis High School, University of Kentucky, Salve Regina University and Providence College. Her choreography has been presented at Southern Vermont Dance

Festival, New England Choreographer's Competition, The Series Vol. I – 25 Emerging Choreographers Showcase (NY) and Collective Threads (NY). Her choreography has been presented at Urbanity Next (Boston) and Utah Regional Ballet. She received her MFA in Dance from the University of Colorado, Boulder where she studied dance pedagogy, dance wellness and choreography and holds a BFA from Towson University in Dance Performance.

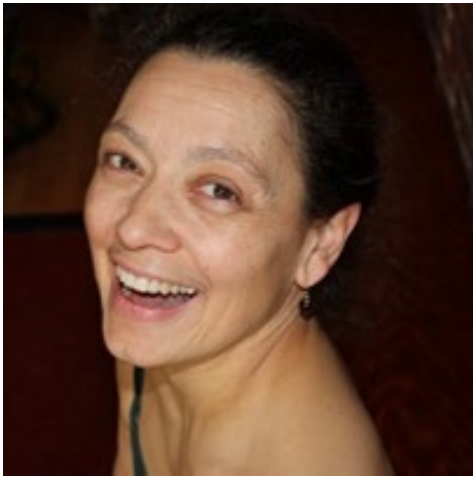
- **Dancer Wellness & Injury Prevention:** July 11th 12:30-2:00pm
- **Historical & Cultural Relevance – Panel:** July 10th 12:30-2:00pm
- **Masterclass – Contemporary:** July 10th 2:00-3:30pm



Erica Schwartz holds a BFA from the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music and a MS in Education from Simmons College. Her professional career began in New York City as a company member and rehearsal assistant for the Pearl Lang Dance Company touring the USA and Italy. In Boston, she directed her own company, Erica Drew Dance Company, which was chosen for the New England Touring Roster and was awarded the Choreography Fellowship by The Artist Foundation,

culminating in a performance at Jacob's Pillow. She has taught at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center (NYC) and assisted May O'Donnell to set her piece, Suspension, on the Ailey Company. Here in Boston, she has taught at The Boston Conservatory, Harvard/Radcliffe Dance Program, Emerson College, Dean College, Boston Ballet, Lexington School of Ballet, Dancing Arts Center and Boston Public Schools. In 2012, Erica was honored the Teachers As Artist Fellowship taking her to Tel Aviv to study Gaga movement with Ohad Naharin. Erica received the 2014 Arts Learning Distinguished Educator Award in Dance. Erica continues to teach and choreograph and four of her pieces have been produced by Across the Ages Dance Project. Most recently, she was a Facilitator and Presenter at Jews and Jewishness in the Dance World Conference, Herberger Institute, Arizona State University, October 2018. In 2022, Erica received an Opportunity Fund Grant from the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture.

- **Lesson Planning – Teaching Composition Tools:** July 8th 12:30-2:00pm
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Andy Taylor-Blenis started dancing with her parents in International Folk Dance at age 0. Her early Creative Movement experiences were with Ruth Wheeler, co-founder of Dance Collective, and with Ann Brown-Allen. After receiving her BFA in Dance from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, she came to Boston and danced with Danny Sloane Dance, Paradigm Dance, Concert Dance Company, Dance Collective, Micki Taylor-Pinney, Dawn Kramer, Miguel Lopez, Milton Myers, Julie Ince-Thompson, ACE Entertainment, and

has been with Prometheus Dance Company for 19 years. She has taught International Dance through the Folk Arts Center of New England, Modern and Jazz Dance at Northwestern and Northeastern Universities, Harvard, Emerson, Boston University, Boston Conservatory and the Jeannette Neill Dance Studio. Andy is the artistic director of Mladost Dance Ensemble and the RSCDS Demonstration Team and loves teaching school residencies thru Mass Movement and Revels Inc. Andy is an adoring admirer of Lynn Simonson. Here are a selection of Andy's performances and choreographies and teaching.

- **Dancer Wellness & Injury Prevention – Folks Dancing Together:** July 11th 10:30-12:00pm
- **Masterclass – Lyrical Jazz:** July 11th 2:00-3:30pm



Micki Taylor-Pinney BS, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; MFA, University of North Carolina, Greensboro is a lecturer at BU College of Fine Arts School of Theatre and has intensive training in international folk dancing and additional training in kinesiology with Dorothy Vislocky. Since 1985, she has directed the dance program in the Department of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance and served as faculty advisor to the student dance company, Dance Theatre Group. Faculty advisor for the dance minor program in the College of

Fine Arts since 1999 and director of Reach, a summer outreach program for urban youth since 1998. She teaches courses in modern dance, dance history, composition, and aesthetics; she has

been a guest lecturer on Ideokinesis and pedagogy in the School of Education. She was selected as an honorary member of Boston University's Scarlet Key Honor Society in 2020. A performer with Dance Collective beginning in 1986, she became an artistic director from 1998 to 2006 during which time she performed and choreographed for the company and directed the educational/outreach programs. She choreographed over 50 dances for BU's Dance Theatre Group and over 30 dances for professional dancers and companies. She served as a dance education consultant and taught residencies for schools and colleges in Vermont, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. She is director of Mass Movement, Inc. providing educational outreach in schools and after-school programs through Young Audiences. She co-directed a teacher training grant in the Boston Public Schools and co-authored a manual for teachers. For 12 years, she was the dance director for creative arts summer programs in Dover and Brookline. Micki was president of Boston Dance Alliance for two of the eight years she served on the board.

- **Lesson Planning – Intro to Lesson Planning:** July 8th 9:00-10:00am
 - **Teaching to the Whole Person – Wrap Up & Group Activities:** July 12th 12:30-2:00pm
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