

CONTEMPORARY DANCE PROGRAMME



SYLVIE DESROSIERS
PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

2026-27

Contemporary Dance Programme

Prospectus 2026-27

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Cover Photo: Lisa Hebert
Performer: Jessie Lhôte | 2013

Photo of Building: Photo: Nicola Fridgen

The School of Dance

Where Creativity Finds its Voice

*At The School of Dance, your movement becomes your language—
a way to tell stories, express ideas, and shape the world around you.*

Founded in 1978 by **Merrilee Hodgins** and **Joyce Shietze**, with **Celia Franca** joining as Co-Artistic Director in 1979, **The School of Dance** has become one of Canada's leading centres for professional dance training. Our vision is rooted in excellence, creativity, and community.

Today, with a faculty and staff of more than 80 professionals, we operate year-round from our historic studios on **Crichton Street**—a vibrant home where discovery and discipline meet every day. Students train, create, and perform in an environment that pairs rigorous technique with the freedom to explore.

We offer two Professional Training Programmes: a **three-year post-secondary Contemporary Dance Programme** and a **nine-year Professional Ballet Programme**. Both are intensive and audition-based, designed to prepare artists for sustainable professional careers.

Graduates perform across Canada and internationally (including Margie Gillis Dance Foundation, Skeels Danse, Sylvain Émard Danse, Compagnie Marie Chouinard, Ottawa Dance Directive, and MGM Productions). Many also become choreographers, educators, rehearsal directors, and leaders who shape the future of dance.

2026–27 marks **Season 48** of The School of Dance and **Year 30** of the Contemporary Dance Programme—a legacy of artistry, community, and vision.

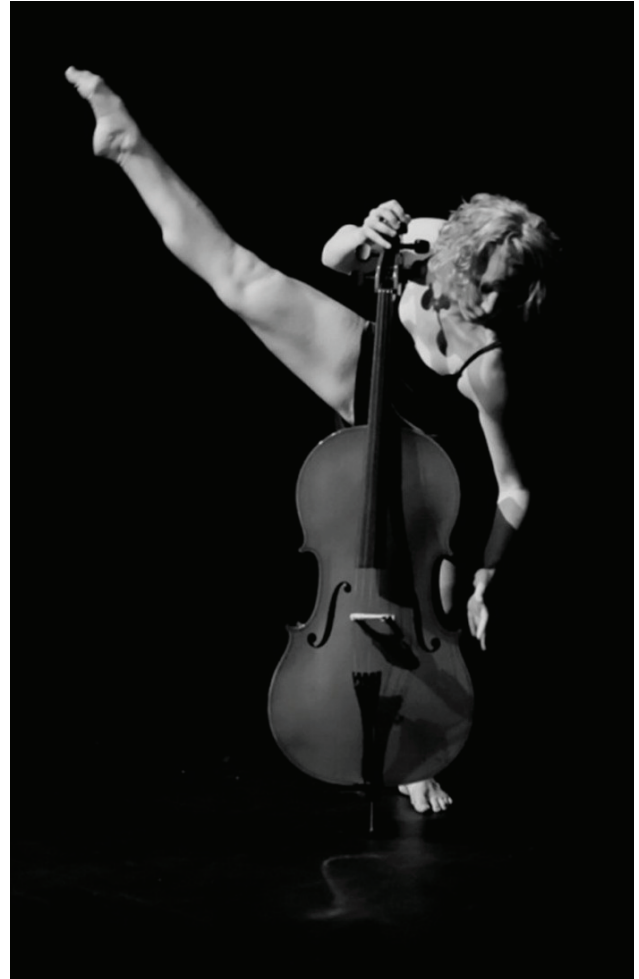


Photo: Gilles Vézina | Choreographer: Sylvie Desrosiers
Performer: Rebecca McLane | 2009



Photo: Gilles Vézina
Choreographer: Sylvie Desrosiers
Performer: Clara Van Doorn | 2023

Contemporary Dance Programme

A Vision in Motion

*Train with purpose. Create with courage.
Turn talent into art that moves people.*

The **Contemporary Dance**

Programme is for post-secondary dancers ready to turn passion into profession. Grounded in artistic inquiry and rigorous technical training, the **Contemporary Dance Programme** nurtures creative thinkers and versatile movers who can meet the evolving demands of contemporary practice.

Students integrate strength, sensitivity, and curiosity—mastering modern dance and ballet foundations while engaging with new movement approaches. Through daily mentorship, creation, and performance, students build a foundation for a sustainable life in dance and beyond.

How you'll train

- **Morning:** technical practice (modern/contemporary, ballet, conditioning).
- **Afternoon:** creation, composition, repertoire, interpretation, and rehearsals.
- **Throughout the year:** choreographic residencies with guest and resident artists.

Students perform publicly at venues such as the **ODD Box** and **Arts Court Theatre** gaining real-world stage experience and ownership of their craft.

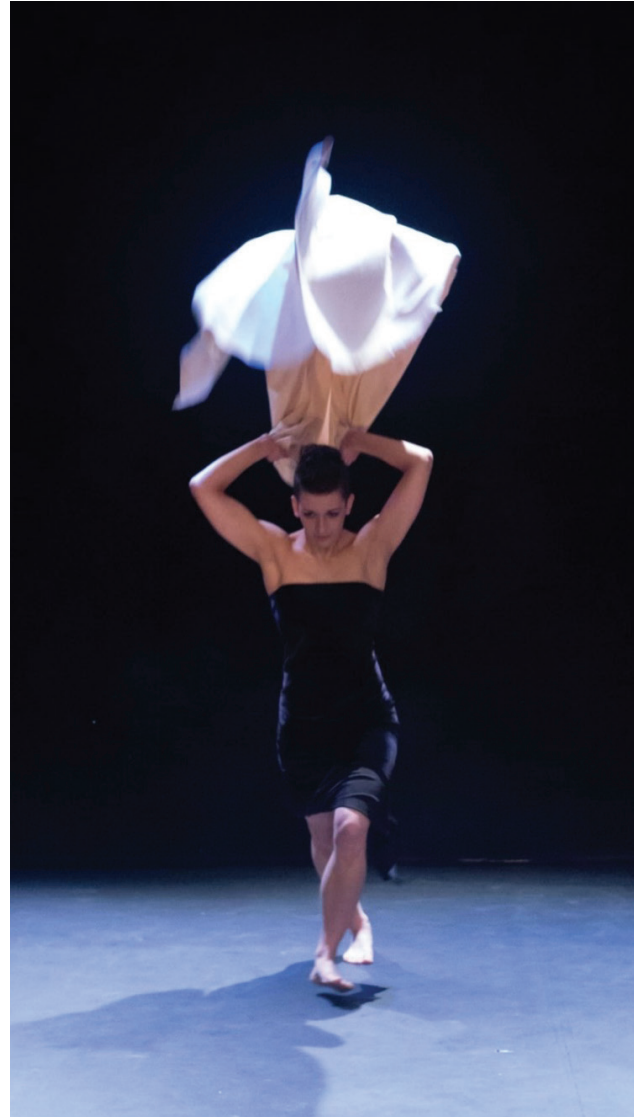


Photo: Gilles Vézina
Choreographer: Tedd Robinson
Performer: Alya Graham | 2014

Two Paths, One Passion

*Shape your artistry at The School of Dance and
expand academically with York University.*

The School of Dance offers a **Joint Diploma Degree** with **York University's Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours B.F.A.) in Dance**—a pathway that blends conservatory training with university study.

Students who complete the three-year **Contemporary Dance Programme** with a **minimum B+ (6.0 York GPA)** are eligible to apply to York's B.F.A. (Hons) in Dance. Upon admission, **60 credits** from The School of Dance training apply toward the **120-credit** degree. Students can continue at York with a tailored mix of studio and theory courses—broadening opportunities in performance, choreography, education, and arts leadership.



Photo: D. Brian Campbell
Choreographer: Marie-Julie Asselin
Performer: Alya Graham | 2013

“

Focusing on the physicality of the art form while simultaneously developing musicality, artistry and versatility, the classes, taught by incredible teachers from Ottawa and renowned guest artists, allowed me to acquire a very strong technical foundation.”

– **Robin Treleaven**, 2018 Graduate
Independent Dancer, Teacher and Choreographer



Photo: Gilles Vézina
Choreographer: Heidi Strauss
Performers: Katherine Ng, Charles Cardin-Bourbeau | 2013

Take Your First Step Audition

*Your journey starts with curiosity, commitment, and an audition
that lets your movement speak.*

Admission is by Audition.

Applicants should have at least three years of serious dance training and a strong technical and creative foundation.

2026-27 Auditions

Ottawa, 200 Crichton St.

Sunday, March 29, 2026

10:00 am–3:00 pm

Application deadline: **March 23, 2026**

Contact registrar@theschoolofdance.ca
by email

Eligibility & Documents

You need to confirm:

- Ontario Secondary School Diploma (or equivalent) or pass Superintendent approved qualifying test.
- **Send us your dance resume, two references** (recent teachers), **academic transcript/diploma copies, birth certificate copy, one full-length photo in dance wear, relevant medical information, and \$75 non-refundable audition fee.**
- **Under 18 with a High School Diploma:** submit supplementary form with parent/guardian consent.
- **Video auditions** available for applicants residing **500+ km** from Ottawa.

Want to talk with the Programme Director? Let us know and we'll connect you.

Results are emailed within **three weeks** of audition.

Submit applications to: Contemporary Dance Programme

The School of Dance, 200 Crichton Street, Ottawa, ON K1M 1W2

OR by PDF: email to registrar@theschoolofdance.ca

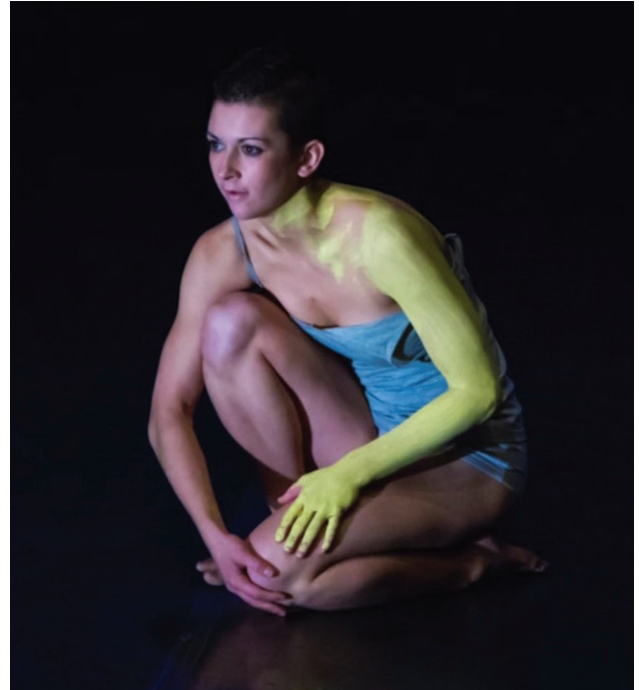


Photo: Michel Dozois
Choreographer and performer: Alya Graham | 2014

Invest in Your Artistry

Your education is an investment in skill, expression, and a life in motion.

The School of Dance is publicly supported; tuition covers only a portion of the real cost.

- **2026-27 Tuition: \$6,000** (32 weeks; September-May)
- **Payment:** typically, two term installments; monthly option available (**6%** interest)
- **Additional costs:** plan **\$300** for ancillary expenses
- **Financial notes:** Québec residents may apply for provincial loans; some students receive arts council grants. Tax receipts and **T4A** forms are issued each February.

Calendar & Routine: School year September-May, with a three-week **December** break and a one-week **March** break; statutory holidays observed. Training days **Mon-Fri, 9:00 am-4:00/5:30 pm**. Annual calendars, timetables, and student regulations are provided in **July**.

We value motivation, self-discipline, respect, and professionalism—qualities that define life as a dance artist.



Photo: Gilles Vézina
Choreographer and performer: Rosalie Paquette | 2023

“

Dancing the demanding and intense classes and choreographies always gave me great satisfaction and a profound feeling of accomplishment.”

– **Marie-Michelle Darveau**, 2014 Graduate
Dancer with Compagnie Janie et Marcio, and Sylvain Énard Danse

A City That Moves With You

Train in a city where art and culture are part of everyday life.

Facilities

Our heritage building at **200 Crichton Street** (New Edinburgh, Ottawa) includes **six** fully equipped studios with sprung **Rosco** floors, pianos, portable barres; a classroom; resource centre; wellness space; change rooms with showers; lockers; a student lounge with **microwaves and refrigerator**; and a water-bottle filling station. We maintain costumes/props, portable sound/video equipment, and a reference library and archives of student work.

Ottawa Life

Canada's capital blends world-class arts (National Arts Centre, national museums, festivals) with parks and riverside paths. The bilingual Ottawa-Gatineau region offers a rich cultural mix. **Housing** averages **\$1,300-\$2,000/month** for a one-bedroom; many students choose shared options. Local listings (e.g., *Ottawa Citizen*, *Le Droit*, Kijiji, Craigslist) are common search tools. Public transit is reliable; a monthly pass is roughly **\$135**.

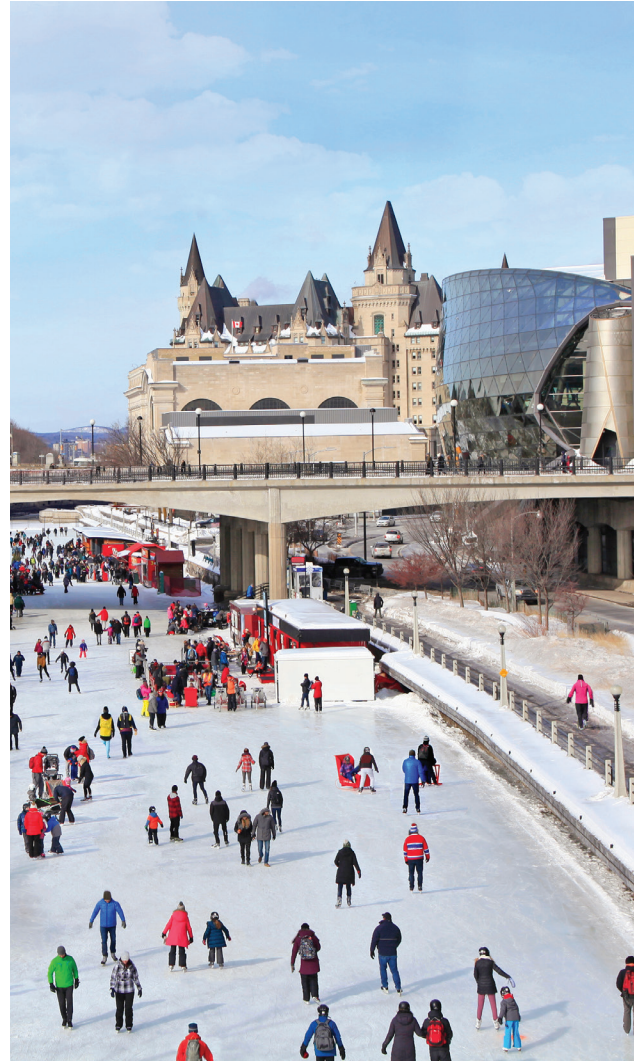


Photo: Adobestock.com

Your Training in Motion

Three years. Countless discoveries. One transformative journey into the art and profession of contemporary dance.

The Programme delivers approximately **30 hours/week** of integrated study (September–May). Each year builds depth and range:

- **Year 1—Foundation:** Strength, alignment, musicality; interpretation, creative awareness; anatomy and somatic literacy.
- **Year 2—Expansion:** Interpretation and repertoire; dance history; composition; performance psychology.
- **Year 3—Professionalism:** Advanced technique; creation/interpretation; career management; capstone solo; public performances.

Training mirrors a company day: **mornings** emphasize technique and conditioning; **afternoons** focus on creation, composition, rehearsals, and residencies. Performances in each level (studio showings, tours, and theatre productions) integrate learning with live audience experience.



Photo: D. Brian Campbell
Choreographer: Ginette Laurin
Performer: Rebecca McLane | 2010

Inside the Training

A curriculum that balances body, mind, and imagination—preparing you to move with purpose and think like an artist.

Modern/Contemporary Technique

Alignment, centre strength, weight/suspension, articulation, musicality; Limón principles (drop/recovery, momentum), modern vocabularies (contraction/release, spirals, shapes/co-ordinations), modern barre, Boneham technique, Floorwork. Progression from a primary Year 1 teacher to increased guest faculty in Years 2–3 builds adaptability and voice.

Ballet

Barre and centre work refine alignment, coordination, turnout from the hip joint, balance, turns, jumps, adagio, phrasing, accent and timing—with **live accompaniment**. Years 2–3 increase complexity (multiple turns, beats, nuanced musicality).

Somatic Studies

Anatomy-informed conditioning for strength, flexibility, coordination, injury prevention, and recovery: **Pilates**, **Yoga Tune Up®**, and **The Roll Model® Method**. Students develop individualized practices, understand hypermobility/strain, and use hands-on techniques (including ball work) to support performance.

Interpretation & Performance

Task-based workshops build spatial awareness, rhythm, dynamics, and embodied detail. Students learn to collaborate with choreographers, externalize intention, and make clear interpretive choices. Residencies (2–4 weeks) for new creations or repertoire remounts culminate in performances at the **ODD Box and Arts Court Theatre**; excerpts often tour via **DanceONTour®** and special events (e.g., **National Arts Centre**).



Photo: Chris Avery
Choreographer: Charles Cardin Bourbeau
Performer: Clodie Huot-Séguin | 2025

Inside the Training

Composition & Improvisation

Improvisation develops creative fluency; contact-improv explores gravity, momentum, inertia, and partnering. Students apply choreographic tools (time, space, energy, structure, contrast, harmony) to group works in Year 2 and present a **self-choreographed solo** in Year 3.

Supporting Courses

- **Anatomy:** functional movement, injury awareness/treatment, kinesiology, breathing mechanics.
- **Dance History/Appreciation:** pioneers of modern dance, Canadian dance lineages, current global leaders.
- **Career Management:** portfolios, auditions, funding agencies/programs, professional networks, financial basics, goal setting.
- **Performance Psychology:** goal setting, self-awareness/acceptance, anxiety reduction, biofeedback, imagery, visualization, focus, motivation, identity, emotional regulation.



The School of Dance, in the world of Canadian contemporary dance training, is like a secret little gem. Those of us lucky enough to have been a part of the Programme were able to experience first-hand the brilliance that is the faculty, training, and facility. What is unique to me about the Programme is the truly equal importance placed on both technique and interpretation; students graduate feeling confident and very well rounded.”

– **Laura Toma**, 2014 Graduate

Certified Gaga teacher, dancer with Margie Gillis Dance Foundation and LA TRESSE collective



Photo: Gilles Vézina
Choreographer: Sylvie Desrosiers
Performers: Robin Treleaven, Myrielle Bernier-Acuña | 2018

Learn From the Best

Every class is an invitation to learn from artists who shape the future of dance.

Core Leadership and Mentor



Sylvie Desrosiers, B.V.A., C.Ed.

Programme Director

Award-winning choreographer and educator,
founder of the Contemporary Division.

Resident Faculty & Specialists

Cathy Kyle Fenton, Shaun Amyot, Pam Place, PT, Nicola Fridgen, Jacqueline Ethier, Chisato Horikawa, Anna Abraham, Mary Catherine Jack and others bring decades of performance, pedagogy, and wellness expertise into the studio.

Advisor

Peter Boneham, C.M. — Order of Canada; visionary mentor; former Artistic Director, Le Groupe de la Place Royale / Le Groupe Dance Lab.



Photo: John Finnigan Lin
Dancers: 2024-25 Students

The School of Dance

Your Stage Awaits

Step into the spotlight. Your training comes alive through performance, collaboration, and creation.

Performance is central to the Programme. Students present work throughout the year—informal studio sharings, theatre productions at the **ODD Box** and **Arts Court Theatre** and **DanceONTour®** outreach in schools and community venues. Special engagements have included performances with the **National Arts Centre** for **Canada Day** and **Culture Days**.

Students learn the full production arc—communication with designers/technicians, theatre etiquette, cueing, and collaborative workflows—so they graduate ready for the professional stage.



Photo: Bill Juillette
Frédérique Pelletier with lighting designer
Fraser MacKinnon | 2019

“

The Contemporary Dance Programme at The School of Dance is why I have a career in dance. Under the instruction, openness and care of Sylvie Desrosiers and the faculty, I started to grow into the performer I am today. Throughout my training I was challenged when I needed to be pushed and nurtured with patience when that was necessary.

I completed the Programme feeling well prepared for the professional world. It is through the Programme that I first worked with Yvonne Coutts, now the Artistic Director of ODD, one of the two companies I currently work for. The Programme also provided room for our own creativity allowing me to explore my artistic voice while still in training. I would highly recommend the Programme to any aspiring contemporary dancer.”

– **Jasmin Inns**, 2001 Graduate

Former dancer with Compagnie ODD and Compagnie de danse Sursaut (Sherbrooke)



Photo: Gilles Vézina
Choreographer: Sylvie Desrosiers
Performer: Simon Renaudu | 2009

Artists Who Inspire

Every generation learns from those who came before—choreographers, teachers, and visionaries who shape the language of movement.

The Programme welcomes an extraordinary roster of choreographers and teachers through residencies, workshops, and master classes. This living network connects students to the broader Canadian and international dance community.

Guest Choreographers (through the years)

Rob Abubo (Ottawa); Massimo Agostinelli (Montréal); Julia Aplin (Toronto); Marie-Julie Asselin (Montréal); Peggy Baker (Toronto); Louise Bédard (Montréal); Martin Bélanger (Montréal); Sarah Bild (Montréal); Anik Bouvrette (Ottawa); Serge Bennathan (Vancouver); Charles Brécard (Montréal); Susie Burpee (Toronto); Marc Boivin (Montréal); Charles Cardin-Bourbeau (Montréal); Marie-Josée Chartier (Toronto); Yvonne Coutts (Ottawa); Mélanie Demers (Montréal); Danièle Desnoyers (Montréal); Lesandra Dodson (Winnipeg); Sylvain Émard (Montréal); Paul-André Fortier (Montréal); Dana Gingras (Montréal); Alya Graham (Gatineau); Karen Guttman (Montréal); Kate Hilliard (Toronto); Sasha Ivanochko (Toronto); Bill James (Toronto); Emmanuel Jouthe (Montréal); Allen Kaeja (Toronto); Kay Kenney (Kingston); Karen Kuzak (Winnipeg); Louis Laberge-Côté (Toronto); Alexandra “Spicey” Landé (Montréal); Emmanuelle Lê Phan (Montréal); Ginette Laurin (Montréal); La Fondation Jean-Pierre Perreault (Montréal); Jane Mappin (Montréal); Dominique Porte (Montréal); Simon Renaud (Montréal); Harold Rhéaume (Québec); Tedd Robinson (Ottawa); Julia Sasso (Toronto); Riley Sims (Toronto); Yvon Soglo (Gatineau); Heidi Strauss (Toronto); David Albert Toth & Emily Gualtieri, PARTS+LABOUR_DANSE (Montréal); Darryl Tracy (Toronto); Michael Trent (Toronto); Jocelyn Todd (Ottawa); Apolonia Velasquez (Toronto); Brian Webb (Edmonton); Calder White (Vancouver); Dan Wild (Toronto); Sarah Williams (Montréal).

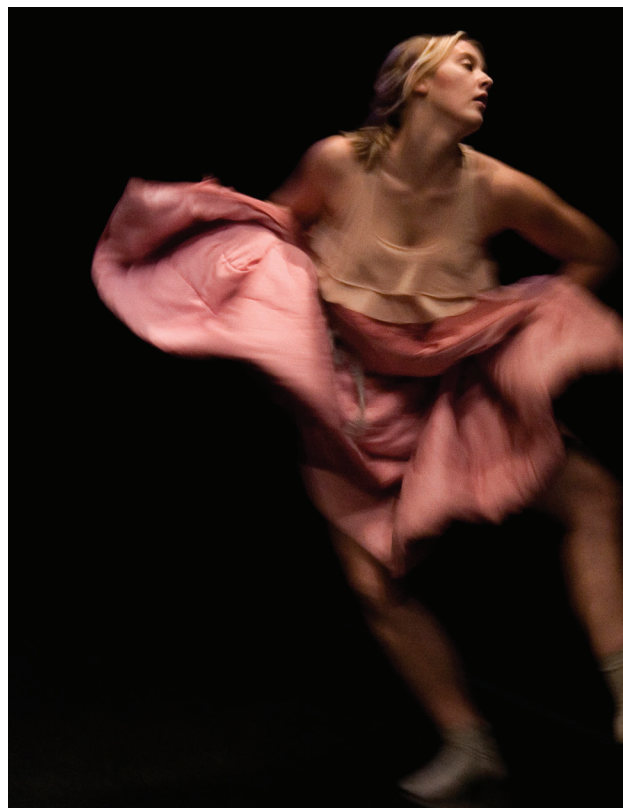


Photo: Sarah Schorlemer
Choreographer and performer: Marilou Lépine | 2010

Artists Who Inspire

Guest Teachers / Intensives / Master Classes (through the years)

Peggy Baker (Toronto); Eric Beauchesne (Montréal); Marion Ballester (Belgium); Marc Boivin (Montréal); Amanda Bon (Ottawa); Charles Brécard (Montréal); Yoan Bourgeois (France); Susie Burpee (Toronto); Charles Cardin-Bourbeau (Montréal); Ginelle Chagnon (Montréal); Lee Ching-Chun (Cloud Gate, Taiwan); Sara Coffin, Mocean (Halifax); Ernesta Corvino (Ballet master for Pina Bausch Tanztheater Wuppertal); Yvonne Coutts (Ottawa); Ana Eulate (Spain); Ralph Escamillan (Vancouver); Frey Faust (France); Noam Gagnon & Dana Gingras (Vancouver); André Gingras (Netherlands); Sylvie Gribaudo (Italy); Andrew de Lotbinière Harwood (Montréal); Susanna Hood (Montréal); Akram Khan (England); Allen & Karen Kaeja (Toronto); Alanna Kraaijeveld (Montréal); Sylvain Lafortune (Montréal); Vincent Mantsoe (France); Owen Montague (Toronto); Dylan Newcomb (Netherlands); Meagan O'Shea (Toronto); Andrea Peña & artists (Montréal); Victor Quijada (Montréal); Linda Rabin (Montréal); Lola Ryan (Ottawa); Tero Saarinen (Finland); Risa Steinberg (New York); Robert Swinston (Merce Cunningham, New York); Frédéric Tavernini (Montréal); Tiffany Tregarthen (Vancouver); Michael Trent (Toronto); Honji Wang & Sebastien Ramirez (France); Sioned Watkins (Ottawa); Paul White (Australia); Brian Webb (Edmonton); Sarah Williams (Montréal).



Photo: Lisa Hebert
Choreographer: Peggy Baker
Performer: Charles Cardin-Bourbeau | 2013

A Legacy of Excellence

For more than four decades, The School of Dance has been a place where artists train, teach, and inspire one another.



Merrilee Hodgins, A.R.A.D.

Artistic Director, Co-Founder

National leader in inclusive dance education and creation.

Photo: Simmy Ahluwalia

Administration



Fern Villeneuve —

Director of Client
Services and School
Operations

Photo: Nicola Fridgen



Nicola Fridgen —

Assistant to the
Artistic Director and
Student Liaison

Photo: Gilles Vezina

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge operating support from the **Government of Ontario**, the **Ontario Arts Council**, and the **City of Ottawa**.



Your Future in Motion

This is more than training. It's your launch into a lifetime of creativity, expression, and artistry.

At The School of Dance, you don't just learn steps—you learn to communicate through movement, to think critically about art, and to collaborate with integrity. You will graduate from the **Contemporary Dance Programme** with a professional diploma, a portfolio of performance and creation, and the confidence to move boldly into your future.

Ready to begin? Audition. Train. Transform.

Contact

The School of Dance

200 Crichton Street, Ottawa, ON K1M 1W2


Phone: **613-238-7838**

Email: registrar@theschoolofdance.ca

Website: www.theschoolofdance.ca/cdp



Photo: Bill Juillette
Choreographer: Apolonia Velasquez
Performers: 2024-25 Students



MOVE CREATE TRANSFORM

Photo: D Brian Campbell
Performer: Haley Ticknor | 2019

Curriculum | Outline

MOVE. CREATE. TRANSFORM.

YEAR 1

- Contemporary Dance Technique I and II (CON 110/120)
- Ballet I and II (BAL 110/120)
- Somatic Work I and II; includes Pilates and Yoga (SOM 110/120)
- Interpretation I and II; includes repertory and new creations (INT 110/120)
- Composition I and II; includes improvisation, contact-improv and creation (COM 110/120)
- Anatomy (ANA 110)
- Performance Psychology I (PSY 110)

YEAR 2

- Contemporary Technique III and IV (CON 210/220)
- Ballet III and IV (BAL 210/220)
- Somatic Work III and IV; includes Pilates and Yoga (SOM 210/220)
- Interpretation III and IV; includes repertory and new creations (INT 210/220)
- Composition III and IV; includes improvisation, contact-improv and creation (COM 210/220)
- Dance History/Appreciation (HIS 210)
- Performance Psychology (PSY 210)

YEAR 3

- Contemporary Technique V and VI (CON 310/320)
- Ballet V and VI (BAL 310/320)
- Somatic Work V and VI; includes Pilates and Yoga (SOM 310/320)
- Interpretation V and VI; includes repertory and new creations (INT 310/320)
- Composition V and VI; includes improvisation, contact-improv and creation (COM 310/320)
- Career Management (CMA 310)
- Performance Psychology III (PSY 310)

Students are evaluated at the end of each year for acceptance into the following year. Evaluation is based on attendance and the successful completion of each course/programme components with an overall mark of 70%.

The School of Dance

Faculty

A group of people with a special ability to inspire.



Merrilee Hodgins, A.R.A.D., Artistic Director

Merrilee Hodgins, the Co-founder and Artistic Director of The School of Dance, studied in Canada, England, Denmark, Germany and the United States. In 1971, Merrilee was awarded the prestigious Solo Seal of the Royal Academy of Dance. In 1973 she became principal dancer with the Alberta Ballet Company, later working in Denmark, Germany and the U.S. as a freelance artist. Miss Hodgins, a recipient of the YM-YWCA's 1997 *Women of Distinction Award*, was the 1997 Chair of the City of Ottawa's Cultural Leadership Committee, was a member of the board of directors for Dance Ontario, and has been awarded Canada Council grants to research and develop projects to introduce children to dance. Merrilee Hodgins is a Director of the Celia Franca Foundation and she regularly collaborates with a wide-range of organizations such as the Ontario Arts Council, the

National Arts Centre, the National Gallery of Canada, Carleton University, the Culture Works Canada and the Hnatyshyn Foundation. Miss Hodgins developed The School's suite of inclusive programmes including *Shall We Dance?* in the hospitals of Eastern Ontario, *DragonFly*® for learners with Down syndrome, the *Dance of Life* Health and Wellness programme and *Dancing in the Street* which takes place throughout the City of Ottawa each summer. Her recent artistic projects include choreographic commissions from the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, a collaboration with Canadian poet Susan McMaster, and a commission to produce a concert version of Stravinsky's *Firebird* for the Brott Music Festival in Hamilton, Ontario. In 2013, Miss Hodgins received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for her dedicated service to her peers, her community, and to the world of dance. In 2017, Miss Hodgins was presented with the Senate of Canada Sesquicentennial Medal in recognition of her valuable service to the nation. *Photo: Simmy Ahluwalia*



Resident Faculty of the Programme

Sylvie Desrosiers, B.V.A., C. Ed., Programme Director

It is under Peter Boneham's direction at Le Groupe Dance Lab that Sylvie Desrosiers trained and started her career as a choreographer and a teacher. She eventually directed Le Groupe's dance school from 1990 to 1993. In the fall of 1994 she joined The School of Dance to establish The School's Contemporary Dance Division. She is director of the division, teaches modern dance technique, composition, and is a resident choreographer. Ms. Desrosiers has extensive experience in the conception and the delivery of movement courses, dance classes and workshops in schools, colleges and universities and has been a guest choreographer in many performing arts schools. She has worked for the Ontario Ministry of Education on the development of the grade 9-12 dance curriculum and has

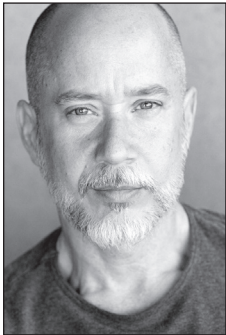
been active in the development of dance education activities with the AFEAO. As a choreographer Sylvie Desrosiers has presented her work in several Canadian cities including Ottawa, Gatineau, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. In her career spanning over 30 years, with the support of the Canada Council for the Arts, le Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, the Ontario Arts Council and the City of Ottawa, she has created works including *Submergé de pétales d'acier*, a new quintet presented in 2019, *douce tourmente* a duet for performers Marc Boivin and Heidi Strauss, à tire d'aile, *flots, glace, épaves, distance* and the trilogy *Vestibulaire*. With her company, DORSALE danse, she produced the performances of *Submergé, douce tourmente, TOUT danse, fougue* and project *Brut*. Sylvie Desrosiers is a founding member of Ottawa Dance Directive/ Centre de danse contemporaine (ODD), she is the 2011 award winner of the *Prix pour la création artistique du Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec pour la région de l'Outaouais* and the 2017 recipient of the Ottawa Arts Council *Victor Tolgesy Award*. *Photo: Michael Slobodian*

The School of Dance Faculty



Anna Abraham, MA, MHK, RP

As a Registered Psychotherapist (CRPO) with a person-centered, strength-based approach, Anna has the rewarding opportunity of supporting clients through a variety of issues related to mental well-being and performance. With a passion for mental health advocacy in sport, she holds a Master of Arts in Counselling and Spirituality (individual counselling) and a Master of Human Kinetics in Intervention and Consultation (health and performance psychology). She is also currently the Varsity Mental Health Coordinator and Counsellor for the University of Ottawa. As a life-long athlete who achieved her Black Belt in Tae Kwon Do and endured several recoveries from sport-related injuries, she can personally attest to the immense value of mental health and skills towards athletic performance. *Photo: Abraham Archives*



Shaun Amyot

Shaun Amyot was drawn to music and performing from a young age which led him to study at The School of Dance in Ottawa and at Canada's National Ballet School (NBS) in Toronto. He then worked in Europe for a decade with the Netherlands Dance Theatre under the direction of Jiri Kylian and Ballet Frankfurt with the incomparable William Forsythe. Highlights were the many world premieres with choreographers such as Kylian, Forsythe, Hans van Manen, Mats Ek, Nacho Duato and many more. He then returned to his first love: Musical Theatre, going on to perform in numerous productions in Toronto and in New York on Broadway including three Original Broadway Casts and the feature film *Chicago*. Dream roles were Amos Hart in *Chicago* on Broadway and Tobias Ragg in *Sweeney Todd* for Canstage. As a choreographer Shaun has created many works

including pieces for the San Francisco Ballet School, NBS, and the Stratford Shakespeare Festival. His teaching career includes a decade at NBS, l'École supérieure de ballet du Québec, Harvard Dance Center, the School of the Hamburg Ballet and the National Ballet Academy in Amsterdam. He has also staged works by choreographers Jiri Kylian, William Forsythe, Aszure Barton and Demis Volpi, and worked as a Rehearsal Director for the National Ballet of Canada, the Houston Ballet and the Royal Ballet of Flanders. His unique teaching style combines all of his rich and varied experiences including his studies in Alexander Technique. Shaun presently teaches Classical Ballet, Forsythe based Improvisation and Contemporary Technique and Repertoire. *Photo: William Biafore*



Esther Caron

Esther is a former dancer for Montreal's renowned Les Grands Ballets Canadiens. She has been teaching dance for over a decade. Esther graduated from L'École Supérieure du Ballet du Québec and has received many honours, prizes and special distinctions. She was also a soloist with Les Ballets Contemporains de Montréal and Ballet West of Montréal and a member of a Spanish dance and flamenco company, *Alegria d'España*. She received a certification as an associate of the Cecchetti Society of Canada. *Photo: minizoom*

The School of Dance Faculty



Jacqueline Ethier, NCPT

Jacqueline has been a leader in the Health and Wellness community in Ottawa for two decades. She has touched the lives of many through her compassionate teaching style which focuses on the somatic experience, is inspired by curiosity and informed by current science. Jacqueline is a graduate of the Contemporary Dance Programme at The School of Dance (1999) and holds the title of Nationally Certified Pilates Teacher (2006). She is a recipient of the prestigious 40 under forty Ottawa Business Journal Award. In 2002, Jacqueline founded Pilates Space in a small basement studio. She had the honour of studying with first-generation teacher Ron Fletcher for nearly a decade, an experience that had a profound effect on her teaching. With vision and dedication, Pilates Space has evolved to be Ottawa's premier Fletcher Pilates movement studio and Teacher Training Educational Centre. Jacqueline is also

a dance artist; she is a collaborator on various independent dance projects in Ottawa and is company member with Tara Luz danse, DORSALE danse (Sylvie Desrosiers) and Compagnie ODD (Yvonne Coutts). *Photo: Bill Juillette*



Nicola Fridgen

A graduate of The School of Dance Contemporary Dance Programme, Nicola Fridgen lives in Ottawa where she trains, creates, performs and teaches, along with working at The School of Dance as Assistant to the Artistic Director. Since graduating in 2008 Nicola has performed works by various Ottawa choreographers, including Sylvie Desrosiers (DORSALE danse) and Cathy Kyle Fenton, and creates/dances in her own works, often in collaboration with musician/composer Tristan Henry. In recent years she had the pleasure of performing in the Dance: Made in Canada Festival in Toronto, at the French Embassy in Ottawa, with the National Arts Centre Orchestra, in the 2016 Ottawa Fringe Festival and at the Brott Music Festival in Hamilton. Nicola works extensively in the many outreach activities of The School of Dance, including DanceONTour® in local elementary and high schools and DragonFly® for

learners with Down syndrome. As a choreographer, Nicola regularly creates for the students of the Professional Ballet and Contemporary Programmes of The School of Dance and Canterbury High School. In 2013, she was mentored by Peter Boneham, CM to create her first work on professional dancers. She coaches Ottawa rhythmic gymnast Kimana Mar, winner of 17 gold medals at the Special Olympics World Games in Los Angeles (2015), Abu Dhabi (2019) and Berlin (2023). Nicola was Co-Producer of Dusk Dances Ottawa for three years and since 2015 has been the Project Leader of Dark Horse Dance Projects, an arts platform designed to create performance opportunities for contemporary dancers and choreographers in the Ottawa region. *Photo: Gilles Vézina*



Chisato Horikawa LCSC-CICB, MA (in Dance Education)

Chisato began her ballet training in her hometown of Nara, Japan. At the age of eighteen, she was accepted into the professional ballet training program with the Showa School for Performing Arts in Tokyo. While at the Showa School, she participated in an exchange program with the Royal Ballet in England where she received intensive training. After graduating from the Showa School, she began to teach ballet at Showa Women's University and Company Bona Terra. Chisato moved to Canada in order to continue her professional development as a ballet teacher through the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School Teacher Training Program, where she graduated with distinction. After moving to Ottawa and joining The School of Dance faculty, Chisato successfully pursued her Licentiate teacher qualification with Cecchetti Canada, as well as a Master of Arts degree in Dance

Education through the University of Bath, England, in partnership with the Royal Academy of Dance. Chisato also holds the Enrico Cecchetti Diploma. *Photo: Patrick McNeill*

The School of Dance Faculty



Mary Catherine Jack

Mary Catherine is an Ottawa based Independent Dance Artist. She is a graduate of the The School of Dance Contemporary Dance Program and holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree (Visual Arts) from the University of Waterloo. Mary Catherine is a Fletcher Pilates® Qualified Teacher, *MELT Method*® Instructor and *MELT Method*® Neurostrength Instructor. Mary Catherine has over fifteen years of teaching experience in the field of movement and continues to expand her repertoire through ongoing practice and professional development. She works with students of all ages, from children, to teens, to adults and trains all levels of movers, from beginners, to professional dancers. She is curious and adventurous, which motivates her to continue exploring and expanding her own practice. Mary Catherine is inspired by art, by nature, and the amazing community of people that she is surrounded by. *Photo: Bill Juillette*



Cathy Kyle Fenton

Cathy Kyle Fenton has performed extensively with Le Groupe de la Place Royale (Ottawa) and Dancemakers (Toronto), touring internationally. She has danced in works by Jean Pierre Perreault, Christopher House, James Kudelka, Carol Anderson, and Doug Varone, among others. Cathy studied at the Mudra school in Belgium and also studied with such luminaries as Peter Boneham, Peggy Baker, Maggie Black, Irene Dowd and Lar Lubovitch. Cathy has received numerous grants and awards including Canada Council grants, Ottawa Arts Council creation fund, The Floyd Chalmers Performing Arts Award and the Erik Bruhn Memorial Award. In 2010, Cathy premiered her choreography *Moon* in Series Danse 10; in 2011, she co-produced an evening of dance with Caroline Barrière; in 2013, she produced a full evening of her choreographies at the ODD BOX including *Outskirts of Town*, *Dominoes* and *Drink the Water*; in July 2015 her work was performed

in Dark Horse Projects; in August 2015 she was awarded the summer residency at ODD and presented *Raw Footage*, an evening of her works. *Raw Footage* was performed again in the 2016 Ottawa Fringe Festival. In October 2017, she produced two evenings of her choreographies in *4X4 Dance*. Her latest work *Two Trust* was performed in Series Danse 10 and was made into a film (Steven Hunt, SD Video Productions). Cathy is a licensed Fletcher Pilates teacher, Hypopressives Canada instructor (neuro-myofascial movement), a BONE FIT instructor (Osteoporosis Canada), and Buff Bones instructor (a medically endorsed full body exercise system for bone and joint health). *Photo: Paul Fenton*



Pam Place, PT FCAMPT CAFCI

Pam Place is an insightful physiotherapist with a professional dance background, who uses her knowledge of the physical demands of performing arts careers to help musicians and dancers avoid injury and maximize their potential. Pam has acquired experience assisting a broad range of clients since beginning her physiotherapy career in 2000. She began at The Ottawa Hospital Rehabilitation Centre, initially working in the areas of respiratory care, spinal cord injury rehab and complex orthopaedics. In 2004 she transitioned into private orthopaedic practice. She now divides her time between The School of Dance in Ottawa, Ontario and PhysioSport Chelsea in Chelsea, Québec. Pam is a graduate of The National Ballet School in Toronto, and spent her performing career dancing with the National Ballet of Canada from 1983 to 1992.

She remains active in Ballet, currently serving on the faculty of The School of Dance, where she teaches anatomy to contemporary dance students and ballet to senior full time students. Pam is the recipient of *the Erik Bruhn Memorial Award* (1997), *the Karen Kain Award* (1996, 1998) from the Dancer Transition Center and *the Mensa Canada Scholarship* (1998). In addition to her BSc. PT, Pam also holds the Advanced Diploma in Manual and Manipulative Therapy from the Orthopaedic Division of the *Canadian Physiotherapy Association* and is certified with *Acupuncture Canada* in the use of anatomical acupuncture. She has also completed "Principles of Dance Medicine", a program offered at Harkness Center for Dance Injuries in New York City. *Photo: Andrew Muir*



Photo: Lisa Hebert
Performer: Audrée Papineau-Chartrand | 2015