Dance

Overview

Step into dance at Connecticut College, and you discover a program shaped by some of the most notable names in the field. The American Dance Festival was held here for 30 years, establishing the College’s reputation as a premier place to learn dance. You get the best of all worlds – a strong liberal arts education with an equally strong, comprehensive, supportive and demanding dance program that encourages interdisciplinary exploration. We are close to New York City, Boston and Providence and bring many guest artists and performances to campus. Our company-in-residence, David Dorfman Dance, teaches classes and choreographs works with students for a two-week period each semester. Recent guests include Kyle Abraham, Monica Bill Barnes and Faye Driscoll.

Personalized Learning

You are exposed to three levels of choreography and a variety of techniques, including modern, Afro-Caribbean, West African, improvisation and ballet. Most importantly, you are encouraged to find a singular voice for your artistry. Dance is a universal language and we hope you study abroad. Options range from Europe to Australia and India. You also have an opportunity to intern with a dance company or arts group.

Dance Productions

You are able to participate in at least six dance productions each year through the Dance Department and student-run clubs. Each spring, senior majors produce their own concert, creating a budget and choreographing and publicizing the show. Dance companies are associated with five of our professors, providing additional opportunities for performance.

Aaron Samuel Davis

Q: Did you study abroad?
A: I studied in Peru my junior year. I returned for a funded internship in Summer 2013 at the Afro-Peruvian Museum of El Carmen and the National Ballet of Peru in Lima. Peru’s rich history in dance led me there. My honors thesis research stems from my experiences abroad.

Q: What types of research have you done?
A: I did my own independent research through honors study with the help of professors David Dorfman, Rosemarie Roberts and Leo Garofalo. My work explores the complexities between dance and tourism as it relates to Afro-Peruvian dance’s rich aesthetic. I explore the relationship among race, tourism, and the destruction of Afro-Peruvian dance and the abolishment of its cultural principles.

Q: What are your future plans?
A: I plan to pursue an MFA in choreography while dancing professionally. Afterward, I intend to pursue a doctoral degree in performance studies.
Faculty

Shani Collins Achille, Assistant Professor of Dance
B.A., Hollins University; M.F.A., Hollins University in partnership with the American Dance Festival
Dance theory and composition; West African dance and folklore; somatic practices; dance history

David Dorfman, Professor of Dance; Chair of Dance Department
B.S., Washington University; M.F.A, Connecticut College
Choreography

Heidi Henderson, Assistant Professor of Dance
B.A., Colby College; M.F.A., Smith College
Modern technique; improvisation; anatomy; choreography; dance writing

Marya Ursin, Adjunct Instructor in Dance
M.A., Swarthmore College
Yoga; mask, myth, movement

Derrick Yanford, Guest Artist/Ballet Instructor
Ballet

Shawn Hove, Assistant Professor of Dance
B.F.A., Cornish College of the Arts; M.F.A., Choreography, The Ohio State University
Dance production; dance lighting; mediated performance; dance film; dance documentation; choreography; dance technique

Lisa Race, Assistant Professor of Dance
B.A., Rutgers University; M.F.A., Hollins University in association with the American Dance Festival
Advanced modern technique; improvisation; dance for the camera

Rosemarie Roberts, Assistant Professor of Dance
B.A., Hunter College; M.A., Queens College, City University of New York; Ph.D., Graduate Center, City University of New York
Body, knowledge, power and difference; dance studies; intersection of arts and social justice; social psychology of performance and dance

Richard Schenk, Musician/Composer for Dance
B.M., Oberlin College Conservatory of Music; M.M., Ohio State University
Dance composition; music for dance

Selected Courses

Three Levels of Choreography, Dance Production; Music for Dance; Dance and Technology; Dance Writing; Acting for Dancers; Anatomy of Movement; Pedagogy; Compositional Improvisation, and Embodied Resistance.

Movement Techniques include: Modern/Post Modern, Afro-Caribbean, West African, Contact Improvisation and Ballet.

About Connecticut College

Connecticut College is a private, highly selective liberal arts college with 1,850 students and more than 40 majors in the arts, sciences, social sciences and humanities, as well as the option for students to self-design majors. The College offers a high level of intellectual challenge, a campus culture that supports students to tailor their educational experience to their own interests and goals, and a four-year career development program that teaches students how to translate a liberal arts degree into a first job or graduate school admission. Connecticut College is situated in the small New England seaport of New London.

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A MAJOR IN DANCE?

Artistic Director, Nicholas Leichter Dance
Special Projects Manager, Time Out New York
Dancer, New York Chinese Cultural Center
Co-Founder, Big Dance Theater
Art Teacher, Concord Hill School
Associate Professor of Kinesiology, Nicholas Leichter Dance
Arts Educator, University of Hartford
Marketing Manager, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts
Dance Director, Stephen Pelton Dance Theater
Dancer, Pilobolus
Managing Director, Anna Myer and Dancers
Choreographer, Clare Byrne Dance
Artistic Director, Deborah Abel Dance Co.
Instructor of Choreography, New York University
Physical Therapist, Munroe-Meyer Institute

EXAMPLES OF STUDENT RESEARCH IN DANCE

Aaron Samuel Davis ’14
An unusual celebration: unraveling the allure of dance performance: Afro-Peruvian dance in the context of globalization and tourism

Amy Gernux ’13
The story of you and me: an urban pop narrative

Hillary Lindsay ’13
Food, language, and tango: embodiment of Italian transnationalism in Argentina

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