



Presents

Synapse Contemporary Dance Theater

November 30, 2020

Founder:

Linda Gold

Artistic Directors:

Jae Lee and Mark Tomasic

Faculty Choreographers:

Angela Jordan, Sophie Monat, Cihitli Ocampo, Mark Tomasic,
Vanessa Van Wormer

Student Choreographers:

Liam Gifkins, Jessica Taylor

This project is supported in part by grants from Associated Students of Santa Monica College and generous donations from the Los Angeles Philanthropic Committee for the Arts, the Public Policy Institute of Santa Monica College, and our private donors.

Directors' Note

Through this production, we delight in sharing the creativity of prestigious faculty as well as our own Synapse student choreographers. You will witness many contemporary voices in dance expressed by and through our dancers. As you engage in this performance, we invite you to open your hearts and find truth, beauty, inspiration, and meaning wherever you might.

Jae Lee and Mark Tomasic



CONTEMPORARY



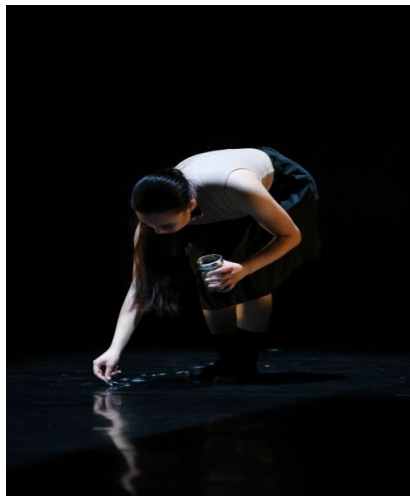
Let mirrors be gone.
Time be gone.
Day be gone.

Choreographer: Liam Gifkins

Music: “*Hallelujah*” by HAIM

Dancers: Liam Gifkins, Amira Murphy, Aya Nakaguchi,

Additional Credits: A huge thank you to Sam Bedard for sharing this experience with us, location scouting, filming, and offering her creativity so that we could bring this vision to life.



MODERN

Summer

The movements in this piece come from within each individual dancer as they strip away all pretense and move from a place of raw impulse, emotion, and honesty

Choreographer: Cihltli Ocampo

Music: “*The Four Seasons: Concerto no 2 in G Minor – Presto*” by Antonio Vivaldi

Dancers: Shuaishuai Chen, Guru Amrit Khalsa, Ania Kouchnerov, Aya Nakaguchi, Golnaz Sadrolashrafi

Thank you to those who force us to look within and be better.

CONTEMPORARY

Colloquially

Colloquially is an improvisation-based piece; an expression of Tchaikovsky’s Rose Adagio through colloquial movement. The piece stems from movement studies, observing shapes and light, as well as interpreting transitions relative to each individual in the piece.

Choreographer: Jessica Taylor

Music: “*Sleeping Beauty*”: The Rose Adagio by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Dancers: Ellie Johnson, Surya Khalsa, Anna Konstantinovsky, Sarah Lewis, Paola Monseratt, Amira Murphy, Lynna Yee

FUSION

Find Your Way Back

If you ever start to lose yourself, find your way back.

Choreographer: Angela Jordan

Music: “*Find Your Way Back*” by Beyoncé

Dancers: Shuaishuai Chen, Chisato Fujii, Guru Amrit Khalsa, Surya Khalsa, Denice Lee, Jessica Taylor



CONTEMPORARY

One Sky

Even when apart, we share the same sky.

Choreographer: Sophie Monat

Music: “*We Move Lightly*” by Dustin O’ Halloran, “*String Quartet No. 3 VI. Mishima/Closing*” by Philip Glass

Dancers: Chisato Fujii, Liam Gifkins, Denice Lee, Chisaki Yamada

SCREENDANCE

I’m a stranger here myself

Choreographer: Vanessa Van Wormer, with dancers

Direction: Vanessa Van Wormer and Andrew Alden

Music: “*I’m a stranger here myself*” Composed and Performed by Andrew Alden

Dancers: Liam Gifkins, Ellie Johnson, Aya Nakaguchi, Golnaz Sadrolashrafi, Chisaki Yamada, Lynna Yee

Special Thanks: Delaney Johnson and Amira Murphy

CONTEMPORARY

a Shard

“*a shard*” is an excerpt from the piece “a shade, a shard, a sliver” (2013). The inspiration from the piece comes from the stylized characteristics of classic film noir. The dance emulates primary moods of film noir which include evil, desperation, and paranoia. The dance seeks to replicate the disorienting visual schemes, ominous shadows, and dark claustrophobic appearance of these films.

Choreographer: Mark Tomasic

Music: “*Psycho*” by Bernard Hermann, performed by Petra Haden

Dancers: Shuaishuai Chen, Chisato Fujii, Liam Gifkins, Ellie Johnson, Guru Amrit Khalsa, Surya Khalsa, Anna Konstantinovskiy, Denice Lee, Sarah Lewis, Amira Murphy, Aya Nakaguchi, Golnaz Sadrolashrafi, Jessica Taylor, Chisaki Yamada, Lynna Yee



PRODUCTION CREDITS

Synapse Founder.....Linda Gold
Artistic Directors.....Jae Lee and Mark Tomasic
Dance Production Specialist..... Endah Redjeki
Dance Administrative Assistant.....Jocelyn Alex
Costume Coordinator Patricia Oliva
SMC Marketing Coordinator Ming-Yea Wei
Graphic Design.....Vivian Chu, Jonathan Ng
Photography..... Charles Mark-Walker
Web/Social Media.....Regina Ip, Marissa Moreno
.....Paul Trautwein
Program Information..... Contributed by Synapse Choreographers
Program EditorsJae Lee and Mark Tomasic
Video Editor..... Nicholas Pudjarminta

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO:

SMC Media Center/Graphic Center Department

SMC Web/Social Media Department

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Associated Students of Santa Monica College

Synapse Dance Theater SMC Contemporary Dance Ensemble

For over 40 years, Synapse Dance Theater, Santa Monica College Contemporary Dance Ensemble, has contributed to the cultural life of Los Angeles by offering innovative dance presentations on campus, in schools, and in area theaters. Past performances include the Broad Stage, Getty Center, Highways Performance Space in Santa Monica, The Cast Theater in Hollywood, Electric Lodge in Venice, The Will Geer Theatricum Botanicum in Topanga Canyon, Inter-College Consortium and University Exchanges, College Dance Festivals in New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, California, Georgia and New Jersey as well as travel-study tours to New York City, England, France, and Switzerland. Dances from *Synapse Dance Theater* (Dance 55A and Dance 70), were

presented at the **American College Dance Association (ACDA)** Baja Conference at University of California, Irvine (Spring, 2019) and were honored to be selected for the gala performance.

Linda Gold (Founder) was the first full-time faculty in Dance at SMC, and was able to initiate a full curriculum Dance Program (now Department), Dance Major, numerous dance series, university transfer agreements, travel-studies in Dance and Synapse Dance Theater, the SMC Contemporary Dance Ensemble. She has taught in the Mentor Program, been advisor to Dance Club, arranged interdepartmental performing/arts events, community outreach, intercollegiate dance consortium and has served on a variety of college committees. She has performed with the Joffrey Ballet Company, Wolf Trap Company, Contemporary Dance Ensemble, Dance/L.A. and won critical praise from international tours with her own Concert Ensemble. She has received grants for her creative work, presented papers at scholarly conferences and adjudicated dance and film competitions. Professor Gold has a BFA in Dance and a Special Education Teaching Certificate from the University of Cincinnati, an MA in Performance and Choreography from UCLA and is completing work on her doctoral degree from the University of Helsinki.

Artistic Director

Jae Lee began her dance training in South Korea where she earned a BS degree in ballet from the Han Yang University. In Korea, she was a member of the *Lee Ballet Company* and danced professionally from 2001 to 2002. In 2003, Lee attended the State University of New York, College at Brockport and earned an MA degree in dance. Lee also holds an MFA degree in dance with an emphasis in choreography from the University of California, Irvine. She has been actively participating the American College Dance Association (ACDA) and her choreographies have been selected to be performed in 'best of festival' Gala Concerts. In 2014, Lee's contemporary ballet, *Interwoven* (2013) was selected for

the Gala Concert at ACDA, and one of her newly choreographed contemporary modern pieces “Entangled Somewhere... (2017)” was also selected to be performed in the Gala Concert, as well as the first alternate choice for the National Festival to be held at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC. Lee is a recipient of the Luis Nazar Chair of Excellence in the Performing Arts, and currently, she is a full time faculty member at Santa Monica College Dance Department.

Mark Tomasic has performed with a variety of internationally renowned dance companies throughout his professional career of over 20 years. Among others, Mark has performed principal and featured roles in the masterworks of such notable choreographers as Martha Graham, Donald McKayle, Paul Taylor, David Parsons, Sean Curran, May O'Donnell, George Balanchine, Antony Tudor, Flemming Flindt, Talley Beatty and Agnes de Mille. As a choreographer, Mark has created works for numerous dance companies, colleges and universities across the country. In Spring 2019, his work *Wianbu* was selected for presentation at the American College Dance Festival Gala Concert. Mark has worked extensively in the field of physically integrated dance with the Dancing Wheels Company & School, one of the premier arts and disability organizations in the United States. Serving as Artistic Advisor to the Company, Mark travels nationally and internationally to teach physically integrated dance to students and professionals alike and is the author of the inclusive dance training manual, *Physically Integrated Dance: The Dancing Wheels Comprehensive Guide for Teachers, Choreographers and Students of Mixed Abilities*. Mark holds an MFA in Dance from the University of California, Irvine and a BFA in Ballet from the University of Cincinnati. He serves as a full-time faculty member in the Dance Department of Santa Monica College where he has been awarded recognition as “Equity Champion” and “Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year” (2018-19).

Faculty Choreographers

Angela Jordan holds a B.A. and M.F.A. in Dance from UCLA. She is a recipient of several fellowships and has conducted research in Havana, Cuba and Guinea, West Africa. Jordan has choreographed and danced in music videos, TV shows, and independent films. Jordan has taught at the Bates College Dance Festival, ACDFCA, UCLA, Cal State Long Beach, Long Beach City College and at Lula Washington Dance Theater. She is currently on staff at Santa Monica College, El Camino College and Debbie Allen Dance Academy.

Sophie Monat was born in London, England and began her professional career in Europe where she danced with the Lille Opera Ballet in France and the National Ballet of Portugal. Following eight years as Ballet Mistress to the New Jersey Ballet, she served as Director of the Classical/Contemporary Dance Department at the O.C. School of the Arts and was also Ballet Mistress to the State Street Ballet in Santa Barbara. Ms. Monat was a member of the full-time faculty at the CSULB Department of Dance and currently teaches for Santa Monica College and the Westside Ballet. She also works extensively as a guest artist and has taught and choreographed for ballet companies, dance festivals, and universities including Stanford University, ODC/San Francisco, the Lyon Opera Ballet, Loyola Marymount University, State Street Ballet, and Montclair State University, New Jersey. A three-time recipient of the finalist award at the McCallum Theatre's Choreography Festival in Palm Desert, Ms. Monat formed her dance company, *Monat Dance*, in 2009. Most recently, Ms. Monat was one of six artists invited to participate in the Cohan Collective, a choreographic residency directed by Robert Cohan, Founding Artistic Director of the London Contemporary Dance Theatre.

Cihtli Ocampo is the co-founder and lead dancer of Arte y Pureza Flamenco Co. She has trained and performed in flamenco, Jazz, Tap, Ballet, Modern and Ballroom and trained in Horton and Dunham at the Ailey School in NYC. After a decade of working and training in Spain,

she returned to the US and has been teaching at SMC for six years. She is a Fulbright Scholar, has a B.A. in Political Science from NYU and is currently an MFA in Dance candidate at Hollins University.

Mark Tomasic (see Artistic Directors bios)

Vanessa Van Wormer, Associate Professor of Dance at Santa Monica College teaches ballet, contemporary, choreography, dance history, and coordinates the Dance NYC and Florence study programs. Originally from Spokane WA, she has danced for Ballet Spokane and The Spokane Opera, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Bill Evans Dance Company, and in prestigious venues including Jacob's Pillow. Her choreography has been presented nationally and internationally, including Tincino in Danza, TESIS in Lugano Switzerland, and in the critically acclaimed festivals. Van Wormer previously was Visiting Assistant Professor of Dance at The College at Brockport NY, and artistic director of VVWdance, a contemporary collective. Van Wormer is also an ABT® certified teacher.

Student Choreographer

Liam Gifkins was born and raised in Southampton, New York. His dance training began about 8 years ago with a primary focus on street dance styles. Prior to attending SMC he spent two years training in New Zealand and performing with Vogue Dance Crew. Since enrolling at SMC, Liam has branched out into more classical and contemporary styles of dance such as Ballet, Jazz, and Modern. After graduation he aspires to work in the industry as a choreographer/creative director

Jessica Taylor began her classical ballet training with Kirov Ballet Principal Marat Daukayev. While studying Vaganova ballet technique she also worked with other master ballet teachers including: Colleen Neary, Thordal Christensen & Robyn Gardenhire. Jessica performed as a soloist with City Ballet of Los Angeles under the artistic direction of Robyn Gardenhire. During her time with City Ballet of Los Angeles she

appeared as a ballet dancer in Misty Copeland's *A Ballerina's Tale*, Good Day LA and in the movie *Honey 2*. Jessica is currently pursuing a degree in Computer Science.



Department Chair: Judith Douglas

Full-time Dance Faculty: Judith Douglas, Marissa Moreno, Jae Lee, Sri Susilowati, Mark Tomasic, Vanessa Van Wormer

Part-Time Dance Faculty: Seda Aybay-Owens, Laura Canellias, Keali'i Ceballos, Sophie Gados, Angela Jordan, Karen McDonald, Cynthia Molnar, Cihlti Ocampo, Raquel Ramírez, Charlotte Richards, Roberta Wolin-Tupas

Dance Accompanists: Mark Litver – lead accompanist, Kirk Brundage, John Carbone, Dylan Halacy, Yelena Osipova, Alla Plotkin, Gnenemon Soro, Malik Sow, Miho Sparling, Nonna Ter-Avanesova, Frederick "Derf " Walker

Dance Production Specialist: Endah Redjeki

Dance Department Administrative Assistant: Jocelyn Alex

SPRING AUDITIONS 2021

SYNAPSE DANCE THEATER

Synapse Dance 55A

This course offers performance experience and is organized as a modern dance company for concerts and dance productions. Students participate as dancers and choreographers. Styles range from modern to postmodern, contemporary ballet to modern jazz and hip hop fusion.

Student Choreographers:

Live Audition/Zoom Meeting: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 3:00pm
Students must present two minutes of original choreography they wish to be developed for the Spring production.

Dancers Audition:

Live Audition/Zoom Meeting: Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 3:00pm

All dancers auditioning must be warmed up and wear black on black dancewear.

Zoom links will be provided on February 16, 2021

at <https://www.smc.edu/academics/academic-departments/dance/program/auditions.php>

GLOBAL MOTION, WORLD DANCE COMPANY

Global Motion Dance 57A

This course offers performance experience and is organized as a world dance company. Dancers and choreographers audition, rehearse and perform on stage traditional and contemporary forms of world dance. Styles include dances of Africa, Asia, Latin America, México, Europe (ballet) and USA (jazz, tap, hip hop).

Student Choreographers:

Live Audition/Zoom Meeting: Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 6:00PM

Students must present three minutes of their work to be developed along with a description of origin and authenticity.

Dancers Audition:

Audition Zoom Meeting: Friday, February 19, 2021 at 3:00PM

All dancers auditioning must be warmed up and wear black on black dancewear.

Zoom links will be provided on February 16, 2021 at <https://www.smc.edu/academics/academic-departments/dance/program/auditions.php>

DANCE DEPARTMENT SPRING 2021 PERFORMANCES

Synapse, Contemporary Dance Ensemble

Virtual Performance (date TBA)

Global Motion, World Dance Company

Virtual Performance (date TBA)

For the latest updates on current and future SMC Dance Department events, please visit the following sources: www.smc.edu/dance