This year, the FCDD received an “American Masterpieces” grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to restage Merce Cunningham’s renowned choreographic collage, MinEVENT, on two casts of five college dancers. This project was especially timely, as it coincided with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company’s final International Legacy Tour — the company disbanded in January. Performances by the two different casts took place at a variety of venues throughout the fall, and included original collaborations with five college costume, set, video and sound design artists. Merce Cunningham (1919–2009) was a leader of the American avant-garde throughout his seventy-year career and is considered one of the most important choreographers of the modern era. Cunningham expanded the frontiers not only of dance, but also of contemporary visual and performing arts. His collaborations with artistic innovators from every creative discipline have yielded an unparalleled body of American dance, music, and visual art. For this version of MinEVENT, long-time company member Banu Ogan, restaged excerpts from four dances spanning four decades of Cunningham’s repertoire: Scramble (1967), Un jour ou deux (1973), Fielding Sixes (1980), and Scenario (1997). With no familiar narrative or musical moorings, as well as constantly changing sound scores, performance spaces, visual designs and costumes, this work proved challenging and revelatory for dancers and audiences alike.

“...you have to love dancing to stick to it. It gives you nothing back, no manuscripts to store away, no paintings to show on walls and maybe hang in museums, no poems to be printed and sold, nothing but that single fleeting moment when you feel alive. It is not for unsteady souls.”

—Merce Cunningham
CAMILLE BROWN RESIDENCY
OCTOBER 3–9

Nationally renowned choreographer and performer, Camille Brown, was in residence at UMass and the FCDD in October, where she restaged her highly praised recent work, New Second Line — A Celebration of Spirit and Culture of the People of New Orleans. The piece was performed on the University Dancers Concert in December, with excerpts touring to area schools in January. Ms. Brown taught master classes throughout the five colleges, at the Pioneer Valley Performing Arts High School and as a community outreach event at the Dunbar Community Center in Springfield, MA. She also presented a talk at the University Museum of Contemporary Art on her work and career.

“DANCING WITH MERCE”

Long-time Merce Cunningham Dance company member and award-winning choreographer, writer and actor Gus Solomons Jr. delivered this year’s annual Five College Dance Department Lecture: “Dancing with Merce.” Weaving absurdist, chance-inspired questions for the audience, with more personal reminiscences of his dancing and long friendship with Merce, Mr. Solomons paid humorous yet poignant tribute to Cunningham’s irreplaceable genius, especially his embrace of chance methods in choreography. For Cunningham (and his philosophical mentor, John Cage) chance offered a way to transcend the bounds of the ego’s narrow conventions, its “likes and dislikes.” As Lewis Hyde writes of Cage, “He asked that intention be thwarted rigorously, not occasionally or whimsically. He worked hard at chance. He would literally spend months tossing coins and working the I Ching to construct a score . . . And when a piece was finished, it was not meant to be an occasion for improvisation; it was meant to be played within the constraints chance had determined . . . The person is being disciplined away from the ego’s habitual attitudes and toward a fundamental change of consciousness. . . . The person is being disciplined away from the ego’s habitual attitudes and toward a fundamental change of consciousness.”

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“The very last thing one could expect of Merce was the he would discuss his intentions . . . Merce mistrusted words as descriptions of dances and was leery of putting literary ideas into our heads, fearing that we’d attempt to interpret them rather than allowing the choreography to speak for itself. It was not that he wanted us devoid of our own ideas about his dances, but that he hoped our ideas, whatever they were, would grow from the mute seed of movement.”

—Carolyn Brown
Lead dancer with Cunningham for 25 years.
Nicole Bindler (HC ’95) traveled to Findhorn, Scotland in 2011 as a part of Deborah Hay’s Solo Performance Commissioning Project. This culminated in a 20-minute solo choreographed by Hay and adapted and performed by Nicole.

Rebecca Bogue (HC ’08) has choreographed and produced six original ballets in Manhattan over the past 3.5 years. Three of the nine dancers, including the choreographer, in things we like, have traumatic brain injuries.

Alison Barry (HC ’97) earned her Ph.D. in Dance History & Theory at the University of California, Riverside, and is currently Visiting Assistant Professor in Dance at Davidson College in North Carolina. Her academic research explores autobiographical performance forms and has been presented at the conferences of the Society of Dance History Scholars and the Congress on Research in Dance.

Kimberly Brandt (HC ’99) and Walsh Hansen had a showing of their video 50 MPH at the Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance.

Taela Brooks (AC ’06) is living in Melbourne, Australia, working as a stage performer, choreographer and teacher. Her next show is Gershwin’s Crazy for You.

Katherine Buechner (AC ’04) is a graduate student in the Yale School of Sound Design.

Mora Cantlin (MHC ’05), after working at Jacob’s Pillow on the year-round administrative staff, has taken a fundraising position at Dartmouth College where she currently works in marketing with the Audience Engagement Department at the Hopkins Center for the Arts.

Nicole Canuso (HC ’91) premiered As the Eyes of the Seahorse, a new work for Nicole Canuso Dance Company, in Philadelphia. The company was also a recipient of The Knight Arts Challenge Grant.

Audra Carabetta (UM BFA ’99) recently presented Please Be Seated, with her company, Audra Carabetta and Dancers, at Green Street Studios in Cambridge. They have also performed at the Massachusetts Dance Festival, Bowdoin College, College of the Holy Cross, The Dance Complex, The Dance Place of Newburyport and the Virginia Beach Performing Arts Center.

Sue Casey-Murray (UM ’84) continues to teach in COMMUNITY OUTREACH/DANCE IN EDUCATION

The FCDD received a grant from Five Colleges, Inc. this spring to fund a new, half-time, two year position in Community Outreach and Dance in Education. This new hire will help the FCDD address growing student interest in these important areas and energize its efforts to engage new and underserved populations in the broader community. Such outreach efforts have been a strong interest of the FCDD in recent years. For example, we have offered courses and projects, including an annual (January) student company tour to local K-12 schools and retirement communities, outreach to local public high school dance programs, multicultural outreach activities for youth in Holyoke and Springfield (especially through the Sankofa Project), and faculty and adjunct courses in both community outreach and dance education. The FCDD also recently received approval for a dance education licensure program (via MHC), which it hopes to open to all five college students.

Continued on page 4
FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“I came to see that movement is one of the great laws of life. It is the primary medium of our aliveness, the flow of energy going on in us like a river all the time, awake or asleep, twenty-four hours a day. Our movement is our behavior; there is a direct connection between what we are this and how we move. As people begin to move in their own way, they are faced with feelings of surprise and delight and often of anxiety and embarrassment. Judgments, corrections and explanations are not of use in their movement, and it happened just that way.”

— Mary Whitehouse

MONICA BILL BARNES CELEBRATES THE INNATE THEATRALITY OF EVERYDAY LIFE

Monica Bill Barnes was in residence this winter at Smith College, bringing her poignant, zany choreographic talents to the FCDD. Monica is a New-York based choreographer and performer. Born and raised in Berkeley, California, Barnes moved to New York in 1995 after receiving her B.A. in Philosophy and Theater from the University of California at San Diego. She has created thirteen evening-length dance works, numerous site-specific events and several cabaret numbers for her company, Monica Bill Barnes & Company. The company has performed in many different venues in New York City, ranging from DanceNow at Joe’s Pub to Fall for Dance at New York City Center. The New York Times Jennifer Dunning writes, “The witty Ms. Barnes, a master of the dance equivalent of a sly guffaw, blends sadness and hilarity.” This unique blend of emotions was clearly evident and expertly woven into the new work she created, Finish Line, for Smith College and FCDD dancers. The piece was the rousing closer—complete with flying confetti—to this year’s FCDD Faculty Concert at Amherst College.

PANDORA’S BOX AND INVISIBLE DANCE

In her recent paper, “Pandora’s Box and Invisible Dance,” presented at the Culture, Brain and Development conference at Mount Holyoke College, faculty member Daphne Lowell took up “the seemingly radical notion that dance is a useful, even important, mode of human discovery, expression and development.” She focused especially on the practice of Authentic Movement (Contemplative Dance), outlining its five key principles:

1. “Movement” includes “stillness.”
2. There is almost always no outside musical accompaniment, though movers might make sound.
3. People work from what is. They accept, give themselves permission to have, the experience they have, while they also maintain responsibility to choose to go with, or to decline engagement with what appears.
4. Contact or touch between movers can be a rich part of the performance.
5. Each mover is the authority of his/her experience.

Any witness would convey his/her experience from witnessing a mover, to the mover, only if invited, and never to any one else. Summarizing its importance for expanding our experience of our culturally neglected “bodily-being,” she writes, “What results is a dialogue-in-motion between conscious and unconscious, immediate and reflected, private and shared experience. Unlike most dance forms, movements are discovered rather than prescribed or learned, they are performed in private settings, and there is no attempt to please or impress any viewer, or to make things look any particular way. Rather, in Authentic Movement, one develops authenticity, compassion and a deep trust in the valuing of difference. It is in a way an invisible dance of everyday life.”

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CONTEMPORARY BALLET WITH DIANE COBURN BRUNING

Diane Coburn Bruning is an award-winning contemporary ballet choreographer and artistic director and founding member of the NYC-based Chamber Dance Project. She was in residence in January at Mount Holyoke College, creating a new, large ensemble work on FCDD dancers. The new work, Torrid Zone, premiered on the FCDD annual Faculty Concert in March at Amherst College.

"Characterized by a sophisticated combination of elegant sensuality and quirky stutters of movement, Diane Coburn Bruning's ballet-based choreography is passionate and original."
—Lisa Jo Sagolla in Back Stage

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"The wonderful, astonishing truth is that the arts are utterly useless. You can't eat music or poetry or dance. You can’t drive your car on a sonnet or wear it on your back to shield you from the elements. This 'uselessness' is why politicians and other painfully literal-minded people during times of budget crises (which is pretty much all the time now) can’t wait to single the arts out and their talent and through the way that we share our rich emotional lives we add color and texture and depth to their lives."
—John Adams
Composer

FCDD CAREERS PANEL

This spring's FCDD Careers Panel proved, once again, to be a timely and important resource for students, especially for juniors and seniors thinking about work and life in dance after college. These panels are offered every other year in an effort to broaden student awareness of the wide range of careers in dance and dance-related fields. Alumni are invited from a variety of career paths to talk about their current work, focusing especially on their trajectories from college to career. This year’s panelists included Kathy Couch (Amherst ‘95, lighting and set designer), Maura Donahue (Smith ‘92, MFA ‘08, dance company director, performer, choreographer, teacher, writer), Karyn Edison (UMass ‘79, founder and director of a major Boston-area dance studio), Anna Grosslein (Mount Holyoke ’08, physical therapist), and Sara Smith (Hampshire ‘95, interdisciplinary artist, choreographer and archivist). Many students were interested in practical strategies for finding work and surviving financially as dancers and choreographers. In response, panelists spoke of their own very circuitous paths to professional work and emphasized the need to be open to many possibilities, encouraging students to say “yes” to any and all opportunities, and to persevere, knowing that they are doing work that truly matters to them.

ANDREW TYLOR (HC ’04) owns and operates his own dance academy in New Hampshire, teaching a variety of idioms to 165 students. His studio recently became the first dance academy/nido in NH to be accredited by the National Honor Society for Dance Arts.

Brendan Drake (UM BFA ‘10) performed with J Chen Project for this year’s APAP Conference. In October, the company premiered the new work, To Identify, at Dixon Place, which was created in collaboration with fashion designer Rachel Metcalf.

Melissa Driscoll (UM BFA ‘10) is finishing her MA in Dance Movement Therapy at Columbia College in Chicago.

Karyn Edison (UM ’79) is the founder and director of the Dancing Arts Center in Boston, where she teaches, choreographs and coordinates all aspects of the program.

Sarah Goddard (UM ’11) is on contract with Columbia City Ballet in South Carolina.

Anna Grosslein (UMC ’08) started physical therapy school 4 weeks after her MHC graduation, and finished her DPT, Master’s in Physical Therapy this year at Simmons College. In April, she began practicing at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, working with both women’s/ men’s Health and Orthopedic clients.

Heidi Henderson (SC MFA ’07) continues to make work in FL under the company name, ‘elephant JANE dance’. Recent performances include Cambridge, MA, Connecticut College and the FlynnSpace in Burlington, VT. She is in her ninth year on the dance faculty at Connecticut College and teaches regularly at the Bates Dance Festival.

Christine Higgins (UM ’98) has been dancing with Dallas Dance, a lyrical/contemporary/jazz company, and touring the world with Mambo Dallas, a salsa company, which included a recent tour to the Dominican Republic and Peru.

CJ Holm (HC ’04) presented her new work, The Salad of the Bad Café, co-created with Tiana Hemlock, at Gowanus Arts in New York in January 2011. She also presented new work at Judson Church in New York in November.

Continued on page 6
Jeff Janishefski (AC ‘92) was Artistic Director of the National Theater Institute before taking a new position as Head of the Acting Program at the National Institute of Dramatic Art (Australia), where Mel Gibson, Cate Blanchett, Hugo Weaving and others have studied.

Jane Jerardi (HC ‘90) relocated to Chicago to pursue her MFA at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. In December, she presented two exhibitions featuring video installations and a performance project.

Lucille Jun (AC ‘90) is teaching in South Korea and has recently performed at a dance festival there.

Karantine Kathleen (HC ‘94) won a Bessie Award at the 2011 New York Dance and Performance Art Award ceremony for “Outstanding Production” for her work, Montgomery Park, or Opulence.

Julia Klin (YHC ‘12) is founder and artistic director of DE²motion, based in NYC. She received her MFA in Dance Education from NYU in 2004 and has recently served as Dance Educator at Middle School 51 in Park Slope, Brooklyn.

Mabel Lajos (AC ‘96) is the Literary Chair at the Boston Preparatory Charter Public School. She recently brought a group of 8th grade students to her alma mater to tour the theater and dance department and see a current production.

Eriin Law (SC MFA ‘11) is an adjunct faculty member at Middle Tennessee State University, teaching dance appreciation and choreography with the dance theatre students. She teaches technique in the Vanderbilt Dance Program and working on short films for their upcoming concert. She was invited to choreograph a piece entitled Fad and Fancies in the Academy for a centennial celebration of John Cage’s birthday in April.

Jennifer Lassman (HC ‘91) is serving as a diplomat with the U.S. Department of State, posted in Quito, Ecuador, until 2014. She works as the outreach coordinator, arranging talks and workshops for visiting U.S. professors, artists, and other experts with elementary, high school, and university students throughout Ecuador. She has started working as a dance historian and advisor with a new local dance company.

Brandye Lee (SC ‘98) former company member in Ailey II and the Lion King, is living and working ballet.

Andrea Miller brought her raw, fierce, visually riveting company, Gallim Dance, to the Fine Arts Center stage to perform in the evening-length Blush; she and company members also taught Master Classes on several FCDD campuses during their three-day residency. About this new work, Miller writes that she wanted the dancers to “melt bloods which block the barriers around the heart and floods into the edges of the skin”.

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FCDD FACULTY, STAFF, MUSICIANS NEWS

Chris Aiken (Assistant Professor, Smith College) has continued to teach and perform internationally—since joining the FCDD, last summer, he taught and performed at the Salt Festival at the University of Utah with Angie Hauser, in St. Julian, France with Montreal-based dancer Andrew Harwood, and this winter in Montreal with Harwood and dancer Marc Boivin. Aiken traveled to Vancouver in March to perform with Peter Bingham and Ray Chung while also attending the 3rd International Fauxia Congress. This summer Chris and Angie Hauser will teach their Owell intensive at Earthdance and then continue on to the Bates Dance Festival in the fall, for which he will co-present Utopia Parkway at Smith College.

Paul Arslanian (Satter Lecturer, UMass) has been directing the Northampton Jazz Workshop and Jam Session at the Clarion Hotel in Northampton every Tuesday night. He will also, once again, be Music Director for the Tap Intensive at the Jacob’s Pillow Summer Dance Festival.

Jean Baxter (FCDD Production Manager) has the O’s—a grandson, whom she has sorting gel into piles by size and color, and a new Graduate degree; her MBA from the UMass Isenberg School of Management. She continues leading the FCDD as a Director of the Bates Dance Festival.

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KATHY COUCH, Mount Holyoke) continued to and Professor, Mount Holyoke, and Chair, UMass) performed on a new dance for the fall. Billbob Brown (Professor and Chair, UMass) presented a collaborative concert with two other composers in Boulder, Colorado in September. He also performed and taught with Nancy Stack Smith in Uruguay in November and in Buenos Aires in December. He presented a solo piano concert at Smith in April, and will be involved in several performance projects in England this summer.

Wendy Woodson (Professor, Amherst College) spent 6 months in Melbourne Australia as an International Artist in Residence at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT). During this time she completed a commissioned video installation project for the National Immigration Museum, on exhibit from July 2011 to January 2012. AC alumna Kathy Couch joined Wendy in Melbourne as a collaborator in the design of the installation. (http://bargainingreflections.com/). Also, She Shedam on the Light, written and directed by Wendy and performed by AC alumna Mariana Lobel, was presented at LaMama Melbourne in June. Wendy is currently working on a new performance and video piece also inspired by Australia, to be performed in 2012-13.
Kellie Lynch (MFC ’09) tours nationally with the critically acclaimed Doug Ellis and Friends Frailbox Masica and has been a member of Abby Mit- bers and Dancers since 2008. She is a founding member and Co-Artistic Director of Elm City Dance Collective in New Haven, Connecticut. Since 2007, her work has been presented throughout New England and NYC.

Michelle Marquicon (HC ’16) received her MFA in Performance and Choreog- raphy from Smith College and teaches Grotowski and Gyrnıkneis at Studio Heli.

Nicki Marshall (MHC ’12) has been dancing with Magdiana Drum and Dance NYC since the summer of 2003. Her choreography has been performed at DITW, BAX, WAX, and the Moxon Cuninham Studios. She is a member of Company Amy Cox and collaborates with Helen Tocz, creating dance and visual art. Nicki is a certified yoga instructor and teaches dance to many beautiful children around NYC.

Dustin Martinich (SC MFA ’16) is currently serving as an assistant professor of theatre and dance at Bucknell University in Lewisburg, PA, specializing in jazz dance technique and beginning acting. He is a principal artist with Core Project Chicago, and also works with Mutter Dance Chicago, the Monocle Eclectic Dance Company, and The Art in Theatre.

Kaitlin McCarthy (MHC ’10) is dancing with two Seattle companies, Reddog Dance and Shambhala Dance Company. This past year, she has also performed in project-based work for Wade Madsen, Christian Luk, Marlo Martin, and Pablo Cornejo.

Oliva McKeon (HC ’16) completed a Master’s in Arts Politics from NYU and a Ph.D. candidate in Culture and Performance at University of California, Los Angeles. Leah Moriarity (LM ’16) presented work at the re- turned Dance Festival in New Haven in March.

Michelle Morphon (HC ’16) continues with her Reflexol- ogy practice by day, and by night, sings with the wild, political troupe “Reverend Billy & the Church of Stop Shop- ping” who recently toured to Europe. She is also active in film, acting in the documentar- y What Would Jesus Buy? presented on the Sundance Channel this winter, and a horror film (her first) called Blue Sheep Suit. She has also been producing music videos, to see her most recent, go to youtube.com/user/chantellucier

Rain Ross (MHC ‘16) presented a paper on music and dance collaboration at the Congress on Research in Dance. She was an invited guest for Lilburn’s first International Dance Day Festival, where she taught a number of classes and gave a talk on collaboration. She continues to teach at the Richard Stockton College in New Jersey and recently per- formed in the Dumbo Dance Festival in New York.

Dance Chicago, The Monocle Eclectic Dance Company, and Eclectic Dance Company, and was an invited guest for Lebanon’s Performance at University of Houston, where she teaches various levels of Jazz, Hip Hop and Modern techniques, and advises the University Dance Theatre, a student dance company. She is also a guest teacher at Rice University and on the teaching artist roster for Young Audi- ences of Houston.

Zeina Nair (HC ’16) is currently working on her Masters at MFA College and continuing to create dance and music compositions. Christophereasham Mcfiminia (HC ’16) presented his research “Makings and Makings of Queer Dance” at a conference hosted by the Con- gress on Research in Dance in February 2012. He received his MFA in Dance from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance.

Lynette P. Rizzo (MHC ’16) is working as the associate director of marketing for Alea- vely American Dance Theatre, a position for more than 11 years. She also serves on the executive advisory committee for Bugilo Dance Theatre.


Christina Saptin (AC ’01) is working on her Masters in Physical Therapy.

Noula Sorafina (HC ’16) received a Masters in Per- formance Studies at NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts with a concentration in heritage tourism, material culture, museum interventions, and American identity. She has recently relocated back to the Pioneer Valley.

Mariana Valencia (HC ’16) launched wristoress Event Issue No 1: Clean Dream in January 2012. wristoress Event is a quarterly paper featuring writing by Mariana, as well as writing and images by fellow artists.

Marya Wethers (MHC ’97) is a freelance performer and choreo- grapher in NYC, performing with Fayre O India, Paksimai, Wynne Castro and Co. and others. This fall she pre- sented An Evening with Marya Wethers and Dana Fair at The Chocolate Factory Marya is also Program Manager at New York Live Arts previously Dance Theatre Workshop).

Teena White (AC ’10) is work- ing at the nonprofit, Phipps Community Development Corporation, as a college awareness advisor for two local Bronx schools and dancing with the West African Dance company, Harambe.

Alie B. Wickham Trainer (HC ’07) changed jobs and got married. She is now working with a new program called the Arts Education Center program at the University of Florida. As the primary leader for the upcoming student initiatives, she is still very involved in the Arts and Health field.