Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company’s classic, STORY/TIME, choreographed in 2012 in collaboration with Janet Wong and company members, was restaged on a double cast of twenty FCDD dancers and performed on multiple campuses throughout the year. The work is an exhilarating and unusual hybrid—mixing the deeply personal, socially and politically charged dance making for which Mr. Jones is best known, with more abstract, formalist interests of his long-time mentor, Merce Cunningham. As New York Times critic Claudia La Rocco writes, “Bill T. Jones has long talked about his simultaneous attraction toward narration and abstraction, and about how his desire to lay claim to both of these artistic traditions has often left him in conflict. How to tell a good yarn but not be yoked to it structurally?” The cast was very fortunate to work first-hand with two illustrious, long-time company members, Jennifer Nugent and Shayla-Vie Jenkins, who shared the staging. The piece was especially challenging for its puzzle-like collage of break-neck movement phrases executed in ever-changing sequence, determined—à la John Cage—by chance procedures, all within the spatial confines of a taped floor-grid of 12 “boxes”. The piece also drew on original personal stories from the dancers, spoken live by different cast members at each performance. This was augmented by a multi-layered sound score, also sequenced by chance, and performed live by electronic musician/composer Jake Meginsky. The whole, exuberant, meticulously-calibrated cacophony unfolded each night beneath a large digital clock that visibly ticked away time’s passing, second by second, from 20 minutes down to the final zero. It was a wild ride for audiences as well as performers!

“Living and dying is not the big issue. The big issue is what you’re going to do with your time while you are here.”
—Bill T. Jones

Shayla-Vie Jenkins leading rehearsal
The FCDD welcomed celebrated choreographer and performer Bebe Miller, who joined the Smith College faculty as the 2017 William Allen Nelson Professor. Over the course of the year, she presented three public events, each with her particular point of view and twist on the lecture format. In Syntax and Flow: dimensional meaning-making through the body in motion, Bebe presented a hybrid performance-talk-conversation, and was joined by Bebe Miller Company members and FCDD faculty Angie Hauser (Associate Professor/Smith College) and Bronwen MacArthur (Guest Artist/UMass). Bebe used real-time performance to help the audience see ‘how she sees,’ in her second presentation, Performing Memory. Conjoining Body, Bebe and Angie performed a lecture-in-performance, focusing on their seventeen-year collaboration and the exceptional autobiographical narrative of Bebe’s writings on dance, self, and history. Bebe’s final offering, Body as Archive: regarding the persistent essential friction of gesture, attention and memory, fit the more expected lecture format, yet still had her particular performative flare. As she read from her notes, dropping pages to the floor when she was finished, the audience was transported from dance studio, to childhood home, to summer camp in Maine, to the theater stage and back again. This fall, Bebe returns to the FCDD, where she and Angie will offer a repertory project for a cast of eighteen students from all five campuses.

“We’re all made up of these flashes of memory that can come uncalled-for, have no order and are sometimes not complete . . . but somehow they are what make us up as whole human beings.” — Bebe Miller

**NUDGE: THE CREATIVE PROCESS WITH KINSUN CHAN**

“Repetition is freedom . . . now, do it again” were familiar watchwords from guest artist Kinsun Chan during the exhilarating, exhausting rehearsal process for his new work, Nudge, created with ballet-trained FCDD dancers and premiered on the FCDD’s annual Faculty Concert in March. Kinsun drew inspiration from the musical compositions of Canadian cellist and composer Julia Kent to create a large ensemble dance notable for its feline dynamism and striking visual designs. Kinsun is a Canadian-American artist whose works draw from a range of artistic disciplines, which he calls Multium Design. He studied art, graphic design, and dance and has danced with the Louisville Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Basel, Zurich and Ballet Basel.
Hip hop is booming in the five colleges—classes are packed, student clubs are thriving, and the FCDD has been steadily increasing its offerings. This year featured several new courses as well as commissioned repertory projects with two of the country’s leading female hip hop performer/choreographers.

Ephrat “Bounce” Asherie was in residence last fall at Smith to create Swept In on FCDD dancers. She is a Bessie award-winning performer/choreographer based in NYC, who, as artistic director of Ephrat Asherie Dance, has presented work at the Apollo Theater, FraArtega, Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival, New York Live Arts, Summerstage, and The Yard. Her first evening length work, A Single Ride, received a Bessie nomination in 2012 for Outstanding Emerging Choreographer. She is a regular guest performer with Dorrance Dance and has worked and collaborated with Doug Elkins, Rennie Harris, Bill Irwin and Gus Solomonis Jr, among others. Ephrat is on faculty at Broadway Dance Center and is a founding member of the all-female house dance collective, MAWU. www.ephratasherie.com.

Jennifer Weber came to Mount Holyoke in the fall to create a hip hop version of Firebird on FCDD dancers. She is the artistic director of Decadancetheatre. The company has toured across the US, UK, Japan and France in venues such as Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival, The Apollo, The Kennedy Center, London’s Southbank Center, San Francisco Hip Hop Dance Festival, and Bumbershoot in Seattle. Jennifer has also choreographed for the NBA’s Miami Heat, American Express, Uber, Ultra, L’oreal Matrix, Reebok, Bloomberg, Philosophy, Marc Jacobs, CK1 and the UK TV show Blue Peter. Recently she choreographed the US Premiere of Bryony Lavery’s Stockholm at Stageworks/Hudson, Trouble, A New Rock Musical at the New York Musical Festival and James Brown Get On The Good Foot for The Apollo Theater with director Otis Sallid. Currently, Jennifer is the director and choreographer of The Hip Hop Nutcracker, which is in its third season of national touring.

The FCDD continues its hip hop offerings next year with more courses and a fall repertory project with Shakia “the Key” Johnson. Shakia is a wildly popular teacher (teaching classes this year at AC, MHC and SC), who is also a highly sought after performer and choreographer. She has performed for numerous hip hop events and has opened for concerts by Fat Joe, Jadakiss, 112, Charlie Baltimore, Kima from Total and Omarion. Additionally, she choreographed a hip hop number for the Celtics/NBA half-time show. Shakia has toured the US and abroad dancing with Face Da Phlake Entertainment and Illstyle and Peace Productions. ■
and becoming named one of the five “Up and Coming Dance Artists of DC” by the Washington Post. In NYC, Matthew now dances with three local companies, recently completed an apprenticeship with Katie Weare, and continues working towards his second MA in Social Work at Hunter College, to become a full-time art rehabilitation specialist.

Angela Paskewich (SC ’12) is a Dance/Movement Therapist living in Brooklyn, NY. She works as a Social Worker/Creative Arts Therapist and in a preventive services program where she counsels families that are at risk of having their children placed in care.

Dan Farberman (AC ’01) began a new job as a law professor at Boston College Law School.

Olana Flynn (HC ’13) started the MFA program in Experimental Choreography this fall at the University of California Riverside. She received a Deans Fellowship and full funding for her studies.

Olivia Fisher (SC ’14) lives in Seattle, and dances with the contemporary Butoh company The Three Yells. She also works with Fairfax Dance, a multimedia dance company directed by Asleigh Clare Miller. She was a guest artist with the physical theater company DangerSwitch, and is also working with a group of dancers on her own work, THAW, which premiered at Converge Dance Festival in April.

Meghan Frederick (HC ’07) had residencies at Deveraux’s Arts Center, Mount Manhattan College and Barn Arts Collective. She presented new material in March in Boston and in May in NYC, and ran a week-long movement studies course at Summer Festival of the Arts in Bar Harbor, ME in July.


Katy Walkman Forline (MHC ’01) uses the embodied anatomy and physiology from her dance experience at MHC to enhance her practice of massage therapy and movement education, Yoga Turns Up “Interfacing” and the recent birth of her new LLC, Move2Joy. She recently returned to the MHC studios to teach a movement session at Reunion II in May.

Lilly Gold (HC ’06) premiered Good Mule at Damşapaus Project in April.

Mark V. Guerra (MHC ’09) continues to co-direct Luminarium Dance Company in Boston, with Kimberly An. Hollman (MHC ’05), now in its seventh season.

PEARL PRIMUS:
RACE, THE BODY AND DANCED MEMORY

In the late 80s, towards the end of her illustrious artistic and academic career, modern dance pioneer, Black dance icon and renowned dance anthropologist, Dr. Pearl Primus, joined the FCDD faculty to teach courses in African dance, African American Studies and Anthropology. So, how fortuitous it was this year to have Ninoska M’bewe Escobar, a Consortium for Faculty Diversity visiting scholar in the Department of Theater and Dance at Amherst College, deliver our annual FCDD lecture. M’bewe’s research focuses on the dancing body, race, feminism, history and memory, and cultural production in the contexts of social formation and social change, and her PhD research is more specifically focused on the legacy of Dr. Primus. In her lecture to a packed Kirby Theater at Amherst College, she examined Primus’s contributions to the field, especially her emphasis on Black dance and performance as powerful markers of Black experience, politicization and agency.

FOOD for THOUGHT

“There is an energy within ... pure strength ... the energy of the person which is put in different forms ... in different shapes ... once we discover that energy, I think that such a thing as dance becomes such a delight because you’re moving on a stream that is you but it is even over and beyond you ... “

—Katherine Dunham

MASTER CLASSES WITH MAJOR ARTISTS

Prior to the performance of the evening-length Agua Furiosa at the UMass Fine Arts Center in early October, company rehearsal director for CONTRA-TIEMPO, Janett Galdamez and company member Samad Guerra, led FCDD dancers in a Guaguanco/Rumba master class that featured live drumming.

The internationally-renowned Sydney Dance Company, known for their powerhouse contemporary dancing, came to the Five Colleges in February, performing new works by artistic director Rafael Bonachela, and offering master classes to FCDD dancers. The company philosophy is founded on the universality of dance and boasts the largest public dance program in Australia.

This year’s season of major touring companies culminated in April with a performance by the legendary Alvin Alley American Dance Theater, including Alley’s signature masterpiece, Revelations. The company offered several master classes for FCDD dancers on different campuses, and the our own Kristin Young (MHC ’97)—the company’s stage manager—brought FCDD students backstage after the performances.

Clockwise from top: Alvin Alley American Dance Theater’s Linda Celeste Sims and Vannick Lebrun, Janett Galdamez leading the Contra-Tiempo master class, Sydney Dance Company
In summer 2016, Chris Aiken and Angie Hauser (Associate Professors, Smith College) taught their annual Dance Improvisation and Performance Intensive (a week-long intensive for professional dancers and choreographers), at Earthdance; taught and performed at Bates Dance Festival where the two co-directed the evening length Moving in the Moment performance; and created a new duet The Profession of Poetry for the Different Voices concert. Angie continued her work with The Making Room Project, a process-based series of small artist-convenings considering and employing the shared and divergent making practices of Bebe Miller and Susan Rethorst. In August 2017, she was a featured artist-faculty at the Seattle Festival of Dance Improvisation. Angie continues work on a new Bebe Miller Company choreography to premiere at the Weiser Center for the Performing Arts in October 2017. In spring 2017, Chris and Angie received promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure from Smith College.

Rodger Blum (Professor and Department Chair, Smith College), a recipient of Smith College’s Grant for New Directions in Scholarship and Teaching, continues to explore avenues that combine dance, technology and the handmade. He premiered a new installation in the spring at Amherst College. The Silk Room is a single-track video projected on and through sixty feet of hand printed organza and choreographed on company members of Pilobolus Dance Theatre. In the fall, he created S.O.D. Dances for Lou on a FCOD cast—set to the music of Lou Harris and incorporating 150 bamboo poles. Jim Coleman and Teresa Freedman (Professors, Mount Holyoke College) presented a weeklong, interactive, public video dance installation at A.F.I. Gallery in Northampton. Jim performed in the annual Seattle Men in Dance Festival and also created several dance video outdoor installations at the Colleges. Jim and T will retire at the end of 2018 and move to Seattle. During spring 2017, beginning with residents at Western Massachusetts Hospital and currently serving patients at Tewksbury Hospital, Paul Dennis (Associate Professor, UMass) worked with Emma George (UM ‘13) and Maggie Golden (MHC ‘18) in collaboration with licensed occupational therapists and physical therapists, to begin the design of a program integrating choreodramas, dance/movement, Laban Movement Analysis and Bartenieff Fundamentals to observe and evaluate patients with Huntington’s Disease and other neuro-degenerative conditions. The program examines the role of the environment and exercise in altering the course of these disorders, and hopes to demonstrate ways that dance is uniquely positioned to effect physical, emotional, sensory and cognitive change.

Charles and Rose Flachs (Professors, Mount Holyoke College) attended the CORPS de Ballet International Conference in Sarasota, Florida following a grueling 100-mile bike ride along the Erie Canal. This conference titled “Traditions in Classical Training: Strengthening Communities” included taking classes and attending lectures with the legendary Harumi de Saa, Director of the Cuban National Ballet School. Following the conference, the Flachs directed the Massachusetts Academy of Ballet Summer program and taught master classes at the Connecticut Concert Ballet, the Pennsylvania Academy of Ballet and DanceWorks studio, and taught at the DanceWorks Summer Intensive for New Directions in Dance. Rose co-taught a Vaganova teacher seminar, and Charles taught master classes at the DanceWorks Summer Intensive.

Rodger Blum, The Silk Room

TOMA SCHUMACHER

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classes at the Pennsylvania Academy of Ballet Society. The Flachs’ current research interests focus on the intersection of active stretching and ballet technique.

Deborah Goffe (Assistant Professor, Hampshire College) brought two long-term creative processes to their culminating performance phases: Pray and Reckiton Bubble. Following a six-year development process and with support from the Mass Cultural Council Artist Fellowship, Pray premiered in December 2016 as the first in an anticipated series of performance salons Deborah will host in her home. Unfolding through a collaborative process with Kelly Silliman (SC MFA ’13) as dramaturg, Pray dives into personal narrative, grappling with ideas of disclosure and concealment, reproduction and identity. Reckiton Bubble grew out of a four-year collaboration with Lofil (a multimedia duo comprised of NYC-based Tali Hinkus and Kyle Lapidos) and Matt Tower (a Hartford-based ceramicist). The multi-media installation premiered at Real Art Ways in March 2017, with seven performances of the choreographic work before the exhibit’s closing in June.

Leslie Frye Maestli (Guest Artist, UMass) collaborated in the fall with colleagues Tom Vacanti (SC MFA ’95) and Paul Dennis on Peril in Three Eye, an immersive dance theater production of Romeo and Juliet. Leslie was able to work with some of her favorite student collaborators to restage her work with this new cast for the FCDD Faculty Concert at Amherst College in March. She is also developing a solo titled Solo not Solo, which she presented in process in March at Jennifer Muller/
The Works Studio in NYC. She’s hoping this will be a part of an evening-length piece to be presented at her home this fall. At ULamar in the spring, Leslie directed and designed a new model for the junior dance majors to present their choreography. The concert, titled X-Abiton, was a large installation performance presented in collaboration with the Art Department and their digital media students.

Candice Salyers (Visiting Artist, Mount Holyoke College, SC MFA ’13) recently published an article in the Journal of Performance and Mindfulness (UK). She received an American Association of University Women (AAUW) Fellowship for 2016–2017, and will spend this year working on a new solo performance and book project. She has been awarded artist residencies from Joya Art + Ecologies (Spain) and Green Olive Arts (Morocco) for the coming year.

Marilyn Sylla (Five College Lecturer in Dance) and Sakou Sylla (FCDD Musician) were happy to teach African dance at Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival during summer 2017. They will be guest artists at Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction during fall 2017, where they will teach and set a piece for CMUs dance concert. Marilyn and Sakou were honored when their former student, Jennifer Kyker (MHC ’02), now an assistant professor of musicology at the University of Rochester, gave a gift to the Mount Holyoke Fund in their honor. Marilyn was delighted to once again direct immigrant Voices, sponsored by the Center for New Americans, and presented at the Shea Theater.

In September 2016, Lester Tomé (Assistant Professor, Smith College) joined the yearlong seminar “Modes and Models of Making” as a fellow of the Kahn Liberal Arts Institute. In November, he presented a paper about the National Ballet of Cuba’s decolonial approach to the classics in an interdisciplinary program sponsored by the Institute for Environment and Society at Brown University. This program is designed to stimulate conversations and collaborations across the natural and social sciences, humanities, and the arts. She performed her monologue about art entitled Created (originally created for the same program at Brown University) as part of the HUT series at the School for Contemporary Dance and Thought in Northampton. Wendy was invited to give the 2017 Jackye Pritzman Lecture by Five Colleges, Inc. She was artist-in-residence at a P.E. Gallery in Northampton during July 2017, where she began work on a new series of video and dance installations.
to study traditional dance and music in Dakar, Senegal. Molly will be teaching a range of new courses in dance education and community engagement.

Mount Holyoke College welcomes Barbie Diewald (SC MFA ’16) to a two-year Visiting Artist position. Barbie is a prolific performer/choreographer whose work has been presented in New York City (BAM, Movement Research, The Chocolate Factory, BAX, etc.), Western Massachusetts (A.P.E. Gallery, the School for Contemporary Dance and Thought), and abroad at Ponderosa (Germany) and the Bogliasco Foundation Center (Italy), where she was a 2016 Fellow. Recently, Barbie has been serving as Associate Director for Programming at the School for Contemporary Dance and Thought (SCDT), emphasizing racial and gender diversity, advocating for international artists, and support systems for emerging New England choreographers. Her current work, Eighteen Refrains reRhoda, uses Virginia Woolf’s fiction as both dramaturgical touchstone and choreographic proposition, and premiered in June in Northampton.

Amherst College welcomes NYC choreographer/performer Dante Brown as a one-year position as Assistant Professor of Dance. Dante began his dance training at Wesleyan University, and went on to receive his MFA in Choreography and Performance from The Ohio State University. As a performer, Dante has worked with artists such as Esther Baker-Tarpaga, Christal Brown, David Dorfman, Kendra Portier, and Noa Zuk, among others. As an educator, Dante has taught a range of classes at Bates College, Dancewave, Dance New Amsterdam, East Village Dance Project, Gibney Dance Center, Mark Morris Dance Center, Peridance Capezio Center and The Ohio State University. Among other courses, Dante is offering a new technique/repertoire course titled, “Ensemble Dancing in Community”. The FCDT was very happy to welcome Kat Rother this past year as the new Dance Production Assistant for the department. Alongside Matthew Adelson, she did remarkable work overseeing and streamlining concert productions across the five campuses. Kat received her BA from Dickinson College and has been working in theatre and dance for over ten years, including as a freelance stage manager in New York City, and with The Public Theater, Two River Theatre Company, Dance New Amsterdam, Gibney Dance Center, and Portland Stage Company. She is looking into creating a lot of her own choreography for the class. She is looking into auditions around the Bay Area—particularly for site specific projects.

Marta Renzi (HC ’75) graduated this spring with a degree in Education, with a focus in Dance and Theater. Marta has performed, choreographed and taught at many universities and dance companies in the United States and abroad, including the School for Contemporary Dance and Thought, emphasizing racial and gender diversity initiatives across campus. She continues to work independently as a choreographer and dancer.

The FCDT welcomes a number of new faculty, guest artists and staff this year. UMass is pleased to announce the appointment Molly Christie Gonzalez as Assistant Professor of Dance. Molly is a dance education specialist with a MA in Dance Education, with New York State Pre K–12 Dance Teacher Certification and edTPA National Certification from The College at Brockport (Brockport, NY), and a MFA in Performance and Choreography. She has certification from the Institute for Dunham Technique, and has been on the faculty at the Annual Dunham Technique Seminar and the Certification Workshop. She co-founded Trio Dourado Brazilian Dance Company in Philadelphia, was a member of Olorun Cuban Folklore Company, and a soloist with the Afro-Cuban theatrical production Patokin in San Francisco. She has conducted dance and music research in Havana, Cuba, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, and Puerto Rico, and in 2000 received a Leeway Foundation grant.

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FOOD for THOUGHT

“You have to love dancing to stick to it. It gives you nothing back, nothing to store away, no manuscripts to store away, no paintings to show on walls . . . nothing but the fleeting moment when you feel alive. It is not for unsteady souls.” —Merce Cunningham

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This current era has been full of upheaval and transition for the FCDD. In recent years, a number of senior faculty members have decided to move on to the next phase of their lives and make room for a new generation of dance artist/educators. This year was the last for Paul Arslanian (UM), Constance Hill (HC/FCDD), Paul Matteson (AC/MHC), and Candice Salyers (MHC Visiting Artist). These amazing teacher/artists will each be deeply missed! While this has caused much sadness, it has also given rise to a sense of rejuvenation and excitement for the future. There is a growing, collective feeling that the FCDD is poised to flourish and lead dance in higher education in new and innovative ways.

For the past 17 years, as Five College Professor of Dance based at Hampshire College, Constance Valis Hill traveled regularly to teach on all five campuses, offering an astonishing variety of innovative courses in dance history, performance theory, jazz studies, choreography on camera, and feminist performance. She also worked with her Hampshire colleagues to establish a Black Studies core curriculum at the college. She will be remembered by generations of students and colleagues for her prodigious intellectual energy, her probing questions and deep curiosity about the predicament and power of dance in the world, as well as her infectiously enthusiastic and quick, contagious laughter. In the broader, national and international field of dance scholarship, Constance is renowned for her groundbreaking writings on Jazz and Tap dance. Her book, *Brotherhood in Rhythm: The Jass Tap Dancing of the Nicholas Brothers* (2008) received the Deems Taylor ASCAP Award; and her most recent book, *Tap Dancing America, A Cultural History* (2010), was supported by grants from the John D. Rockefeller and John Simon Guggenheim foundations. Her colleague and fellow dance historian, Lester Tomé, writes, “Constance situated herself among a generation of scholars who, in the 1990s, expanded the scope of dance research to include popular dance and Afrodiasporic traditions. She was part of the project of questioning a Eurocentric dance canon.” More locally, she will be remembered for the impressive array of new, interdisciplinary courses she developed over the years, including many collaborations with colleagues from dance, film, and music.

Paul Arslanian, beloved accompanist, teacher, and musical coordinator for the UMass Dance program will be remembered for his encyclopedic knowledge of a variety of musical traditions and his consummate performing skills in bringing these to vibrant life in classrooms and on stages at UMass and the FCDD. Throughout his career, Paul has also been very active in the larger music and dance community. He is a renowned musician in the region, and most fittingly, in his final year at UMass, he received the prestigious NEPR Arts and Humanities Award, honoring his inspirational and tireless work in developing the Northampton Jazz Workshop.

After five years of amazing contributions to the FCDD as teacher, choreographer and performer, Paul Matteson made the very tough decision to take a leave from academia and move back to NYC to pursue a variety of professional projects. His thoughtful, sweet-tempered presence; wild, viscerally-charged movement phrases; astonishing virtuosity and humanity as a performer; and his many imaginative and original choreographies will be deeply missed by all, especially students and colleagues at his twin home campuses of Amherst and Mount Holyoke. We look forward to seeing him in performance again soon!

Whether in adjunct or full-time replacement teaching roles, for the past two decades, Candice Salyers (SC MFA ’03) has had a tremendous impact as a teacher, performer, and artistic mentor for students and colleagues in the FCDD, especially at Mount Holyoke and Smith, where she frequently taught. This year, she received an American Association of University Women (AAUW) Fellowship, and will spend this coming year working on a new solo performance and book project. As a teacher, Candice will be remembered for her tireless, personal, and inspiring artistic mentoring relationships with each of her students.

Laura Ann Samelson (HC ’11) performed her project, practicing, in rep with square product theatric’s production of Damani Webb’s THE BOX: A RARELY BLACKED-TALE from a Halifaxian American Grown-up Mixed-up in Conotobin. This fall, Laura Ann will begin the MFA in Dance program at the University of Colorado Boulder where she was granted a Center for the Humanities and The Arts’ Arts & Sciences Fellowship.

Kerry Schafer (AC ’91) has been busy with the non-dance activities of starting a medical practice as a holistic family doctor and raising two children in Portland, Oregon. She has been keeping connected with dance through exploring aerial arts/pole dance and dancing her 11-month old to sleep. She is excited to be on the board of a local non-profit, Dance Wire (dancewirepdx.org) dedicated to helping enrich and support dancers and dance health in the Portland community.

Constance Valis Hill, beloved accompanist, teacher, and musical therapist, performed in rep with square product theatric’s production of Damani Webb’s THE BOX: A RARELY BLACKED-TALE from a Halifaxian American Grown-up Mixed-up in Conotobin. This fall, Laura Ann will begin the MFA in Dance program at the University of Colorado Boulder where she was granted a Center for the Humanities and The Arts’ Arts & Sciences Fellowship.