Wonderland: The GALLIM Project

Excerpts from Andrea Miller’s wild, ferocious Wonderland were restaged with a cast of twelve Five College dancers in January. The piece was presented on the FCDD Faculty Concert in March.

At the beginning of each long day of rehearsal, Caroline Fermin (lead dancer with Gallim and stager for Wonderland) coaxed the dancers to begin moving slowly, from “sensation,” savoring the “pleasure” in their moving. Later, amidst the technically grueling demands of the rehearsal, she would again coax them to find the pleasure, even in their most intense exhaustion. All phases of this project, from the imagistic, Gaga-like warm-ups, to the dramatic intensities and physical extremes of the final performances, demanded an engagement unlike anything the dancers had previously experienced. As Tommy Seibold remarked, “Wonderland was challenging mentally, physically, and spiritually all at the same time. “The impact of this process went far beyond the studio—many wrote about it as being life-changing. Artistic Director and Gallim founder Andrea Miller visited at the end of the performance run to teach a final master class. She told the dancers, “I work at maintaining a very innovative approach to movement, a value set on human expression. You see the whole person—spirit, humor and vulnerability.”

“I’m trying to make people think and feel strongly. . . . I have to find something that frightens me, some process that terrifies me a little and motivates me to feel like I’m trying something new.”

—Andrea Miller
SIDRA BELL CREATES AT THE BAZAAR

Award-winning NYC choreographer Sidra Bell created a new ensemble work, at the bazaar, on FCD student dancers during multiple residencies this past fall. Sidra’s rehearsal process was remarkable for its transformation of the studio environment into a charged laboratory for experimentation. Seated at the edge of the space, on a Bertoia wire chair, she verbally guided the dancers through long improvisational journeys—stream-of-consciousness style—exploring philosophical conundrums, poetic images, specific dance phrases repeated again and again, personal movement rituals, unexpected disruptions (“Catch this” while throwing a shoe into the audience), and throughout this, lots of exhausting, soundly-charged dancing from all of them. She carefully assembled a final choreographic challenge for the dancers to be present and perform as one living entity, enlivened by a keen sense of collective agency. The process was at once exhausting, confusing and enlightening.

“Sidra is more than a choreographer; she is a philosopher who thinks deeply about life and art.” —Coil Hill Review

Above Olivia Fauser (SC ’14) and cast at the bazaar. Top Right: Sidra Bell

PERFORMING AUTHENTICITY AND THE LABOR OF DANCE

Susana Leigh Foster, choreographer and remixed dance scholar, presented this year’s FCD Fall Lecture Performance, “Performing Authenticity and the Labor of Dance” to packed house of Five College students. She interrogated the body presented in performances of competition dance on television shows such as So You Think You Can Dance, looking specifically at how dance serves in these spectacles of quantification of authenticity and of a split self of identified selves. Inoking neo-Marxist theories of affective labor, she showed how on these programs enact a cycle of alienation and hyper-focus on the practice of dance, one that replicates the endless drive to consume that marks our contemporary moment. By looking closely at the expressions of surprise, gratitude, and praise for others that the dancers must perform, she also considers how the competition programs re-produce the lack of distinction between mediated and unmediated relationships that is pervasive in our culture. Susana Leigh Foster is Distinguished Professor in the Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance at UCLA, and author of numerous books, including Reading Dance Bodies and Subjects in Contemporary American Dance, and Choreographing Erotic Atmospheres in Performance.

“Men and women are fully capable of dreaming up surreal scenarios…” —Mary Catherine Bateson, cultural anthropologist

FACULTY AWARDS

Sherrerd Award for Outstanding Teaching

Danuor Fencer and Department Chair Rodger Blum received the prestigious Sherrerd Award for Outstanding Teaching at Smith College. Each year, Smith students, faculty and alumnae submit nominations for the Sherrerd teaching prize, which recognizes the distinguished teaching record, and creative, imaginative and inspiring contributions to student learning and intellectual development.

Life-time Achievement Award from NIDOE

Peggy Schwartz, Professor and Director Emerita of the University Dance Program, “In recognition of Outstanding Leadership, Advocacy, and Achievement in Dance and Dance Education” was awarded the prestigious Life-time Achievement Award from the National Dance Education Organization last September.

Grant from National Endowment for the Humanities

Lester Tomas, Assistant Professor of Dance at Smith College received a $10,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to support work on new work in the history and global politics of post-revolution Cuban ballet. He spent the year conducting research as a resident scholar at Harvard’s David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies.

Choreography Fellowship from MCC

Paul Mattmuller, Assistant Professor of Dance at Amherst and Mount Holyoke Colleges, received a $10,000 Choreography Fellowship from the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

“You can’t suppress yourself... you have to mediate yourself” —Kathleen Hermesdorf

Above Ouroboros 10 by Kathleen Hermesdorf. Top Right: Kathleen Hermesdorf

KATHLEEN HERMESDORF IN RESIDENCE

San Francisco-based choreographer Kathleen Hermesdorf was in residence at Smith College in the fall, teaching and creating a new piece, Ouroboros 10, with a cast of FCD dancers. Kathleen is a prominent and influential member of dance communities in the United States and Europe. She is known for her masterful and inspiring teaching, and for the group as rehearsal director for the piece. Ouroboros 10 was performed at the Smith College Faculty Concert in November.

“The rehearsal process was remarkable for its transformation of the studio environment into a charged laboratory for experimentation. Seated at the edge of the space, one-like, she verbally guided the dancers through long improvisational journeys—stream-of-consciousness style—exploring philosophical conundrums, poetic images, specific dance phrases repeated again and again, personal movement rituals, unexpected disruptions (‘Catch this’ while throwing a shoe into the audience), and throughout this, lots of exhausting, soundly-charged dancing from all of them. She carefully assembled a final choreographic challenge for the dancers to be present and perform as one living entity, enlivened by a keen sense of collective agency. The process was at once exhausting, confusing and enlightening.” —Kathleen Hermesdorf

Above Ouroboros 10 by Kathleen Hermesdorf. Top Right: Kathleen Hermesdorf

PUBLIC ART

“Art as a contemporary dance in languages; it’s a language that’s being enjoyed by everyone, and it’s one that can be enjoyed by everyone.” —Sidra Bell

IN RESIDENCE

Sidra Bell

Ouroboros 10, a new ensemble work, was presented new work at the bazaar. Top Right: Sidra Bell
LUCY GUERIN IN RESIDENCE AT THE FCDD

“Generally I always go in with an idea, but I find that the real content comes out of the day to day process of working with the performers.”
— Lucy Guerin

Internationally-renowned Australian choreographer Lucy Guerin was in residence at Amherst College and the FCDD for the last week of October. Lucy screened and discussed excerpts from her recent dances, Situation and Sideshow, and also spoke about her music and visual arts collaborations. Company members taught master classes on several campuses and the company culminated with an intimate, physically charged studio performance of the company’s newest work Weather.

MASTER CLASSES WITH MAJOR ARTISTS

Fresh from their brilliant performances at the Lillias Fine Arts Center, Arturo Fernandez and Caroline Fischer, leading dancers with Alonzo King LINES Ballet, taught two advanced ballet technique master classes for the FCDD community. Alonzo King LINES Ballet is a 35-year old contemporary ballet company that has been guided since 1982 by the unique artistic vision of Alonzo King. Collaborating with noted composers, musicians, and visual artists, the company creates works that draw on a diverse set of deeply rooted cultural traditions, imbuing classical ballet with new expressive potential.

Internationally-renowned Parsons Dance, under the artistic direction of David Parsons—“one of the great movers of modern dance” (Jennifer Dunning, NYTimes)—was in residence in the FCDD in November. The company offered classes in contemporary technique and a workshop on nutritional balance and wellness for dancers led by company member, Christina Iliesiu.

In October, Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion taught two master classes as part of the company’s performance residency: an advanced modern technique class, and Dance in Identity, taught by Kyle Abraham himself. This unique workshop allowed students to explore issues of gender and sexuality through dialogue and guided movement experiments. Kyle was honored this year with a prestigious MacArthur Fellowship—award the citation describes Abraham as an “a choreographer and dancer probing the relationship between identity and personal history through a unique hybrid of traditional and vernacular dance styles that speaks to a new generation of dancers and audiences.”

COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY CROSSOVERS

The FCDD dance education and community outreach initiatives this year included a very successful January tour by University Dancers to area K-12 schools, a series of touring lecture demonstrations developed by Marilyn Sylla’s spring Dance in the Community (see video highlights at the FCDD website), and a number of new courses and outreach projects developed by Jodi Falk, the FCDD’s Coordinator of Community Outreach and Dance in Education.

Jodi’s fall Community Crossovers class at HC worked with seniors at The Arbors in Lenox and with youth from the First Generation artistic ensemble in Springfield. They also completed a four-week residency with the Robert F. Kennedy Children’s Action Action, whose residential treatment program helps at-risk young women ages 13-18. Jodi’s UMass class, Teach to Your Passion, focused on addressing social issues through performance and teaching, and included developing a lecture-demonstration on building for Dean Technical High School in Holyoke, and creating a step dance in partnership with a Holyoke dance studio about diversity, respect and coming together through movement.

One major project of Jodi’s course at Mount Holyoke College, The Power of Dance: Education and Beyond, was operating and executing Starburst, an intergenerational campus and community dance event. Area schools were invited to dance classes at HC, MHC, and UM. Schools included: the Rebecca M. Johnson Visual and Performing Arts Technical High School in Holyoke, and creating a step dance in partnership with a Holyoke dance studio about diversity, respect and coming together through movement. One major project of Jodi’s course at Mount Holyoke College, The Power of Dance: Education and Beyond, was operating and executing Starburst, an intergenerational campus and community dance event. Area schools were invited to dance classes at HC, MHC, and UM. Schools included: the Rebecca M. Johnson Visual and Performing Arts Technical High School in Holyoke, and creating a step dance in partnership with a Holyoke dance studio about diversity, respect and coming together through movement.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“Artists are people who are subject to irrational connections of the mind. But sometimes some images are just so deep and true that they are in danger of being lost in the soul. And then I think, the art of the person who is trying to deepen the mystery.”
— Pierre Schjeldahl, art critic

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“The job of the artist is always to deepen the mystery.”
— Pierre Schjeldahl, art critic

Continued on page 8

Continued on page 8
FCDD DANCERS PERFORM AT THE KENNEDY CENTER

THE FCDD WELCOMES LESLIE FRYE MAIETTA

A dynamic performer, educator and dance maker who will join the UMass faculty for a one-year appointment beginning next fall, Leslie holds a BFA from the Conservatory of Dance at The University of the Arts, and recently completed her MFA in Dance at Mills College (The American Dance Festival). Last fall, her work was featured in New York City in Jennifer Muller’s HDNY series and in July she performed her solo piece “Dream With Me” in the Gala Concert of the Southern Vermont Dance Festival. Leslie has performed the work of Asaki Ayers, Mary Cochran, Chi McFadden, George Faison, and many others, and was a company member with both Full Force Dance Theatre and Scapular Garden in Hartford, CT. She has held faculty positions at The Governor’s Academy for Arts and Judson University, and the University of Hartford, Hartford Community School Division.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“That all is important is this one moment in movement. Make the moment important, vital, and worth living. Do not let it slip away unnoticed and unloved.”
—Martha Graham, choreographer
Deborah Goiffe

The FCDD welcomes DEBORAH GOIFFE

The FCDD welcomes incoming Hampshire College Assistant Professor of Dance, Deborah Goiffe. Deborah is a performer, dance maker, dance educator, video artist and performance curator. Since founding Scapegoat Garden in 2002, the Hartford-based collaborative dance theater company has served as a primary vehicle and creative community through which Deborah has explored the intersection of dance with other media. In 2012, Deborah was honored by the Connecticut Dance Alliance for Distinguished Achievement in Dance, and participated as New England Emerging Artist in Residence at the Bates Dance Festival in 2010. She has received Artist Fellowship Grants from the Connecticut Office of the Arts (2013, 2005), the Greater Hartford Arts Council (2007), and the Sundance Foundation (2008).

A graduate of the University of the Arts (BFA, Modern Dance) and California Institute of the Arts (MFA, Dance Performance and Choreography), Deborah recently earned a Professional Certificate from Wesleyan University’s Institute for Curatorial Practice in Performance where she explored curatorial practice as a way to nurture the health and vitality of local dance eco-systems.

Deborah Goiffe

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Desiree Monet-Anderson (MHC ’74) studied jazz dance with Luigi in New York City for many years, and later taught jazz dance and performed in Indianapolis. Married, with a family and full-time job, she no longer dances, but states that she has “such wonderful and satisfying memories.”

Canace Morgan (MHC ’11) takes dance classes at the Edwin M. Morgan College of Visual and Fine Arts in Kingston, Jamaica, and performs whenever she gets the chance.

Leah Moriarty (UM ’10) has been dancing with the Harambee Dance Company, a Harlem-based African Dance ensemble. She also works as a choreographer. Souleymane Badili will be joining her in Barlinke Faso summer.

Cathy Nicolai (SC MFA ’04) is in her second year as Assistant Professor of Dance and Performance Studies at Roger Williams University in Bristol, RI. Her most recent choreographic work, The Red Thread, is an interdisciplinary approach to literary Com- munity’s Four Laws of Ecology in which she collaborates with Heidi Henderson (SC MFA ’03) and other movement, visual, and sound artists.

Leslie Palmieri (MHC ’74) graduated from the Juilliard School and worked for the Dance in Education Funded for 17 years as a teacher, choreogra- pher, staff leader and mentor, directing their concert groups and working as an artist in the schools. For the past 22 years, she has been a kindergarten teacher. She has a master’s de- gree in teaching and National Board Certification.

Sandra Parks (SC MFA ’11) taught with the BridgeWater State University, College of Visual and Performing Arts at Montclair State College as adjunct faculty after graduation. She then moved to Atlanta to serve as an assistant professor at Kennes- we State University. While in Atlanta, Sandra co-directed and edited a documentary on Chinese dance and culture. She now works as an Assistant Professor and Head of Dance at Louisiana State University.

Jennifer Passios (MHC ’13) spent last summer on scholar- ships at the Gozo Gerdano Dance School in Chicago, since returning to Boston, she has been rehearsing and performing with Tribe and Hippodrome Dance. In October, she was in Boston directing Week’s dance-inspired runway show at the Institute of Con- temporary Art. She also teaches jazz at the Northeast School of Ballet and substitute teaches at an elementary school.

Roberta Rod (MHC ’79) stopped dancing profes- sionally a few years before the birth of her child in 1996, and dedicated herself full-time to her private practice in Bodywork and Movement Therapy in NYC. In 2011, she performed in the Global Water Dance project.

Jan Rosenboom (HC ’56) was one of the inaugural recipients of this award, a new mentorship prize for young choreographers in NYC experimental dance community. She continues to teach, curate concerts and perform her work in the city.

Laura Ann Samuelsdon (HC ’11) performed her new work EVERYTHING IN THE Com- munity Dance Collective in Bcodo, and was featured as part of Susan Froh’s 100 Colle- gialo Creatives blog series.

Noelle Safraiho (HC ’06) is the Administrative Assistant & Educational Outreach Coordinator at Pioneer Valley Ballet in Northampton, Mas- sachusetts.

Meagan Seufert (MHC ’11) has been busy with volunteer work at a local theatre, both performing and running tech. She also does freelance photography, with a focus on capturing live stage performance. She is employed as an Account Executive at Mosaic Magazine, with opportunities to perform at radio spots and to develop a video series for the publication.

Karina Kathleen Soyars (HC ’96) will be presenting work in the River in River Festival and has returned to Mount Tamper Arts to continue to collaborate on new work with Sara Smith (HC ’90) and Luke Cantarella, with whom she presented Another Tree Dance at the Chocolate Factory The- ater in Long Island, NY.

Tony Silva (UM ’08) is in his thirteenth year of teaching dance classes for the FCDD. He recently finished the musical score for his seventh docu- mentary and continues to create and produce work with fellow Smith alumni, Rebecca Hito Yatschuk (SC MFA ’12), and Stephen Ursprung (SC MFA ’12) with their company Reject Dance Theatre. Stephanie is also the dance coach for My College Audition and directs and choreographs musicals throughout the city.

Amy Soffic (SC MFA ’16) is working towards an MA in Dance/Movement Therapy and Counseling at Antioch University New England, and is interning as a counselor at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts. Prior to this, she served as an instructor in the Theatre and Dance Department at Franklin Pierce University.

Rebecca Steinberg (UM ’10) has been dancing with Vortigo Dance Company’s International Training Program in Israel for the past year. She has performed on Bahati’s home stage at the Suzanne Delfal Center for Dance and Theater, and in the Tower of David Museum for Israel’s In- dependence Day celebration.

Jennifer Trainorbridge (MHC ’72) was in the first MHC class with dance majors, and she’s still dancing, teaching, performing and learning! Pilobolus was an early influence on her and she con- tinues to work with Alonzo Chase. She runs a private studio in Sedgwick, ME and teaches and choreo- graphs in the region.

Maritania Valencia (HC ’96) presented on the floor on the floor at March of New York Live Arts with fellow HC alum Lydia Okrent (HC ’16). They did a residency at HC in May to keep developing this work.

Chrisy Vanyur (UM ’12) is in her second year dancing with the Boston Celtics, traveling around the world.

Cat Wagner (SC MFA ’13) has moved in Brooklyn in April. She presented Oh, u Cup Again, at Triskelion Arts Comedy Dance 2014. She collaborates with Kelly Silliman (SC MFA ’10) for dance theatre duet: NosterSea.

Autumn Welt (SC MFA ’12) lives in Florida. She performs and choreographs in the Orlando area with companies such as Universal Studios, Nickelodeon, and DreamWorks.

Chelsea White (SC ’11) works at the non-profit Phipps Com- munity Development Corpora- tion as a College Awareness Advisor for two Bronx schools, and dances with West African dance company Harambee.

Christina Whitman (MHC ’03) works at the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst where she serves as the founding director of the Yosef Oral History Proj- ect, a growing archive of over 600 hours of video interviews about Yiddish language and culture.

Dyanra Winkler (MHC ’03) is directing a feature-length documen- tary, United Skates, about an underground dance scene that fuses hip-hop, breaking and animating—all while on other stages. The project raised nearly $60,000 through a Kickstarter campaign and started filming soon.

Lauren Walter (HC ’13) relocated to NYC and spent fall 2013 as a student in Broadway Dance Center’s Professional Semester living in NYC and offering her her first opportunity, notably performing on the Or. & Show with Richard Simms and dancing in a Teens Music video.

Jessica Treeburg (UM ’08) is in the national tour of 50 Shades of Grey.

ALUMS! STAY IN TOUCH WITH US!
Dear Alums: Please send us your e-mail and other contact information! E-mail us at fcdd@hampshire.edu

The FCDD welcomes DEBORAH GOIFFE

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