

A photograph of a person from the chest up, wearing a black t-shirt with the text 'ART, LET'S DANCE' printed on it in white. Instead of a head, there is a large, dense bouquet of various flowers, including white daisies, dark red roses, and purple chrysanthemums. The person's right hand is on their hip. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The entire image has a semi-transparent teal overlay.

COLLEEN THOMAS DANCE

Photo by Miguel Anaya
Rebecca Makus Design (2019)

COLLEEN THOMAS DANCE 2021

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ABOUT COLLEEN THOMAS

Colleen Thomas is a New York-based choreographer and performing artist. She is the director of Colleen Thomas Dance, co director of Bill Young/ Colleen Thomas Co., and co- curator for LIT (loft into theater). She began her professional career with the Miami Ballet and went on to work with renowned contemporary choreographers such as The Kevin Wynn Collection, Nina Wiener Dance Company, DonaldByrd/The Group, Bebe Miller Dance Company, and Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, among others.

Her work has been seen throughout the United States as well as in Europe, Asia, and South America. Her recent research includes: a new work with artists from Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, and USA which premiered at La MaMa Theater in May 2019, and a new dance premiere slated for April 2021 at New York Live Arts looking at women artists during fascist times.

Thomas' interdisciplinary work includes a recent published scientific study looking at brain activity in contact improvisers. The study, titled *Contact improvisation dance practice predicts greater mu rhythm desynchronization during action observation.* (Goldman, A., Thomas, C., & Sajda, P. (2019)). was published in the *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*. Advance online publication.

Thomas received her BA in Psychology from SUNY Empire State College and her MFA in Dance from University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. She has been an adjunct faculty member at Long Island University's Brooklyn Campus, The New School, Barnard College, Skidmore College, and Bates College.

She is currently a Professor of Professional Practice at Barnard College of Columbia University.

OUTREACH

PERFORMANCE AND PEDAGOGY

Let us to perform, teach, and share with you!
Colleen Thomas Dance and collaborators will
come to your center, theater, school, town, and
community to create that special feeling
that only dancing together can!

The company offers a variety of classes.
Some examples include:

COLLABORATION AND THE CREATIVE PROCESS
CONTACT IMPROVISATION
SITE SPECIFIC MAKING
IMPROVISATION
COMPOSITION
FLOORWORK
MODERN
HIP-HOP
BALLET
SALSA

Let's keep making the work - together!



LIGHT AND DESIRE
WORLD PREMIERE 2021



LIGHT AND DESIRE

Created against the backdrop of increasing extremism worldwide, *light and desire* is a piece that must be made, words that must be said, and truths that must be told. Thomas joins five women artists from Venezuela (Carla Forte), Hungary/Germany (Ildikó Tóth), Poland (Joanna LeŚnierowska), Albania/ Greece (Ermira Goro), and North America (Rosalynde LeBlanc), taking a personal and universal look at how women artists cope under oppressive and manipulative power structures.

This feminist collective is supported by a community of 15 women representing an autonomous body of strong, feminine power which transforms the space for the other six performers. The original mask design by NEA award winner, Rebecca Makus, expresses the duality of beauty and grotesque, masculinity and femininity of human existence, and our endurance to transform.

The creation of *light and desire* was supported in part by a commission from New York Live Arts' Live Feed Residency program with generous support from the Trust for Mutual Understanding, Adam Mickiewicz Institute, Barnard College, and Miami Light Project. The Live Feed Residency program is supported in part by Rockefeller Brothers Fund, National Endowment for the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, Stavros Niarchos Foundation, and the Partners for New Performance.



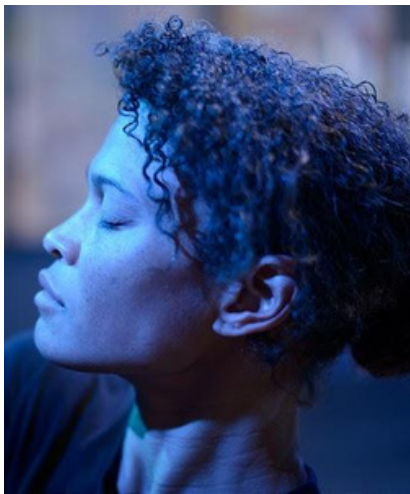
CARLA FORTE is a film director, scriptwriter and performer. Forte is the founder and Director of Film Department of Bistoury Physical Theatre and Film. Selected as a Berlinale Talent 2017, Carla has directed internationally featured Video-Art works such as *Interrupta*, Official Selection at 27th Festival Les Instants Vidéo 2014. Her cinematographic work includes the Feature Film *ANN*, Official Selection 41st Atlanta Film Festival 2017; the documentary *The Holders*, which World Premiered at the 32th Miami International Film Festival 2015; Short films

"Imaginarium" and "Reset" selected for Cannes film festival's Short Film Corner; as well as the feature film *Urban Stories*, Winner of Best Screenplay, Best Cinematography and Best Feature Film at Bootleg Film Festival in Toronto; and Honorable Mention at both Los Angeles Movie Awards and Lucerne International Film Festival, Switzerland.



ERMIRA GORO is a movement and dance theatre artist who is always in search of finding new forms to research and communicate her ideas. Ermira graduated from the Greek National School of Dance. With scholarships from Koula Pratsika Foundation and Greek State Scholarships Foundation (IKY) she continued her studies in New York where she collaborated with international dance companies and created her first choreographic works. In 2004 she worked on the

choreographic team for the opening and closing ceremonies of the Athens Olympic Games. Since 2007 Ermira has been working with the world-renowned DV8 Physical Theatre as a performer, teacher, and Research and Development/Choreography Assistant. As a choreographer, Ermira has presented her work at Judson Church, Hellenic Cosmos Cultural Centre, Joyce Soho, Theatre Hora, Semio Theatre, PS 122, Danspace Project, Galapagos Art Space, Sixrono Theatre, Benaki Museum, Athens School Of Fine Art, Flow 2 International Festival, Athens & Epidaurus Festival 2014/2016, Arc for Dance Festival and Onassis Cultural Foundation among others. For more information: www.ermiragoro.com



ROSALYNDE LEBLANC LOO has spent over twenty-years in dance as a performer, choreographer and educator. She holds a BFA from the State University of New York at Purchase and an MFA from Hollins University. She was a member of the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company (1993-1999), Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project (1999-2002), and the Liz Gerring Dance Company (2003-2006). In addition to performing the work of various independent choreographers, LeBlanc Loo has also danced with New York City's Metropolitan

Opera and for the 250th Mozart Celebration in Salzburg, Austria. She has had her writing published in the leading international dance periodicals, Dance Magazine and Ballettanz, and her choreography presented in venues around the country. She continues her work with Bill T. Jones in the preservation of his legacy and pedagogy, most notably, directing the LMU Dance-Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Educational Partnership. She is also producing and co-directing, with acclaimed cinematographer, Tom Hurwitz, the documentary film, Can You Bring It: Bill T. Jones and D-Man in the Waters. The film was awarded an Arts and Cultural Heritage grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Graves Award in the Humanities. It is due out in 2020. She is also the Chair of Dance at Loyola Marymount University.



LLDIKÓ TÓTH is a dancer, teacher and dance maker based in Leipzig, Germany. After graduating with a BA from Codarts University Rotterdam, she received a DAAD scholarship for postgraduate studies in New York City. She moved there in 2005 and subsequently performed in the works of Bill Young/Colleen Thomas & Company, Susan Marshall & Company, Kota Yamazaki among others. In 2012, Ildikó returned to Europe and became a member of the William Forsythe Company. Since its closure in 2015, she has been working as a freelance artist,

involved in projects with Thierry de Mey, Heiner Goebbels, Fabrice Mazliah | MAMAZA, Sebastian Matthias, Michael Maurissens and Darko Dragičević as well as Irina Pauls. Ildikó has taught at Tanzfabrik Berlin, b12 Festival, Tanzplattform Rhein-Main Frankfurt, La Raffinerie Brussels, K3 in Hamburg, Palucca Schule Dresden, and the Hungarian Ballet Academy in Budapest, among others. Learn more at www.ildiko-toth.com



JOANNA LEŚNIEWSKA is a dance writer, curator, and performance maker. She has been published in major Polish professional papers as well as abroad (in Germany, Israel, Czech Republic, and others). She guest lectured at universities in Poznan and Krakow and gave many speeches on Polish dance abroad. In 2004 she has created Poland's first regular dance space/choreographic development center, Art Stations Foundation. From 2011-2014 she was a member of the Advisory Board for the Music and

Dance Institute in Warsaw. Parallel to her curatorial work, Joanna develops her practice as an artistic coach to young choreographers and as a dramaturge and lighting designer to a number of Polish and international artists. Since 2011 she has created her own performances ("reconstruction", 2011, "...(rooms by the sea)", 2014, "Leavening", 2016). She received the award for best choreography at Polish Dance Platform 2014 for the solo "Insight" that she co-created with Janusz Orlik.



Photo by Nadia Halim
Rebecca Makus Design (2019)

DIANE. STILL.
PREMIERED 2019





DIANE. STILL.

Diane. Still. is a collaborative investigation which delves into the intersectional identities and daily injustices experienced by young women. This intimate trio features dancers Nadia Halim, Sadi Mosko, and Rochelle Jamila Wilbun, and music direction by Jo Morris. *Diane. Still.* captures moments of multiplicity in the different selves we choose to let others see and the ones we withhold.

"I used the word "quiet," but Thomas's choreography (on which the dancers collaborated) isn't docile; it's full of big, flung steps and moments of suspension before a noiseless fall. It's also structurally satisfying—that is, movements repeat in new configurations, whether performed in unison by all three women or just two."

- Deborah Jowitt, ArtsJournal

Diane. Still. premiered at the 19th iteration of Bill Young and Colleen Thomas' Loft into Theater showcases at 100 Grand.



NADIA HALIM is a dancer, writer, and creative director based in New York. Raised in Houston, TX, she attended the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. She graduated cum laude from Barnard College in 2019 with a B.A. in Sociology and Dance. Nadia had the privilege of performing works by Shannon Gillen, Yin Yue, Loni Landon, Zachary Tang, Sasha Waltz, David Dorfman, Jennifer Archibald, Kevin Wynn, among others. She has attended summer programs by A.I.M, VIM/VIGOR, and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. She has had the opportunity to train

at the b12 festival in Berlin and with artists including Kevin Quinaou and Julien Desplantez in Paris. Nadia completed the Diversity in Art Leadership program (Arts & Business Council/NY) and is currently the Marketing Associate at The Joyce Theater in New York.



ROCHELLE JAMILA is a dancer, doula, and Reiki practitioner based in Brooklyn. Her path to the healing arts began as a child growing up in Memphis, TN where she learned the transcendent power of dance. Upon graduating from Columbia University with a B.A. in Dance and Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, Rochelle found Reiki, herbalism, and meditation as tools for wellness and transformation. Rochelle became a full spectrum doula in 2018 after learning about the maternal health crisis and wishing for better support and information during her own

reproductive journey. Her art and healing practices are rooted in the legacy of radical Black artists, activists, mothers, healers and the Mississippi Delta. It is her heartfelt belief that wellness and spiritual alignment are all of our birthrights.



SADI MOSKO is a dancer and choreographer based in New York City. Since 2016, she has been a performer and collaborator with Colleen Thomas Dance. Sadi's choreography has been commissioned by organizations including the Columbia Ballet Collaborative (NY) and Treefort Music Fest (ID). Sadi co-founded SilverMoss Dance Project, a platform for the works she creates in collaboration with Carolyn Silverman. Originally from Boise, Idaho, Sadi graduated magna cum laude from Columbia University with B.A. degrees in both dance and

sustainable development. She studied with artists such as Twyla Tharp, Andrea Miller, and Jodi Melnick and performed works by Sasha Waltz, Shannon Gillen, Loni Landon, and Alexandra Beller, among others. Outside of the studio, Sadi is a writer and editor with a passion for environmental sustainability.



WAKE UP!
WORK-IN-PROGRESS
PREMIERED 2019





WAKE UP!

Wake Up!, a new duet with longtime collaborator Adriane Fang, deals with the filters we as a society feel that we need to place upon our perceptions in order to be able to withstand reality in this current socio-political landscape. We examine concepts such as the inequitable reality that as women we so often have to move backwards in order to move forward and how women both support and get in each other's way under glass ceilings.

This work was previewed at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Millennium Stage on October 20, 2019.



ADRIANE FANG was a member of the world renowned dance company, Doug Varone and Dancers, from 1996-2006 and has worked with several other choreographers including Colleen Thomas, Bill Young, Wally Cardona, Christopher K. Morgan and Elizabeth Shea. She has been a guest teacher at Taller Nacional de Danza - San José, Costa Rica and the Damansara PAC in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and has choreographed dances for groups such as Compañia Ceibadanza in Ecuador and Shendandoah University, and was awarded a 2014 Local Dance

Commissioning Project Award from The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to present her full-length work, Grains. Currently on faculty at the University of Maryland, Adriane is the recipient of a 2007 New York Dance and Performance Award ("Bessie") for her performance with Doug Varone and Dancers.



BUT THE SUN
CAME UP AND
WE WERE HERE

PREMIERED 2019





BUT THE SUN CAME UP AND WE WERE HERE

What are the limits – or possibilities – of a sense of belonging amid rising fear and tension in an unsteady world? Thomas and her collaborators delve into the embodied experience of self, perception and connection in a climate of heightened political and social unrest. With an international cast of dancers from Poland, Ukraine, Belarus and the U.S., *but the sun came up and we were here* asks if the expression of our individual essence, intuition and power can be the antidote to division in a fractured world.

"The piece investigate[s] possibilities for community amid rising global tensions...Thomas' capable performers make themselves caricatures, speaking in falsetto, contorting their faces, and telling stories that have no beginning or end...It's an uneasy truce held together by a common goal – an end to divisions without achieving unity"

- Nicole Loeffler-Gladstone, The Dance Enthusiast

but the sun came up and we were here was made possible because of generous support from the Trust for Mutual Understanding, Barnard College, and Lower Manhattan Cultural Council.

PRESS

"The beautiful and ominous mingle in thoughtfully poetic ways."

- **Deborah Jowitt**

"The woman to my left conveys her enjoyment to me. I nod....and venture a small, contented, only-in-New-York sigh."

- **Deborah Jowitt, ArtsJournal**

"...the dancers veer off balance, collect themselves and whirl away in another direction."

- **Gia Kourlas, The New York Times**

"Thomas dances most movingly on the floor—trembling, rearing up to rise, and dropping down again—as if she could hardly bear to put weight on the soles of her feet. She's a lovely, thoughtful performer."

- **Deborah Jowitt, Village Voice**

"...couples who are forced into sleek partnering upheavals and reversals and loving encounters that are both serene and feisty"

- **Jennifer Dunning, The New York Times**

"Performed at Danspace Project on Thursday night, *Winning You With Words* places three notably tall dancers — Julia Burrer, Ted Johnson and Karl Rogers — within a setting of fluffy pillows (used both for sleeping and smothering), stiff and rubbery movement..."

- **Gia Kourlas, The New York Times**

"Dramatic, inventive, *Catching Her Tears* is one of the best pieces I've seen this year. Thomas is as adept at the tender as she is the creepy."

- **Lightsey Darst, St. Paul Magazine**

"Spare choreographic phrases...creating a happy dissonance between cool structure and warm intimacy."

- **Claudia La Rocco, The New York Times**



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