

CAN WE DANCE HERE?

CHOREOGRAPHERS & DANCERS

Amanda Castro, Tap
Arielle Rosales, Flamenco
Brinda Guha, Kathak

MUSICIANS

Ryan Stanbury, Trumpet & Musical Director
Okai Musik, Percussion
AJ Jagannath, Electric Guitar

All musical compositions are collaboratively created by and credited
to the Soles of Duende collective: Amanda Castro, Arielle Rosales,
Brinda Guha, Okai Musik, AJ Jagannath, and Ryan Stanbury

Musical direction by Ryan Stanbury
Additional track contribution by Raaginder Momi
Costumes by Soles of Duende
Technical Coordinator: Beaudau Banks
Production Assistant: Trevania Layne

With Can We Dance Here?, these three storytellers bask in the light of their third iteration of percussive conversation. Celebrating and elevating their survival amidst the barriers that diminish collective liberation, Soles has bottled this synergy into an enticing evening of rhythmic exchange. Rooted in the freedom their crafts provide them and in dialogue with live music, this trio invites the audience to pause, witness, and receive three women of culture boldly taking the floor... here and NOW.

A NOTE FROM THE ARTISTS

Time has proven that no backstory is linear, continuously revealing how all of our histories remain intertwined. From the spice trade to the middle passage to the transatlantic; from the Nuyo-Rican arrival to the 1965 Immigration Act; from dhabas to bodegas – we embody the histories of our intersectional past, finding our cultures' rhythms as our collective language. When it comes to music, the one thing we do share? The floor. From a sixteen-beat teental, underbellied with a twelve-count bulerías, finishing with three and a break, the floor lets us share our cultures across bars. Although a shave and haircut to one is a *remate* to another and a *tehai* to the third, we know that when we all arrive, we've found our collective musical break. As percussive artists, we've consistently had to ask for permission: permission to create new music, permission to break rules, and permission to even dance on the floor that is built for us to use. Tonight, we offer you ourselves, our history, our music, here and now – in abundance. So... can we dance here? . Si. Yes.

Can We Dance Here? premiered at Gibney Spotlight Performances in 2022.

Run time: Approximately 75 minutes, including 15-minute intermission.

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SOLES OF DUENDE
MUSICAL INFLUENCES
for Can We Dance Here?
Various Sangeet Tukras, Drut Toras, Parans
Kathak Guru Bela Arnab & Guru Malabika Guha

La Fiesta de Pilito
El Gran Combo
Escobilla por Bulerías de Cádiz
Letras por Alegrías
Take the 'A' Train
Billy Strayhorn & Duke Ellington
Aguanilé
Willie Colón & Héctor Lavoe

The Rock Cries Out To Us Today (Excerpt)

MAYA ANGELOU
Each of you a bordered country,
Delicate and strangely made proud,
Yet thrusting perpetually under siege.
Your armed struggles for profit
Have left collars of waste upon
My shore, currents of debris upon my breast.
Yet, today I call you to my riverside,
If you will study war no more.
Come, clad in peace and I will sing the songs
The Creator gave to me when I
And the tree and stone were one.

THE ARTISTS
ABOUT SOLES OF DUENDE

A Brooklyn-born Puerto-Rican from New Haven, a Mexican Puerto-Rican Jew from the Lower East Side, and a Bengali Indian from Jersey walked on to the wooden floor & the rest? History. Bonded by their deep love of music, their crafts, and true connection, Soles of Duende is on a lifelong mission to elevate the joy and music of true collaboration across disciplines and the celebration of the forms they practice. Based in the sounds of Tap (Amanda Castro), Flamenco (Arielle Rosales) and Kathak (Brinda Guha), Soles of Duende's fire is the spirit that lives within each of these women to celebrate their connection given their beautiful differences

and to uplift the forms that made them.

AMANDA CASTRO (Tap). Featured on Dance Magazine's "25 to Watch" for 2023, Amanda Castro is a Bessie award-winning Puerto Rican-American multidisciplinary artist rooted in rhythm. Most recently seen in *Rhythm is Life* by Dormeshia Sumbrey Edwards and *Chasing Magic* by Ayodele Casel, Castro is a graduate of California Institute of the Arts where she studied under Glen Eddy of Nederlands Dans Theatre and Andre Tyson from the Ailey Company. Once a principal dancer of the renowned company, Urban Bush Women, she's gone on to star in musical theater productions such as *Singing In the Rain* in the role of Kathy Seldon, Jared Grimes' ensemble in *42nd Street*, "atomic" performances as Anita in Glimmerglass Festival's *West Side Story* (NYT) and *Lyric Opera of Chicago*, among others. Castro has worked for and collaborated on various projects with artists from around the country including Soles of Duende, Justin Peck, Julio Monge, Caleb Tiecher, Michael Heitz, Jared Grimes, Francesca Zambello, and many more. She's been fortunate to work with innovative artists in the field and is constantly on the search to be a part of stories that help elevate our collective humanity.

ARIELLE ROSALES (Flamenco) is a Bessie-nominated Performing Artist who interweaves the worlds of Flamenco, Percussion, Theater, and Improvisation as a means to find connection through duende. She has been dubbed, "Excitingly rhythmic and undoubtedly seductive" by Dance Informa Magazine, and "A very intense and wonderful choreographic talent" by Broadway World. Her work has been featured on *The Today Show* (NBC), *Good Morning America* (ABC), and *Mrs. Doubtfire* on Broadway. As an Educator, Arielle is an active Teaching Artist with Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana and NY City Center, and is part of the 2023 cohort of The Hidden Voices Project creating an original Flamenco curriculum for the Social Studies Department of the NYCDOE. She is a Co-Founding Dancer with the all-women percussive dance trio @solesofduende and a Band Member & Conductor with the all-women Afro-Brazilian samba reggae band @batalanewyork. Follow @ariellerosales and visit www.ariellerosales.com for more info!

BRINDA GUHA (Kathak) identifies as a non-disabled, caste-privileged, cisgender, and queer South-Asian American, and is a Bessie-nominated artist trained Kathak dancer of over 20 years. During training and performing for years in the Kathak (Malabika Guha) & Manipuri (Kalavati + Bimbavati Devi) dance disciplines, as well as Flamenco (Carmen de las Cuevas; Dionisia Garcia) and Contemporary Fusion vocabularies, she co-founded Kalamandir Dance Company in 2010. She has choreographed for many national stages and self-produced original feature-length dance productions which earned her artist residencies at Dixon Place (2018) and Dancewave (2019) to continue to develop work. Now, she is represented by CESD Talent Agency and is pursuing artistic direction, performance and arts education. She trains in Kathak, Manipuri, and Contemporary, and is the artistic director and faculty member at Kalamandir of NJ Dance School. Her dream of having art meet activism was realized when she created WISE FRUIT NYC, a seasonal live

arts installment (est. 2017) dedicated to the feminine divine and honoring select women-led organizations. For her day job, she works as the Senior Producing Coordinator for dance service organization based in the values of Justice, Equity, and Inclusion: Dance/NYC.

RYAN STANBURY (Trumpet/Musical Director), creatively known as Ryan the Artkitect, is a Jamaican-American recording artist, arranger, and alchemist from northern New Jersey. Baptized by the vibrations of sweet Reggae music and raised to the tune of Brooklyn block parties and American popular music, Ryan began his musical journey at the age of seven, first on the violin, followed by the trumpet, and then percussion shortly after. He has performed on stages across New York City, the United States, and abroad as both a musician and musical director with a vast array of performers. Ryan's musical offerings can be heard throughout an ever-expanding catalog of recorded collaborations as an instrumentalist, composer, producer, and mixing engineer by way of his music production studio, Wilberforce & Annie; a boutique production house founded on amplifying the voices of now.

OKAI MUSIK (Percussion), Brooklyn-born with Haitian descent, was beating on anything that he could get his hands on to help his imagination grow from a young age. His ears became infected with the hard boom bap drum loops of Hip Hop, and roots music from the Caribbean. Those sounds led him on a musical path to find rock, Jazz, samba, salsa, rumba, and pretty much anything that involves percussion. Okai has had the pleasure of performing before audiences at Brooklyn Museum, the legendary African art auction exhibition at Sotheby's, Madison Square Garden, Carnegie Hall, and other venues throughout the States. Internationally, Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Canada, Tanzania, Ivory Coast, Australia, Japan, and Brazil have been showered with his sounds and soon the rest of the world will.

ANDREW "AJ JAGANNATH" (Electric Guitar), born and raised in Harrisburg, PA, became infatuated with the guitar at age 13, after a foot injury prevented him from playing sports over one summer. He had many early musical influences to draw from between his mother's Western classical piano training, his father's love of music and extensive record collection, and his grandmother's knowledge and proficiency in singing Carnatic music. Through the use of effects pedals, multiple amplifiers, triggered sounds, and live looping, AJ strives to create a rich sonic atmosphere with the guitar that goes beyond the scope of sounds traditionally associated with the instrument. AJ has performed on stages such as the Apollo Theater, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Bowery Ballroom, Brooklyn Bowl, ABC's The View, and many more. He currently lives in Queens, NY, where he runs a recording studio and works as an engineer.

A co-presentation of Proctors and Union College, this performance is presented in cooperation with Union College as part of the Stephanie C. Davis Residency and made possible by the gift of Gus (class of '59) and Sue Davis in memory of their daughter.

The NYS DanceForce, a partnership program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature, is proud to provide funding support to the artists involved in this performance and residency.

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THE STEPHANIE C. DAVIS DANCE RESIDENCY



The Stephanie C. Davis Dance Residency at Union College is made possible by a gift from Sue and Gus Davis '59, an active alumnus from Hamden, Conn., who is a retired clinical professor of pathology, Yale University. The residency was created in memory of their daughter, Stephanie C. Davis, a modern dancer and environmental activist with a lifelong love of the performing arts. It has become a highlight of the Union Dance Program.

From her first ballet lesson at age 7, Stephanie was always passionate about dance. She continued with ballet and modern dance throughout University City High School in Missouri and in London during her parents' sabbatical year abroad. She spent one year at Washington University in St. Louis as a liberal arts major with a dance minor before auditioning for and being accepted into the NYU Tisch School of the Arts Dance Program. She graduated with a bachelor's of fine arts degree.

A knee injury prevented Stephanie from pursuing a career in dance. She obtained a master's degree in public administration, with a concentration in the arts, from NYU and went on to a successful career as a medical waste recycling consultant and educator. Her love of dance and music continued throughout her lifetime.



Stephanie, 18, is pictured at Washington University in St. Louis during a dance break.

"Dancing had been Stephie's passion, and Union College, where we met, has always been a special place for us. The idea of a dance residency was enthusiastically received as an educational experience for students and an artistic experience for the entire Union community. We remember Stephanie by transmitting our love for her and her love of dance to new generations of Union students. She would have been thrilled."

The Davises

Gus (Union College Class of 1959) and Sue (Russell Sage College Class of 1960)