

*Gaspard
& Dancers*

Noula (2022)

Choreography by: Gaspard Louis
in collaboration with the dancers

Music: Shana Tucker

Costumes: Mahalia Stines

Lighting: Austin Powers

Performers: Laura Espitia, A J Guevara, Shamila Issa, Taylor Jordan,
Nelson Mejia, Garrett Parker, Marsha Pierre, Evan Wilkins

27 (2018)

Choreography: Gaspard Louis

Music: Jonathan Mathews

Costumes: Mahalia Stines

Lighting: Tiffany Schrepferman

Performer: Evan Wilkins

Pothos (2017)

Choreography: Gaspard Louis

in collaboration with the dancers

Music: Joshua Starmer and Robert Cantrell

Costumes: Mahalia Stines

Set Designer: Steven Silverleaf

Lighting: David Ferry

Performers: Laura Espitia, AJ Guevara, Shamila Issa,
Taylor Jordan, Nelson Mejia, Garrett Parker

Sodo/Waterfall (2022)

Choreography: Gaspard Louis

in collaboration with the dancers

Music: Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR)

Costume Design: Mahalia Stines

Set Designer: Steven Silverleaf

Lighting: Austin Powers

Performers: Marsha Pierre and Nelson Mejia

*Sodo-Waterfall, was developed in part during a residency at the Baryshnikov Arts Center, New York, NY.
Music commissioned by the Charles and Joan Gross Family Foundation.*

L'esprit/The spirit (2014)

Choreography by: Gaspard Louis

in collaboration with the dancers

Music by: Avishai Cohen

Costumes by: Gaspard Louis & Mahalia Stines

Lighting by: David Ferri

Performers: Laura Espitia, A J Guevara, Shamila Issa,
Taylor Jordan, Nelson Mejia, Garrett Parker, Marsha Pierre, Evan Wilkins

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Gaspard Louis is the Founder and Artistic Director of Gaspard&Dancers (G&D). He received a BFA in Dance from Montclair State University and continued his dance studies on scholarship at Gus Giordano's in Chicago and Nikolais/Louis Dance Lab in New York. Following his studies, he joined the New York based company called AllNations where he performed traditional dances from many parts of the world for US troupes across the globe. Subsequently, he performed and traveled worldwide with Pilobolus Dance Theater. He collaborated on the choreography of nine major dance works with the company and taught master dance classes both nationally and internationally. Gaspard received an MFA in Dance from the Hollins University/American Dance Festival Program and is the Director of ADF's year-round creative movement outreach program which provides free dance classes to youth in the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill community of North Carolina. Additionally, Gaspard has been a guest teacher at numerous universities including North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA), Duke, Elon, and North Carolina Central.

DANCERS

Laura Espitia was born in Colombia and raised in Florida, Laura is a New York based dance artist. While earning her Bachelors in Fine Arts from New World School of the Arts in 2019 she performed works by Robert Battle, Paul Taylor, Ohad Naharin, and Eduardo Vilaro to name a few. Upon graduating she has had the pleasure of working professionally with Rosie Herrera, Allison Cook Beatty, Laura Halzack, and has joined G&D for their 2022 season. Laura's training has led her to participate in American Dance Festival, Bates Festival, and Paul Taylor intensives. Most recently, she received a scholarship from The Paul Taylor School for their year-round program. Laura's goal is to perform professionally for as long as she can and later intends on developing her artistic voice as a choreographer.

AJ Guevara is a performer, teaching artist, and choreographer hailing from California's Central Coast. He earned his BFA in Dance & Choreography from Virginia Commonwealth University, with additional training from the Accademia dell' Arte (Italy) and American Dance Festival as a scholarship recipient. He has had the privilege of performing the works of Jennifer Archibald, Bill T. Jones, Robert J Priore, Jodi Melnick, Rachel Erdos, Jamal Abrams, Joshua L. Peugh, Arthur Pita, and Thomas Noone, among others. His work with Company|E, in partnership with the US State Department, has allowed him to serve as an Artistic Diplomat for Cultural Exchange in Israel, Cuba, Dubai, the United Kingdom, Palestine, as well as multiple engagements at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. AJ's advocacy work with GIBNEY, ETD Outreach, AXIS Dance Company, and Local Motion Project, strives to create equitable spaces, healing through movement and bringing awareness to disability within the arts. This work has allowed him to share with communities in The Netherlands, Switzerland, Mexico and domestic engagements across the US. AJ is grateful to be returning for another season with G&D!

Shamila Issa is from Dallas, Texas. She began her dance training under the guidance of Dr. Kihyoung Choi and has been a leading member of Movers Unlimited Touring Dance Company since 2014. During her time in the company, she has had the opportunity to choreograph and present her work at various artistic junctions. In 2019, her dance choreography was chosen to be featured in the American College Dance Association's gala performance. Later that year, she was selected to attend the Hubbard Street Dance summer intensive. In addition, her participation at the Palm Desert Choreography Festival received high praises. She is ecstatic to start her first season with G&D.

Taylor Jordan is a movement artist, teacher, and choreographer based in New York City. She is a native of Montgomery, Alabama where she studied ballet, modern and jazz at the Alabama Dance Theatre. Throughout her high school years, she trained at companies including Nederlands Dans Theater, Boston Ballet, Houston Ballet, Charlotte Ballet, Portland Festival Ballet and Alabama Ballet. After graduating high school, Taylor joined Charlotte Ballet II under the direction of Patricia McBride and Mark Diamond. In 2016, Taylor joined the Alonzo King LINES Ballet Training Program. During that time, she performed original works by Shannon Gillen, Gioconda Barbuto, Alex Ketley, Maurya Kerr, Erik Wagner, Carmen Rozestraten, Angelo Dello Iacono, and Gregory Dawson. After graduating from the LINES Training Program in May 2018, she joined dawsondancesf under the direction of Gregory Dawson. She has also performed with Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Reyes Dance and xseed2020. This is Taylor's second season with G&D.

Nelson Mejia is a multi-disciplinary artist based in Richmond, VA and in his final year at VCU in the Department of Dance and Choreography. Beginning at the age of 13, Nelson has surveyed and encompassed a variety of dance styles. He has performed works by Urban Bush Women, Sinclair Emoghene, Eric Rivera, and more. He has worked closely with associate professor Emoghene in creative process, joining in for their Artist-in-Residency at The Kennedy Center in 2019. That same year, his first video work, *Headspace*, was showcased at VCU's Spring Student Concert. In 2020, he served as videographer, director, and editor for the Freshman Repertory class's "Fresh Rep" concert, a virtual screening of works by Trebien Pollard and Starrene Foster. A sound designer as well, his work has been commissioned for a number of projects at VCU. More recently, Nelson presented his solo, *rinse*, at VCU Dance NOW 2022. He has taken intensives with Arts Umbrella, Gagabalab, and Company E among others. He is looking forward to attending Springboard Danse Montreal this June. Nelson is excited to start his first season with G&D.

Garrett Parker was born in North Carolina and spent much of his childhood in New Delhi, India. He is now a Brooklyn-based choreographer, videographer, and advocate for people with disabilities. Garrett is a graduate of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. His choreography has been shared at NYC venues including Judson Church, Baruch Performing Arts Center, LaGuardia Performing Arts Center, Sheen Center, Actors Arts Fund Theater, the International Human Rights Arts Festival, Dixon Place, Last Frontier, Create Art, and Arts on Site. Garrett is excited to come back to the G&D family for another season. He is committed to sharing the healing qualities of dance with the world.

Marsha Guirlande Pierre is a Haitian-American freelance artist based in the Bronx, New York. She began her dance training at Knecht Dance Academy in Levittown, Pennsylvania under the direction of Elise Knecht. She graduated from Montclair State University with a Bachelors in Fine Arts in Dance Performance in May 2019. Throughout college, Masha performed works by Camille A. Brown, Bill T. Jones, Daniel Shapiro and Joanie Smith, and Alwin Nikolais. Outside of Montclair State repertory she has performed professional works with Earl Mosley's Diversity of Dance, The Nathaniel Hunt Project, VOID: a female memory, Padierna Dance Project, and The Lab by SGalberth. Since graduating, she has worked with G&D as well as Maxine Steinmein & Dancers. She joined Limón Dance Company as an apprentice during their 2019-2020 season. Masha also interned for Sidra Bell Dance New York and is a member of ARTS by the People, a non-profit organization where she coordinated educational art programs for groups ranging from after school programs to senior living activities. In early 2021, she debuted as a lead dancer for the music video *If You Care* by the artist Q. She is pleased and excited to join G&D this season.

Evan Lee Wilkins is a North Carolina Native that now calls NYC Home. He is a Graduate of The University of North Carolina School of the Arts High-school program. And is a recent Graduate of Marymount Manhattan College's BFA program. While attending university he had the opportunity to perform works by José Limón, Martha Graham, Paul Taylor, Ming Yang, Larry Keigwin, And Michale Mao. Making his concert debut, Evan is excited at the opportunity to be joining Gaspard and Dancers for the 2022 season.

COMPOSERS

SHANA TUCKER Cellist. Singer-Songwriter. Arts Advocate. Teaching Artist. Collaborator. Cultural Conduit. In each role, Shana Tucker is a builder-of-connections, and her unique genre of ChamberSoul weaves jazz, roots, folk, acoustic pop, and a touch of R&B into melodies that echo in your head for days. A sought-after collaborator, Shana performs and records with legendary jazz saxophonist/composer Bennie Maupin, jazz flutist/composer Nicole Mitchell, Grammy-nominated NuSoul collective, The Foreign Exchange and countless others. President Barack Obama recently released his "2022 Summer Playlist" and listed the song "Better" by the Foreign Exchange featuring Shana Tucker as recommended listening. Recent North Carolina dance/cello collaborations include *When We Were Queens* with Murielle Elizéon (premiering Fall 2023), a commissioned exploration into the "body stories" of women artists of color and the navigation of their creative, cultural, historic, African Diasporic legacies and present-day existence in the South; *They Are All*, an exploration of living with Parkinson's Disease, presented at American Dance Festival 2019 with Culture Mill; *Continuing To Tell*, a multidisciplinary public-space performance presented by Proxemic Media that highlights the history of Civil Rights in Durham, NC. Shana is also an accomplished master teaching artist and children's music content creator. She appeared in a lead recurring role on PBSNC/Rootle TV's *Block Party LIVE @ Home!* for the 2022-23 season. Shana currently serves as Executive Director for Kidznotes, a music-for-social-change community youth orchestra organization in Durham, NC. — shanatucker.com

Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) is a prolific and endlessly collaborative composer, performer, educator, and social entrepreneur. "About as omnivorous as a contemporary artist gets" (New York Times), DBR has worked with artists from Philip Glass to Bill T. Jones to Lady Gaga; appeared on NPR, American Idol, and ESPN; and has collaborated with the Sydney Opera House and the City of Burlington, Vermont. Acclaimed as a violinist and activist, DBR's career spans more than two decades, earning commissions by venerable artists and institutions worldwide. Known for his signature violin sounds infused with myriad electronic, urban, and African-American music influences, DBR takes his genre-bending music beyond the proscenium. He is a composer of chamber, orchestral, and operatic works; has been nominated for a Sports EMMY for Outstanding Musical Composition for his collaboration with ESPN; featured as keynote performer at technology conferences; and created large scale, site-specific musical events for public spaces. DBR earned his doctorate in Music Composition from the University of Michigan and is currently Tenured Professor and Professor of Practice at Arizona State University.

Robert Cantrell is a Chapel Hill NC based percussionist who plays a variety of Cuban and Brazilian instruments in addition to acoustic and electronic drum kit. Currently performing in several NC based groups, he also has accompanied a number of dance troupes ranging in style from folkloric to modern. He enjoys exploring the exchange of energy between musician and dancer and is excited to perform with Gaspard & Dancers.

Jonathan Mathews holds a BFA in dance and a minor in music from NYU. In addition to accompanying dance, he dances and writes about performance in NYC, choreographs for This is Not a Theatre Company, and is the co-artistic director of BREAKTIME, a current artist in residence at Chez Bushwick.

Joshua Starmer is a composer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist and performer. As a composer, he has created works for dance companies Gaspard & Dancers, Vector and Leah Wilks, as well as short films and television commercials. As a songwriter, he writes and records a new song every month. This project, which began in January 2013, serves as a musical diary, describing the heartbreaks and triumphs in everyday life. As a dynamic multi-instrumentalist and performer, Joshua brings his music to life with a passionate intensity everywhere from the opera house to the road house. You can follow Joshua's music on the web at: <http://joshuastarmer.com/>

Designers and Production Staff

Austin F. Powers (Technical Director/Lighting Designer) Based in Durham, NC, he designs sound, lighting, and video for live performance. Recent credits at Duke University include lighting design for The Roadkill Club and broadcast video direction for Medea and Citizen: An American Lyric. He was the scenographer for an installation work, Sinewaves in the Triangle, created by Christopher and Jennifer Scully-Thurston. He has also worked with Carolina Ballet, as projection engineer for Sleepy Hollow, Frankenstein, and The Rime of the Ancient Mariner. Austin is a staff designer and supervising technician at Duke, where he graduated from the Department of Theater Studies and works frequently with the American Dance Festival.

Mahalia Stines (Costume Designer) is a Brooklyn Based Fiber artist. Formerly trained as a Costume Designer she draws her inspiration in the Urban cityscape and fuses those influences with cultural elements from her Native Haiti.

Steven Silverleaf (Set Designer) attended the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee during the 1970s where he studied painting and drawing. He was active in the local art, poetry and experimental theater scene in Milwaukee. He maintains a studio in Carrboro, NC. Artist. Stevensilverleaf.com

Robin Gallant (Company Photographer) is a multiple time international award winning fine dance photographer. She won second place in the famed Px3 photo competition in Paris where thousands of images were entered from photographers from 85 countries. She has trained with both Lois Greenfield and Roy Volkman. She has worked with professional dancers from many different countries and companies, including Alvin Ailey, Urban Bush Women, Elisa Monte and the show So You Think You Can Dance. She especially took a particular interest in Gaspard&Dancers and enjoys working with the company since 2009.

Satsuki "Sunshine" Scoville (Photographer) is a family, portrait, and event photographer and photography workshop instructor based in Durham, North Carolina, who feels fortunate to capture images of special and everyday moments for families and organizations(www.ScovillePhotography.com). Sunshine has degrees in Psychology and Social Work, and has also worked or volunteered with La Leche League of North Carolina, Sister Cities of Durham, Carolina Friends School, Central Park School for Children, and the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute of UNC-CH. Sunshine and her partner David have two children: Lucy and Sumi.

David Liu (Philosopher-in-Residence) continues to philosophize, write, make music, cook for family, and plan an institute in Rome. He sees Gaspard's dancers with the imagined proprioception of a naïf, and engages them accordingly.