

24/25 Performance Season



**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
DANCE COMPANY 2025**

**February 6 - 9, 2025**

Power Center



U-M School of Music, Theatre & Dance Department of Dance presents

# UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN DANCE COMPANY 2025

Co-Artistic Directors

**Shannon Gillen & Jillian Hopper**

Choreographers

**FLOCK: Alice Klock and Florian Lochner<sup>+</sup>, Tzveta  
Kassabova, Biza Sompá, Robin Wilson**

Rehearsal Directors

**Ginny Jiang<sup>‡</sup>, Marly Spieser-Schneider, Dorka  
Fetter<sup>‡</sup>, Tamara Tucker-Ibarisha**

Scenic Designers

**Jungah Han, Tal Lev<sup>‡</sup>**

Lighting Designer

**Joseph R. Walls**

Costume Designers

**Sarah M Oliver, Rachael Hymowitz<sup>‡</sup>**

Hair & Makeup Designer

**Brittany Crinson**

Production Stage Manager

**Brett Finley<sup>+</sup>**

Lighting Design Assistant

**Ethan J. Hoffman<sup>‡</sup>**

*‡ SMTD Student*

*+ SMTD Guest Artist*

**University of Michigan Dance Company 2025 will be presented with one  
intermission.**

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**The performers in this production are students in the Department of Dance. The designers for this production are students, faculty, and/or guests of SMTD. Scenery, costumes, properties, sound, and lighting were realized by the students and staff of University Productions, the producing unit of SMTD. Thank you for supporting our educational mission.**

Latecomers will be seated at a suitable break. As a courtesy to others, please turn off cellular phones and pagers and refrain from texting during the performance. Photography, audio recording, and videotaping of any kind are not permitted.

## **STATEMENT ON THE ANISHINAABE LAND TRANSFER**

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Anishinaabeg gaa bi dinokiiwaad temigad manda Michigan Kichi Kinoomaagegamig. Mdaaswinshwaaswaakshimdaaswishiniizhawaaswi gii-sababoonagak, Ojibweg, Odawaag, minwaa Bodwe'aadamiig wiiba gii-miigwenaa'aa maamoonjiniibina Kichi Kinoomaagegamigoong wi pii-gaa aanjibiigaadeg Kichi-Naakonigewinning, debendang manda aki, mampii Niisaajiwan, gewiinwaa niijaansiwaan ji kinoomaagaazinid. Daapanaming ninda kidwinan, megwaa minwaa gaa bi aankoosejig zhinda akiing minwaa gii-miigwewaad Kichi-Kinoomaagegamigoong aanji-daapinanigaade minwaa mshkowenjigaade.

The University of Michigan is located on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe people. In 1817, the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Bodewadami Nations made the largest single land transfer to the University of Michigan. This was offered ceremonially as a gift through the Treaty at the Foot of the Rapids so that their children could be educated. Through these words of acknowledgment, their contemporary and ancestral ties to the land and their contributions to the University are renewed and reaffirmed.

Special thanks to Jameson Eisele+

## **FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

Welcome to an evening of dance that celebrates the boundless creativity and vision of four distinguished choreographers: Robin Wilson, Tzveta Kassabova, Biza Sempa, and FLOCK. Each of these artists brings a unique perspective to the stage, reflecting diverse voices and narratives that push the boundaries of movement, emotion, and storytelling.

Tonight's program is a powerful reminder of the vastness of the human experience as expressed through the art of dance. From intimate interactions to intricate ensembles, the works you will see tonight are as varied in style as they are in their exploration of the body's capacity to communicate. The beauty of this evening lies in the rich contrasts and shared themes that emerge across each piece: the interplay between individuality and unity, the relationship between movement and sound, and the ever-evolving dialogue between artists, performers, and audiences.

As we gather together in this shared space, we invite you to immerse yourself in the creative energy that these artists have so generously shared. The dancers on stage tonight are the heart of these works, embodying each choreographer's vision with incredible dedication and artistry.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Robin Wilson, Tzveta Kassabova, Biza Sempa, and FLOCK for their exceptional contributions, and to the dancers whose passion and commitment bring these pieces to life. We are so fortunate to witness this collaboration and hope you will leave tonight feeling inspired and moved by the power of dance to connect us all.

Thank you for being a part of this unforgettable evening.

With appreciation,

Shannon Gillen and Jillian Hopper

*Co-Artistic Directors*

**ABOUT THE SHOW**

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# **The Opposite of Killing**

*Dedicated to Ed Tyler*

Choreographer, Set and Costume Design Concept

**Tzveta Kassabova**

Rehearsal Director

**Dorka Fetter**

Scenic Designer

**Tal Lev**

Costume Designer

**Rachael Hymowitz**

Lighting Designer

**Joseph R. Walls**

Sound Designer/Engineer

**Aaron Kippola**

Dancers

**Mia Brooks, Amanda Chizuk, Audrey De Guia, Katherine  
Kiessling, Stella Lansill, Julia Lepore, Ava Menzel,  
Carly Perrino, Ladina Schaller, Jessica Serres, Erika  
Siblesz, Lauren Blair Smith, Sarah Snow, Amelie  
Vidrio, Angelica White, Abby Widlak, Kaitlyn Wilson**

## **DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

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“The Opposite of Killing” explores change, anger, understanding, confusion, and sorrow, related to the absence of a close friend. The work was first created at a seven-day residency at the New Bulgarian University (Sofia, Bulgaria). Later it was reworked and presented with a professional cast at Dance Place and the Kennedy Center, both in Washington, DC. The piece won four Metro DC Dance Awards in 2012. An excerpt of the work was staged for student casts at the University of Florida, UMBC, and Middlebury College. In 2016, the piece was commissioned by Ririe-Woodbury dance company and was performed as part of their repertory in Rose Wagner Performing Arts Center, Egyptian Theater Season, Utah Art Festival, Snowy Range Dance Festival, and Jewish Art Festival. In May 2018, “The Opposite of Killing” was performed as part of their residency in East Asia for Season 7 of BAM’s DanceMotion USA in Ulaanbaatar (Mongolia), and Seoul, Gwangju, and Jeonju (South Korea).

*Tzveta Kassabova, choreographer*

Tzveta would like to thank the Dance Department at the University of Michigan for this incredible opportunity; Shannon and Jillian for being visionary leaders; All the students and staff who worked tirelessly for realizing this work; Talia for embracing the walls and for fighting for them; Joey for making everything look better under the lights; Dorka for being the best rehearsal director under the sun and ensuring everything work smoothly; The performers for their commitment, dedication, unlimited energy, and inspiring performance; You for supporting dance; Ed Tyler for teaching me to dream.

## ABOUT THE SHOW

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# Flying Home

Choreographed by  
**Robin Wilson, in collaboration with cast**

Scenic Designer  
**Jungah Han**

Rehearsal Director  
**Marly Spieser-Schneider**

Costume Designer  
**Sarah M Oliver**

Lighting Designer  
**Joseph R. Walls**

Sound Composer  
**Bradley Phillips**

Sound Designer  
**Joshua Harrison**

Filmmaker/Video Editor  
**Ginny Jiang**

Photographer/Filmmaker  
**Chien-An Yuan**

Vocalists  
**D. Yarrow Halstead, Edith Lewis,  
Kathleen Moore, Robin Wilson**

Vocals/Fiddle  
**Rebekah Geller**

Percussion/Cajon  
**Austin Nordhaus**

Cast  
**Landrie Adams, CiCi Benn, Aaliyah Brown, Rachel  
Dunklee, Curry Jackson, Kennedy Marshall, Violeta**

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## ABOUT THE SHOW

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**Neuman, Emily Roitman, Jessica Serres, Brooke  
Shaw, Gabriele Sheppard, Najah Tucker**

Swings

**Vivian Clay, Chelsea Wallington**

Understudies

**Chloe Erwin, Jaclyn Dierkes, Mary Kacsur**

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## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

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In May of 1803, 75 enslaved Africans of the Igbo nation (from what is now called northern Nigeria) defiantly waded into the cool waters of Dunbar Creek on St. Simons, Georgia. Still chained together and having just overpowered their captors on a small vessel off the Georgia coast, they chose death over a life of enslavement in one of the largest mass suicides of enslaved West Africans in the history of chattel slavery.

Inspired by Virginia Hamilton's picture book *The people could fly* and other related texts, "Flying Home: The People Could Fly" explores ideas around flight and return. The dance investigates the imagination of supernatural power and the soul's return from exile through systems of flight. What if those Igbos DIDN'T drown but flew home? And if not home, back to Africa, where?

In Jason Young's *All God's Children* and Lorna McDaniel's *The Flying Africans* retelling, the Igbo people were heard to be singing "Ku mbuba yandi, ku mbuba ntambe, ku nkonku yandi, ku nkonku ntambe," the Luba proverb loosely translated to mean "He is tricky, so I will win by being tricky, too!"

I want to thank Dr. Jason Young and the late Dr. Lorna McDaniel for their invaluable research that pushed me to dig into the work, my music and video collaborators, and my inspirational cast of dancers.

*Robin Wilson, choreographer*



## **ABOUT THE SHOW**

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# **ReQuest**

Choreographed by

**FLOCK: Alice Klock and Florian Lochner**

Rehearsal Director

**Ginny Jiang**

Costume Designer

**Sarah M Oliver**

Lighting Designer

**Joseph R. Walls**

Sound Designer/Engineer

**Aaron Kippola**

Dancers

**Landrie Adams, Paige Ashley, Alexandra Baron,  
CiCi Benn, Anna Bodescu, Vivian Clay, Robert Farr-  
Jones, Gabrielle Kiminyo, Jessica Knapp, Sarah  
Lau, Megan Piagentini, Madison Rogers, Emily  
Roitman, Brooke Shaw, Caitlyn Wade, Olivia Weber**

Understudies

**Eve Anderson, Gabriella Boutiette, Julianne Doner,  
Sarah Gorman, Alyssa Hernandez, Mallory McKenna**

## **DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

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Inspired by medieval stories and the richness of myths of knighthood, "ReQuest" celebrates the power of individuals coming together around a collective mission or journey. This new work explores the beauty and profundity of bravely following a sense of "calling" and emphasizes that it is through commitment that we can achieve unity and peace within our eternal questing.

*FLOCK: Alice Klock and Florian Lochner, choreographers*

# Mabanza (Remembrance)

Choreographer

**Biza Somp**

Scenic Designer

**Jungah Han**

Costume Designer

**Sarah M Oliver**

Lighting Designer

**Joseph R. Walls**

Sound Designer/Engineer

**Aaron Kippola**

Rehearsal Director and Dramaturg

**Tamara Tucker-Ibarisha**

Drummers

**Andoche Loubaki, Abraham Kayne,**

**Billy Noah, Biza Somp**

Soloists

**Tamara Tucker-Ibarisha, Angelica White**

Dancers

**Ava Barber, Anna Bodescu, Julianne Doner, Keara  
Eaton, Emerson Forbes, Ava Garland, Natalia  
Gomez, Gabrielle Kiminyo, Annie Laforet, Megan  
Piagentini, Bridghaite Rosario, Ladina Schaller, Erika  
Siblesz, Dahvi Simon, Angelica White, Natalie Yu**

## **DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

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“Mabanza” is an evocative dance journey presented in three movements: “Mama Mousayandi,” “Tata Sompá,” and “Ma Moundele.” Choreographed by Biza Sompá in loving tribute to his late mother, father, and grandmother (respectively) for whom the dances are named. Each dance explores the profound themes of transition, progress, and reunion in the afterlife. “Mama Mousayandi” moves with a slow, deliberate pace, capturing the delicate yet emerging acceptance of one’s journey into the afterlife. Dancers embody an uncertainty that accompanies the passage into the afterlife, moving with a grace that speaks to the weight of loss and letting go while also finding the courage to embrace what lies ahead. The song “Nao Tsetsa” is a Congolese folk song that hauntingly captures the voice of a young woman who drowns in the river, leaving a baby behind. Wistfully, the spirit of the woman calls to her mother who is now caring for the baby and asks them both to move on with life while also remembering her through the personal artifacts that she has left behind.

Excerpts from “Tata Sompá” are included in this staging of the choreography that Biza created in honor of his father. In stark contrast, “Ma Moundele” bursts forth as a joyous celebration, reflecting the exhilaration of reunion. Dancers come alive with a vibrant energy that is emblematic of Esombi, the foundational rhythm for this dance. The movements illustrate the soul’s embrace of joy as it reconnects with ancestors, finding its rightful place in the realm beyond. This piece radiates a spirit of togetherness and celebration, reminding us of the enduring bonds that transcend even death. Together, these works invite the audience to reflect on the nature of life, loss, and the transformative power of love.

*Tamara Tucker-Ibarisha, rehearsal director and dramaturg*

## ABOUT THE CAST

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**Landrie Adams** (*ReQuest, Flying Home*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Romeo, MI

**Eve Anderson** (*ReQuest u/s*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Toledo, OH

**Paige Ashley** (*ReQuest*) Senior, BFA Dance, Gaylord, MI

**Ava Barber** (*Mabanza*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Livonia, MI

**Alexandra Baron** (*ReQuest*) Junior, BFA Dance, Charlevoix, MI

**Cristina "CiCi" Benn** (*ReQuest, Flying Home*) Senior, BFA Dance, Ypsilanti, MI

**Anna Bodescu** (*ReQuest, Mabanza*) Junior, BFA Dance, Livonia, MI

**Gabriella Boutiette** (*ReQuest u/s*) Senior, BFA Dance, Bridgewater, MA

**Mia Brooks** (*The Opposite of Killing*) Junior, BFA Dance, Berkley, MI

**Aaliyah Brown** (*Flying Home*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Harper Woods, MI

**Amanda Chizuk** (*The Opposite of Killing*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Canton, MI

**Vivian Clay** (*ReQuest, Flying Home (Swing)*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Hartland, MI

**Audrey De Guia** (*The Opposite of Killing*) Junior, BFA Dance, Oakland, MI

**Jaclyn Dierkes** (*Flying Home u/s*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Highland, MI

**Julianne Doner** (*ReQuest u/s, Mabanza*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Northville, MI

**Rachel Dunklee** (*Flying Home*) Senior, BFA Dance, Dexter, MI

**Keara Eaton** (*Mabanza*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Livonia, MI

**Chloe Erwin** (*Flying Home u/s*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Gaylord, MI

**Robert Farr-Jones** (*ReQuest*) Senior, BFA Dance, Los Angeles, CA

**Emerson Forbes** (*Mabanza*) Senior, BFA Dance, Traverse City, MI

**Ava Garland** (*Mabanza*) Sophomore, BBA Business Administration / Dance Minor, Upper Marlboro, MD

## ABOUT THE CAST

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**Natalia Gomez** (*Mabanza*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Elgin, IL

**Sarah Gorman** (*ReQuest u/s*) Senior, BFA Dance, East Dundee, IL

**Alyssa Hernandez** (*ReQuest u/s*) Junior, BFA Dance, Saginaw, MI

**Curry Jackson** (*Flying Home*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Fort Wayne, IN

**Mary Kacsur** (*Flying Home u/s*) Senior, BFA Dance, Furlong, PA

**Katherine Kiessling** (*The Opposite of Killing*) Senior, BFA Dance, Traverse City, MI

**Gabrielle L'Amour Kiminyo** (*ReQuest, Mabanza*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Wellington, FL

**Jessica Knapp** (*ReQuest*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Shanghai, China

**Annie Laforet** (*Mabanza*) Senior, BFA Dance, Midland, MI

**Stella Lansill** (*The Opposite of Killing*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Shanghai, China

**Sarah Lau** (*ReQuest*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Shanghai, China

**Julia Lepore** (*The Opposite of Killing*) Junior, BFA Dance, Shelby Twp., MI

**Kennedy Laura-Venus Marshall** (*Flying Home*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Detroit, MI

**Mallory McKenna** (*ReQuest u/s*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Yorba Linda, CA

**Ava Menzel** (*The Opposite of Killing*) Junior, BFA Dance, Grand Rapids, MI

**Violeta Neuman** (*Flying Home*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Dallas, TX

**Carly Perrino** (*The Opposite of Killing*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Troy, MI

**Megan Piagentini** (*ReQuest, Mabanza*) Junior, BFA Dance, Vernon Hills, IL

**Madison Rogers** (*ReQuest*) Senior, BFA Dance, Grand Rapids, MI

**Emily Roitman** (*ReQuest, Flying Home*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Toronto, Ontario

## ABOUT THE CAST

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- Bridghaite Lemrow-Collazo-Rosario** (*Mabanza*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, South Bend, IN
- Ladina Schaller** (*The Opposite of Killing, Mabanza*) Junior, BFA Dance, Fribourg, Switzerland
- Jessica Serres** (*The Opposite of Killing, Flying Home*) Junior, BFA Dance, Aldie, VA
- Brooke Shaw** (*ReQuest, Flying Home*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Irvine, CA
- Gabriele Shephard** (*Flying Home*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Detroit, MI
- Erika Siblesz** (*The Opposite of Killing, Mabanza*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Miami, FL
- Dahvi Simon** (*Mabanza*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Agoura Hills, CA
- Lauren Blair Smith** (*The Opposite of Killing*) First Year, MFA Dance, Singapore
- Sarah Snow** (*The Opposite of Killing*) Junior, BFA Dance, Scituate, MA
- Najah Tucker** (*Flying Home*) Senior, BFA Dance, West Bloomfield, MI
- Amelie Vidrio** (*The Opposite of Killing*) Junior, BFA Dance, Norwalk, CA
- Olivia Weber** (*ReQuest*) Junior, BFA Dance, Saline, MI
- Caitlyn Wade** (*ReQuest*) Senior, BFA Dance, Rochester Hills, MI
- Chelsea Wallington** (*Flying Home (Swing)*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Troy, MI
- Angelica White** (*The Opposite of Killing, Mabanza*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Indianapolis, IN
- Abby Widlar** (*The Opposite of Killing*) Senior, BFA Dance, Grand Rapids, MI
- Kaitlyn Wilson** (*The Opposite of Killing*) Junior, BFA Dance, Spring Hill, KS
- Natalie Yu** (*Mabanza*) Sophomore, BFA Dance, Los Angeles, CA

## ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

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**Brittany Crinson** (*Wig, Hair, and Makeup Designer*) is the wig, hair, and makeup designer for all of UProd. This is her first year as a full-time staff member as the hair and makeup manager. Crinson is thrilled to have moved back to Michigan, where she was born and raised. She has spent the last decade in Chicago working for the Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Joffrey Ballet and on several projects for TV and film, including the HBO MAX show *Somebody Somewhere* and Hulu's *The Bear*.

**Dorka Fetter** (*Rehearsal Director*) is a second-year BFA dance student with a kinesiology minor at the University of Michigan. Originally from Hungary, she trained at the Hungarian Dance University in Vaganova ballet and performed with the Hungarian National Ballet. After moving to Ann Arbor, she studied at the Academy of Russian Classical Ballet and Young Dancers Initiative. Fetter has performed in *The Nutcracker*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *Don Quixote*, and she collaborated with Baira Movement Philosophy, Mersiv Sound Project, and the Ann Arbor Summer Festival. She is currently training with faculty at the University of Michigan dance department.

**Brett Finley** (*Production Stage Manager*) has worked for over 40 years gleefully calling shows and sharing her love of the performing arts with her colleagues and students. She spent 10 years on the University of Michigan faculty, frequently stage managing the dance concerts, and she created the BFA program in stage management there before returning to full-time freelancing. She frequently stage manages opera productions at U-M, mentoring students, several of whom have subsequently ASM'd for her at opera companies around the country. In recent years she stage managed productions for New Orleans Opera, Seattle Opera, Opera Colorado, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Lyric Opera of Chicago/Scenario Two, San Diego Opera, Tulsa Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Opera San Jose, and Detroit Opera. Last year, Finley was thrilled to be one of three recipients of the national Stage Management Association's 2023 Del Hughes Lifetime Achievement Awards.

## ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

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**Shannon Gillen** (*Co-Artistic Director*) is the artistic director of VIM VIGOR (US) and associate professor of dance at the U-M. Her projects include commissions by L.A. Dance Project, dance films for BAM, NY Fashion Week, Danceworks at the Lobero Theatre, Hubbard Street 2, Gibney Dance Company, over het lj in (NL), Jacob's Pillow, Agnes Varis (NYC), Arthur Miller (Michigan), BDT at the ICA in Boston, Ruvuelo (Chile), Mainfranken Theater Würzburg (DE), Arts Umbrella in Vancouver (CA), the International Solo-Tanz Theater Festival in Stuttgart (DE), TIF Theater in Kassel (DE), de dansers (NL), as a Think Big choreographer-in-residence at Staatsoper Hannover (DE), and as choreographer in residence at Princeton. Prior to founding VIM VIGOR, Gillen was a full company member with Johannes Wieland at Staatstheater Kassel. In 2024, Gillen created work for the IUA in Iceland and the B12 Festival in Berlin. In 2025, she will create work for the University of Limerick and the IAB in Barcelona, and will launch Michigan Movement Performance Projects at U-M, a professional training program for gifted young artists. She is a graduate of the Juilliard School and earned her MFA from Tisch School of the Arts, NYU.

**Jungah Han** (*Scenic Designer*, *Flying Home*, *Mbanza*) is a freelance set designer in theatre, film, and television. Design credits: *The Duat*, *Disinform*, *A Little Night Music*, *The Chinese Lady*, *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *The Power of the Dog*, *Bernarda Alba*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Barber of Seville*, *The House That Will Not Stand*, *Vier Letzte Lieder*, *My Onliness*, *Numbness: Chapter 2*, *Shockheaded Peter*, *When the Rain Stops Falling*, *Coriolanus*, *Paradise Lost*, *Cardboard Piano*, *Measure for Measure*, *Solo Bach*, and *No Exit*. Broadway and international associate set design credits: *Lempicka* (Longacre), *Sally and Tom* (Public), *Waiting for Godot* (TFANA), *Jagged Little Pill*, *The Empire of Light* (Théâtre National de Bretagne), *Red Waters* (Opéra de Rennes), *Derren Brown Secret*, *Once on This Island*, *Frankie & Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, *Harlequinade*, and *Rigoletto* (Die Staatsoper Unter den Linden). MFA from David Geffen School of Drama at Yale. She teaches scenic design at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. [www.jungahhan.com](http://www.jungahhan.com)



## ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

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**Jillian Hopper** (*Co-Artistic Director*) is an assistant professor and the interim chair of dance at U-M. Hopper is excited to be returning to the Power Center as co-AD after choreographing here in 2023 and the many years as director for the First Year Dance Company and the Dance Legacy Project at U-M. She has taught professionally for Northern School of Contemporary Dance (Leeds, UK), Middlesex University (London, UK), The Place (London, UK), Eastern Michigan University, and Hillsdale College, and she has been a regular guest choreographer for ConTexture Dance Detroit.

**Rachael Hymowitz** (*Costume Designer, The Opposite of Killing*) is a senior studying theatre design and production with a concentration in costume design and construction. U-M credits: *Eurydice* (co-costume designer), *Don Giovanni* (assistant costume designer), and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (co-costume designer). Film credits: *Bernays* (artistic director, costume designer, director of marketing), *The Fisherman* (costume designer), and *Branch Out* (assistant costume designer).

**Ginny Jiang** (*Rehearsal Director, ReQuest*) is an interdisciplinary artist, choreographer, filmmaker, educator, and dancer currently pursuing an MFA in Dance at the University of Michigan. Her work explores power dynamics, gender and heteropatriarchy, dance and democracy through dance performance, film, ensemble dance improvisation, and installation. Ginny has created works commissioned by Spurs Gallery, CHOI Center & Cloud House, The Guardian Arts Center, San Francisco Symphony, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Wuzhen Theatre Festival, and Peking University. She holds a BFA in Dance from Beijing Normal University (China) and was an exchange student at Conservatoire national supérieur de musique et de danse de Lyon.

**Tzveta Kassabova** (*Choreographer, Set and Costume Design Concept for "The Opposite of Killing"*) is a Bulgarian-born choreographer, performer, costume designer, and installation artist who was named one of the "25 to Watch" by *Dance*

## ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

*Magazine*. At different times, she has been a gymnast, physicist, and meteorologist, and she holds three master's degrees. Her work has been presented throughout the US, Europe, and Asia and has received multiple awards for performance and choreography. Currently, Kassabova is an associate professor in the Department of Theatre & Drama at UMich. She has always been fascinated by the concept of space and is constantly trying to address it, in both her choreography and design. [www.tzvetakassabova.com](http://www.tzvetakassabova.com)

**FLOCK: Alice Klock and Florian Lochner** (*Choreographers, ReQuest*) discovered their co-creative magic while serving as dancers and choreographic fellows at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. In 2017, they created FLOCK, through which they perform their own work and co-create new choreography for film and stage. Their most recent international tours include their productions "Somewhere Between" (named one of *Chicago Tribune's* top 10 shows of 2023) and "Quest." As a team, they have choreographed for multiple dance companies, universities, and cultural institutions, including Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Whim W'Him, GroundWorks DanceTheater, Backhausdance, Orsolina 28, Ballet Idaho, Seattle Dance Collective, the Goethe Institut, the Alonzo King LINES Ballet BFA, and the 92nd Street Y. Every year, they create a new work for the Freilichtspiele Schwäbisch Hall in southern Germany, where they are company in residence. FLOCK strives to bring artists and audiences together in environments that are open, dynamic, and based on joy.

**Tal Lev** (*Scenic Designer, The Opposite of Killing*) is a junior pursuing a BFA in design and production (scenic design concentration) at the University of Michigan. This is her debut production as a scenic designer within UProd and she is thankful for the wonderful opportunities offered to her during her time in the program. Previous credits include *Twelfth Night* (asst. SD), *Julius Caesar* (graphic designer), *Hansel und Gretel* (deck crew head), *The Cherry Orchard* (asst. TD). [tallevdesign.com](http://tallevdesign.com)

## ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

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**Sarah M Oliver** (*Costume Designer*, ReQuest, Flying Home, Mabanza) is an associate professor of costume technology and design in the Department of Theatre & Drama. Design credits: (U-M) *Orpheus in the Underworld*, *Arbor Falls*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *somebody's children*, and *Nora: A Doll's House*; (regional) Music Academy, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, Kansas City Actors Theatre, Unicorn Theatre, the New Theatre Restaurant, and Kansas University Opera. Costume construction credits: (international) St. Lawrence Center for the Arts, Celebrity Cruises Quixotic Fusion, G&S Society Bermuda, Spanish Summer Dance Festival, Hong Kong Ballet, and Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts; (New York) the Juilliard School, the Irish Repertory Theatre, and New York City Opera; (regional) Theatre Aspen, Des Moines Metro Opera, the Coterie Theatre, Gulfshore Playhouse, the Magic Theatre, Washington National Opera, and Crossroads Theatre.

**[Jean-Claude] Biza Somp**a (*Choreographer*, Mabanza) is an educator, performer, choreographer, and cultural ambassador committed to preserving and celebrating Congolese culture through dance. His dance career began in 1970 with the Ballet Damar and the Congolese National Dance Company in Brazzaville, Congo. As the founder of the Bichini Bia Congo Dance Theater Company in 1979 and co-founder of the Bala Ba Congo Children's Company in 2022, he has created a unique platform to showcase the vibrant traditions of Congolese performing arts. He has trained thousands of artists and students over more than 30 years as an educator in the U-M dance department, at Eastern Michigan University, and at Washtenaw Community College. His creative endeavors have taken him around the globe, including work with the Makii International Academy in Kyoto, Japan, in 1992. In 2015, he fulfilled a life-long dream of bringing the members of Bichini Bia Congo to perform in Brazzaville, Congo, at the La Sanza de Mfou music festival.

## ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

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**Marly Spieser-Schneider** (*Rehearsal Director, Flying Home*) graduated from the University of Michigan with a BFA in Dance and is a certified Iyengar yoga instructor. She currently works as a lecturer in the dance department at Eastern Michigan University, in program development and as a facilitator for support groups at Garrett's Space, as an Iyengar yoga instructor at Yoga Focus Collective, and as a freelance instructor, creator, and director at various other locations. She believes wholeheartedly in the power of curiosity, creativity, and collaboration in building the world we wish to live in. She strives to work with the body in a way that recognizes it as a source of power, a teacher, a tool for growth, and a place for discovery and play. Her work – through teaching, facilitation, choreography, performance, and personal practice – is all about movement and using our bodies as tools for developing awareness and living well.

**Tamara Tucker-Ibarisha** (*Rehearsal Assistant and Dramaturg, Mabanza*) discovered a love for dancing in 1996 under the tutelage of the Pashami Dancers of Lansing, MI. Her career in dance has included training in West African and East African (Kenyan) dance styles and over 20 years of training under Biza Sompá as a member of the Bichini Bia Congo Dance Theater Company. She is a lead dancer, instructor, and company administrator for Bichini Bia Congo and the Bala Ba Congo Children's Company, of which she is also a co-founder. She served as the rehearsal director and as a creative collaborator for this performance.

**Joseph R. Walls** (*Lighting Designer*) is a designer whose selected collaborations include designs for Ricardo Amarante, Gemma Bond, Val Caniparoli, John Heginbotham, Julie Kent, Jessica Lang, Trey McIntye, Andrea Miller, Juliano Nunes, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Helen Pickett, Dwight Rhoden, Ethan Stiefel, Paul Taylor; 2019 Catholic Church World Youth Day with Pope Francis; Orlando Ballet's *Nutcracker*, Johan Kobborg's *Lucile* for Ballet Nacional de Cuba; American Repertory Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, Ballet West, the Charlotte Ballet, Complexions Contemporary

## **ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM**

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Ballet, Inland Pacific Ballet, Komansé Dance Theater, Milwaukee Ballet, National Theatre of Panama, Oklahoma City Ballet, Orlando Ballet, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Richmond Ballet, Utah Metropolitan Ballet, and the Washington Ballet. [jwallsdesign.com](http://jwallsdesign.com)

**Robin Wilson** (*Choreographer, Flying Home [she/her]*) has taught at U-M since 1995. Choreographer, performer, improviser, vocalist, educator, activist, she teaches others to be advocates for the arts and their communities. A founding member of New York's Urban Bush Women, Wilson's work explores the influences of the African Diaspora in historical and contemporary dance/culture, public scholarship, and social justice through community engagement. Ongoing projects include documenting the oral histories of black dancers in Harlem during the Black Arts Movement of the early 1970s, curriculum development for K-12 populations that explores the intersection of diasporic dance culture, dance history, and social justice. Recent collaborations include *What We Ask of Flesh*, with INSPIRIT: A Dance Company, and *Ancestral Haiku*, as choreographer, vocalist and movement artist. Wilson is a recipient of a New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award. She has an undergraduate degree in dance from Washington University in St. Louis and an MFA in choreography from Temple University.

# PRODUCTION CREW

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1st ASM **Shelby Holloway**

Theatrical Lighting **Shira Baker, Sydney Geysbeek, Morgan Gomes, Ethan Hoffman, Elianna Kruskal, Brandon Malin, Kathleen Stanton-Sharpless, William Webster, Andrew Wilson, Tate Zeleznik, Gabriela Ribeiro Znamensky & Theatre 250/252/262 Students**

Scenic Painting **Yue Cai, Miles Hionis, Victoria Kvasnikov, Bella Spagnuolo, Martha Sprout, Lauren Streng, Ellie Vice (Lead), Amber Walters, Angela Wu & Theatre 250/252/262 students**

Props **Eliza Anker, Andy Blatt, Yue Cai, Laney Carnes, Aquila Ewald, Dallas Fadul, Audrey Hollenbaugh, Banks Krause, Lexie Lake, Tessie Morales, Leah Stchur & Theatre 250/252/262 students**

Scenery **Kelly Burkel, Aiden Heeres, Miles Hionis, Ren Kosiorowski, Hannah Kryzhan, Lily Mizrahi, Michael Russell, Sophia Severance, Owen Smolek, Nathaniel Steever, Lauren Streng, Ross Towbin, Eliza Vassalo & Theatre 250/252/262 students**

Costumes **Sammer Ali, Katy Dawson, Sarita Gankin, Aspen Kinomoto, Lucy Knas, Rachel Pfeil, Esmay Pricejones, Kayti Sanchez, Ellie VanEngen, Summer Wasung & Theatre 250/252/262 students**

Wigs, Hair, & Makeup **Christine Chupailo, Miles Hionis & Theatre 250/252/262 students**

Production Office **Shelby Holloway, Esther Hwang, Greta Steever**

# RUNNING CREW

---

Light Board Operator **Morgan Gomes**

Deck Crew **Rio Colino, Justin Comini<sup>^</sup>, Payton Cottrill, Mary-Kate Mahaney**

Video Operator/Deck Crew **Zamora Tamminga**

Deck Electricians **James Burke Brickner, Aya Galang**

Wardrobe Crew **Jonas Annear, Myah Bridgewater, Koralyynn Kennedy, Ashley Kramer, Brendan Lockhart, Esmay Pricejones<sup>^</sup>**

Hair & Makeup Crew **Dorka Fetter**

<sup>^</sup>Crew Head

# **M** | MUSIC, THEATRE & DANCE

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## **SMTD LEADERSHIP**

**David Gier, Dean**

Paul Boylan Collegiate Professor of Music

## **THE DEPARTMENT OF DANCE**

Interim Chair

**Jillian Hopper**

Administrative Specialist

**Katie Gunning**

Media Consultant

**Sean Hoskins**

Faculty

**Marwan Amen-Ra, Missy Beck, Charli Brissey, Amy Chavasse, Jason Cianciulli, Fabio "Lobinho" DaCunha, Krisilyn "Tony" Frazier, Shannon Gillen, Slavka Jelinkova, Angela Kane, Samantha Mecca, Fangfei Miao, GingerAnn Neslund, Jen Peters, Judy Rice, Kara Roseborough, Stephen J. Rush, Andrea Salazar, Kristen Schuyten, Biza Sompá, Joseph Walls, Amy West, Khita Whyatt, Robin Wilson**

## **UNIVERSITY PRODUCTIONS**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

Executive Director

**Jeffrey Kuras**

Administrative Specialist

**Christine Eccleston**

Administrative Assistant

**Eli Stefanacci**

Information Systems Manager

**Henry Reynolds**

Facilities Manager

**Shannon Rice**

Performance Halls

House Manager

**Kelley Krahn**

Lead Backstage Operations Manager

**Dane Racicot**

Senior Backstage Operations Manager

**David Pickell**

Backstage Operations Managers

**Tiff Crutchfield, Yvette Kashmer, Robbie Kozub**

## **UNIVERSITY PRODUCTIONS**

### **PRODUCTION STAFF**

Interim Production Manager

**Michelle Williams-Elias**

Production Management Assistant

**Briana Barker**

Lead Technical Dir. (Walgreen)

**Richard W. Lindsay, Jr.**

Theatrical Scenery Manager

**Chad Hain**

Lead Scenic Carpenter

**Devin Miller**

Scenic Carpenter

**Heather Udowitz**

Charge Scenic Artist

**Beth Sandmaier**

Assoc. Theatrical Paint Mgr.

**Madison Stinemetz**

Lead Prop-Studio Manager

**Patrick A. Drone**

Assoc. Theatrical Properties Manager

**Danielle Keys**

Sr. Properties Artisan

**Dan Erickson**

# **M** | MUSIC, THEATRE & DANCE

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Properties Stock & Tech Coordinator

**Kat Kreutz**

Theatrical Lighting Manager

**Heather Hunter**

Assoc. Theatrical Lighting Manager

**Jorrey Calvo**

Sound Designer/Engineer

**Henry Reynolds**

Senior Costume Shop Manager

**Laura Brinker**

Asst. Costume Shop Manager

**Leslie Ann Smith**

Lead Cutter/Draper

**Tj Williamson**

Cutter/Draper(s)

**Sarah Havens, Lani Tortoriello**

Stitchers

**Mag Grace, Rene Plante**

Lead Costume Crafts Artisan

**Elizabeth Gunderson**

Costume Stock Manager

**Theresa Hartman**

Theatrical Hair and Makeup Mgr.

**Brittany Crinson**

## **DESIGN & PRODUCTION FACULTY ADVISORS**

Stage Management **Jenn Rae Moore**

Scenic Design **Kevin Judge**

Costume Design **Sarah M. Oliver**

Lighting Design **Jess Fialko**

Rehearsal Direction **Shannon Gillen, Jillian Hopper**

Staff Mentors **Laura Brinker, Brittany Crinson, Patrick Drone, Chad Hain, Heather Hunter, Richard W. Lindsay, Beth Sandmaier**



## **SMTD ADVANCEMENT**

Chief Advancement Officer

**Ericka Bigelow**

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**Jessica Woodman**

Director of Development, Marching and Athletic Bands

**Kimberly Baumgartner**

Associate Major Gifts Officer

**Megan Anderson**

Manager of Annual Giving Programs and Development Research Analytics

**Rose Martus**

Development Generalist

**Emily Carter Sharpe**

Michigan Marching Band

Annual Giving Officer

**Kelly Bertoni**

Dean's Liaison

**Evan Kiel**

### Marketing & Communications

Director of Marketing & Communications

**Beth Miller**

Director of Marketing & Communications for Ticketed Performances

**Sarah Erlewine**

Brand Manager

**Brandon Monzon**

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**Judy Galens**

Video & Multimedia Manager

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Video & Multimedia Coordinator

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**Tracy Payovich**

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**Erin Crnkovich**

MMB Digital Communications Manager

**Izzi Jasperse-Cheng**



# MUSIC, THEATRE & DANCE

## EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES

Friends of Dance supports the SMTD Department of Dance by providing vital discretionary support for scholarship funding to attract the most talented prospective students to the University of Michigan. Additionally, Friends' support brings visiting artists, guest choreographers, and other industry insiders to Ann Arbor to work with students and creates performance opportunities our students need to succeed in the competitive world of dance.

### GIFTS AS OF JANUARY 17, 2025

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Jessica Fogel and Lawrence Weiner  
Nancy Heers  
Michael McStraw  
Jolie Moray  
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# M | MUSIC, THEATRE & DANCE

Thomas and Marie Wall  
Elise Weisbach  
Bruce Wilson

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Peter Jackson  
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Douglas Czinder  
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and Lee Green  
Karen Freedland  
and James Berry  
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Lorna and Mark Hildebrandt  
Ariel Hurwitz-Greene  
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School of Music, Theatre & Dance • Office of Advancement • 2005 Baits Drive • Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2075

# SMTD WINTER 2025 EVENTS

## **University Philharmonia Orchestra**

1/28 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **University Symphony Orchestra**

2/2 | 7:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **Concert Band**

2/4 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **Symphony Band**

2/6 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **★ University of Michigan Dance Company 2025**

2/6 - 2/9 | Power Center  
Department of Dance

## **University Philharmonia Orchestra**

2/13 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **★ A Few Good Men**

2/20 - 2/23 | Power Center  
Department of Theatre & Drama

## **★ The Government Inspector**

2/20 - 2/23 | Arthur Miller Theatre  
Department of Musical Theatre Studio  
Production

## **University Symphony Orchestra & SMTD Choirs: "Scenes from the Life of a Martyr"**

2/21 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **Jazz Ensemble & Jazz Lab Ensemble**

2/27 | 8:00pm | Rackham Auditorium | FREE!

## **Concert Band**

3/12 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **Symphony Band**

3/19 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **University Symphony Orchestra**

3/23 | 7:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **University Philharmonia Orchestra**

3/26 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **★ The Turn of the Screw**

3/27 - 3/30 | Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre  
Department of Voice & Opera

## **★ Our Oz**

4/3 - 4/13 | Arthur Miller Theatre  
Department of Theatre & Drama

## **★ Jazz Showcase**

4/3 | 8:00pm | The Ark (off-campus, tickets available at MUTO)

## **Chamber Choir**

4/4 | Stamps Auditorium | 8:00pm | FREE!

## **★ Women's Glee Club Spring Concert**

4/6 | 4:00pm | Hill Auditorium

## **Jazz Ensemble**

4/10 | 8:00pm | Rackham Auditorium | FREE!

## **University Symphony Orchestra**

4/11 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **★ Men's Glee Club Spring Concert**

4/12 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium

## **Orpheus Singers**

4/13 | 7:00pm | Stamps Auditorium | FREE!

## **Symphony Band**

4/14 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **Concert Band**

4/16 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **★ Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance Senior Concert**

4/17 - 4/19 | Dance Building | FREE! (tickets required)

## **★ Titanic: The Musical**

4/17 - 4/20 | Power Center  
Department of Musical Theatre

## **University Philharmonia Orchestra**

4/21 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | FREE!

## **★ Musical Theatre Senior Showcase**

5/4 | Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre  
Department of Musical Theatre

## **★ Ticketed Event**

## **Bring a Group!**

Student group sales are available at \$11 a ticket. Contact our group sales desk at 734.763.3100 or email [umsgroupsales@umich.edu](mailto:umsgroupsales@umich.edu).

For more information, visit [smtd.umich.edu/events](http://smtd.umich.edu/events) or scan below: