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March 31, 2025  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **UW Department of Dance: MFA Dance Concert 2025**

*Premiering five original dances choreographed by MFA candidates and performed by undergraduate and graduate students*

Wednesday\*–Saturday, May 14–17, 2025, 7:30pm  
Sunday, May 18, 2024, 2pm  
Meany Hall—Studio Theatre, UW Campus

*\*Wednesday, May 14, is a ticketed preview performance.*

**Tickets:** \$10–20 / ArtsUW Ticket Office / [arts.uw.edu](https://arts.uw.edu) / 206-543-4880

**Info:** [dance.uw.edu](https://dance.uw.edu) / [UW Dance Facebook](#) / [UW Dance Instagram](#)

The University of Washington invites you to the MFA Dance Concert: an evening of original works created by the current MFA cohort, and featuring sixty undergraduate dancers, two graduate students, and faculty member Rachael Lincoln. The artists explore humanity from multiple angles—apocalyptic, hopeful, intimate, communal—using a variety of movement languages including low-fly aerial, contemporary, and street dance.

**Choreographers:** Emily Schoen Branch, Derek Crescenti, Annie Franklin, Christopher Kaiser, Cameo Lethem

**Special Guest:** Rachael Lincoln

**Concert Director:** Jennifer Salk

### **ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES:**

**Emily Schoen Branch** is a dance artist, choreographer and teacher, named “Top 25 to Watch” by *Dance Magazine* and “Martha Duffy Resident Artist” by Baryshnikov Arts Center for their acclaimed BAC Space Residency (NY). Emily makes dances for stage, film, and breweries, including a touring happy hour performance series. Her international collaboration with dancers from Tunisia received support from the US State Department, DanceMotion USA, and American Dance Abroad. She has fulfilled 21 choreographic commissions for companies and universities around the country and has been on faculty at such institutions as Pacific Northwest Ballet and Spectrum Dance Theater. Emily danced for Kyle Abraham/AIM; the Metropolitan Opera in works by Doug Varone, Mark Morris and Carolyn Choa; for eight years with Larry Keigwin / KEIGWIN + COMPANY; and briefly for the Rolling Stones. She is grateful for the opportunity to pursue her MFA in Dance at UW. [esb.dance](https://esb.dance).

**Derek Crescenti** is a second-year graduate student in the University of Washington's Department of Dance. His choreography has been showcased by the Allentown Symphony Orchestra, Ten Tiny Dances, and the Seattle International Dance Festival. He has also created original works for DeSales University and UW's Chamber Dance Company. Derek's work is shaped by his experiences dancing with choreographers such as Chase Brock, Donald Byrd, Daniel Gwirtzman, Larry Keigwin, Megan Williams, and Mark Morris, as well as the

New York City-based repertory company, 10 Hairy Legs. He holds a BFA in Dance from the University of Michigan.

**Annie Franklin** is a hybrid dance artist, educator, and MFA candidate at the University of Washington. With a BFA from Western Michigan University and over 15 years of experience, she bridges Hip Hop, street, and Afro-diasporic dance forms with Western concert dance. Her work has been presented at the American College Dance Association, the National Dance Education Organization, World of Dance, and the World Championships of Hip Hop. A 2020 Chicago DanceMakers Forum grant recipient, Annie created *Shaping Lens: An Artist's Playbook*, a dance-for-camera project featured in the 2021 Pivot Arts Film Festival. Her current research, supported by the Howard P. Dallas Endowed Fellowship, investigates Brukup, a Jamaican-rooted dance culture in Brooklyn, NY, and its role in identity formation and hybridity in Afro-diasporic movement. As a result of this immersive research, she is publishing an academic article on Brukup in *Conversations Across the Field of Dance Studies*, special edition *The Caribbean as a Pole for the African Diaspora*.

**Christopher Kaiser** is an accomplished ballet artist and educator with experience at world-renowned institutions. He studied at The Juilliard School before receiving a contract with the Alberta Ballet. After three seasons of dancing in Canada, he finished his dancing career with Oregon Ballet Theatre where he had the privilege to perform works by William Forsythe, Ben Stevenson, and Nacho Duato. Currently pursuing an MFA in Dance at the University of Washington, Christopher combines a deep understanding of classical ballet and modern dance with innovative, student-centered teaching philosophies. His mission is to create a space where dancers can take ownership of their education and training while providing them with the necessary tools for success in the field and beyond.

**Cameo Lethem** is a choreographer and performer based in Seattle. Her work has been shown at On the Boards, Velocity Dance Center, Erickson Theater, 12th Ave Arts, Kirkland Performance Center, Base: Experimental Arts + Space, Yaw Theater, and more. She has performed for choreographers Alice Gosti, Kate Wallich, and others. Cameo is a recipient of SeattleDances' 2017 DanceCrush award and 2019's James Ray Residency. She is a second year MFA Dance candidate at the UW.

**Rachael Lincoln** (Associate Professor, Department of Dance) is a dance-maker, performer, and facilitator with a deep commitment to collaboration. Her duet work with Leslie Seiters has spanned two decades, touring extensively, and she is in her eleventh year practicing and performing with the Seattle-based improvisation collective, AVID. Since 1998, Rachael has been a performer and associate director with BANDALOO, dancing site-specifically on vertical surfaces and in traditional theaters worldwide. She has also had the pleasure of working with celebrated dance-makers such as Joe Goode, Jo Kreiter, Bebe Miller, Sara Shelton Mann, and Nancy Stark Smith. Recently, she has been enjoying teaching Low Fly at UW and in workshops across the country.

The **University of Washington Department of Dance** believes dance is for everybody. We expand the meanings and experiences of dance as a field of study and a living art form. We employ pedagogical perspectives, research approaches, dance-making methods, and performance philosophies that are historically and culturally informed to elevate the value of play, creativity, critical thinking, and embodied knowledge for our students and global communities.

[dance.washington.edu](https://dance.washington.edu)

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[Photos](#): Michael B Maine, from the 2024 MFA Dance Concert

High-quality photos available; contact [dancepr@uw.edu](mailto:dancepr@uw.edu)

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