



OKLAHOMA

INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL



2026

A Word from the Director

Friends, welcome to this special evening with the Oklahoma International Dance Festival. Each summer, I am reminded how extraordinary it is to gather dancers, choreographers, and audiences who believe in the power of movement to transform and connect. What begins as individual artists arriving from near and far quickly becomes something greater—a community built on curiosity, dedication, and the joy of sharing dance.

What you will experience tonight is more than a performance—it is a conversation without words, one that invites you to witness, to wonder, and to feel. These fleeting moments of movement are shaped not just by the artists onstage, but by you, the audience, whose presence breathes life into every step. In this space, we meet each other beyond language, celebrating our shared humanity through art.

This evening, we honor not only the dancers and their incredible work but also the vision and generosity that make nights like this possible. The steadfast support of the Kirkpatrick Foundation, the Oklahoma Arts Council, and many dedicated donors allows this festival to thrive, bringing world-class training and performance to our community year after year.

From all of us at OIDF, thank you for being here, for championing the arts, and for believing in the magic we can create together. May tonight's performance leave you inspired, moved, and reminded of how dance can connect us all.

— *Austin Hartel, Artistic Director*



About The Oklahoma International Dance Festival

The Oklahoma International Dance Festival (OIDF) is a summer dance intensive dedicated to offering exceptional training and performance opportunities to dancers from around the world. Guided by a mission to make world-class dance education accessible to all, OIDF cultivates a vibrant, inclusive community where dancers grow artistically, technically, and personally.

Held annually in Oklahoma City, OIDF welcomes dancers ages 15 and up to a transformative experience that blends rigorous instruction with artistic discovery. The curriculum spans Ballet, Modern, Jazz, and West African dance, led by an internationally acclaimed faculty that includes Karen Bethel, Vincent Gros, Ayinde Hurrey, Raffaele Irace, Alba Nadal, and Kevin O'Day. These distinguished artists and educators bring deep expertise and a passion for mentorship, offering students personalized guidance and high-level training.

OIDF is more than a dance program—it's a creative home where excellence and inclusivity go hand in hand. Our robust scholarship initiative helps remove financial barriers, ensuring that talented dancers from all backgrounds have the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.

Throughout the festival, dancers participate in multiple performance opportunities, including a Choreography Showcase and a Closing Performance. These events celebrate the talent, dedication, and artistic voice of each dancer, while also connecting them with broader audiences. Our work is strengthened by partnerships with organizations such as Oklahoma Contemporary, Allied Arts, the Oklahoma Arts Council, and the Kirkpatrick Foundation, allowing OIDF to expand its reach and enrich the cultural landscape of Oklahoma and beyond.

Join us at OIDF—where passion, purpose, and possibility move together.

Oklahoma International Dance



Karen Boyd Bethel (USA) A former Radio City Rockette, Karen Boyd Bethel is a dynamic and multifaceted movement artist whose work bridges the worlds of concert dance, musical theatre, and theatrical intimacy. She holds an MFA in Modern Dance from the University of Oklahoma and a BPA in Dance Performance from Oklahoma City University, and she brings decades of professional performance and choreographic experience to the studio. In addition to her choreography for regional and collegiate musical productions, Karen is a certified intimacy choreographer with a strong focus on communication and consent in movement creation. Her classes at OIDF challenge dancers to tell powerful stories with precision, musicality, and expressive range, nurturing versatility and confidence across disciplines.



Vincent Gros (France/Spain) Vincent Gros brings a wealth of international experience and artistic refinement to OIDF. A finalist at the Prix de Lausanne and a graduate of The Royal Ballet School in London, he has performed as a soloist and principal dancer with companies including Leipzig Ballet, Ballet du Capitole de Toulouse, Ballet Madrid, and Cape Town City Ballet, interpreting both iconic classical roles and contemporary works by choreographers such as George Balanchine, Jiri Kylián, John Cranko, and Nacho Duato. Currently the Ballet Master of Ballet de Catalunya, Gros is also an acclaimed teacher and choreographer. At OIDF, his classes emphasize strength, alignment, and artistry, and he is deeply committed to helping dancers find confidence and clarity in both classical and contemporary technique.



Ayinde Hurrey (USA) A powerful cultural educator and performer, Ayinde Hurrey brings the vibrant rhythms and spirit of West African dance and drumming to the OIDF experience. A graduate of North Carolina Central University and the University of Florida's MFA Acting program, Ayinde is also the founder of Hurrey-UP Consulting & Performing Arts, a company focused on cultural awareness and arts education through performance, residencies, and workshops. His rich background in African diasporic traditions, theater, and percussion creates an immersive and celebratory classroom experience. At OIDF, he inspires dancers to connect with rhythm, heritage, and ensemble energy through movement and music.

Festival 2026 Faculty



Jonnesha Hawkins-Minter (USA) is a Houston-based dance artist, choreographer, educator, and certified Katherine Dunham Technique instructor. A graduate of the University of Oklahoma with a B.F.A. in Modern Dance Performance, she has performed with Dayton Contemporary Dance Company 2, Houston Metropolitan Dance Company, Psophonia Dance Company, and Urban Souls Dance Company, where she also served as rehearsal director. As founder of TopFlight Dance Conservatory, Jonnesha is dedicated to cultivating artistic excellence through performance, mentorship, and culturally rooted dance education, inspiring the next generation of dancers and choreographers.



Alba Nadal (Spain/Germany) With 14 seasons at the Royal Danish Ballet, Alba Nadal brings to OIDF the grace, depth, and discipline of one of Europe's most revered classical traditions. Originally from Spain and trained at the Royal Ballet School in London, Alba has performed a wide range of classical and neoclassical repertory, gaining critical acclaim for her artistry, stage presence, and musicality. Most recently a soloist at the Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe in Germany, she combines pedagogical rigor with empathetic mentorship. At OIDF, her classes emphasize technical excellence and poetic expression, inspiring dancers to cultivate both their physical and emotional artistry within the ballet form.



Kevin O'Day (USA/Germany) A globally sought-after choreographer and visionary artist, Kevin O'Day's career spans the most influential dance institutions of the 20th and 21st centuries. A former soloist with the Joffrey Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and Frankfurt Ballet under William Forsythe, O'Day has created over 80 original ballets for major companies such as New York City Ballet, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, Royal Danish Ballet, and Ballet British Columbia. His choreography blends athleticism, musicality, and human connection, and he brings that same spirit to his teaching. At OIDF, O'Day guides dancers toward greater individuality, choreographic curiosity, and collaborative exploration—nurturing the next generation of creators. His mentorship challenges dancers to explore new movement vocabularies and bold artistic voices in an environment of thoughtful experimentation.



Austin Hartel, Artistic Director, Oklahoma International Dance Festival, brings extensive international experience to OIDF. Originally from Washington, D.C., he trained at the Washington School of Ballet, Pennsylvania Academy of Ballet, and received his BFA from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. He later earned an MFA from CalArts in Dance and Integrated Media.

Hartel danced as a soloist and co-choreographer with Pilobolus Dance Theater and has performed with numerous companies. He is a former Cultural Specialist for the U.S. Department of State and a Fulbright Scholar, working with the National Ballet of Paraguay. As Artistic Director of Dalton-Hartel Dance and Hartel Dance Group, his choreography has been presented on five continents and at prestigious festivals like The Vignale Dance Festival and The Florence Dance Festival. He is on faculty at the University of Oklahoma's School of Dance, where he served as Coordinator of the Modern Dance Program and Artistic Director of Contemporary Dance Oklahoma.



Emily Oliver Ham, PT was born and raised in Edmond, Oklahoma. She pursued a dance degree at The University of Oklahoma, graduating in May of 2015 with a BFA in Modern Dance Performance. Emily was a member of the Contemporary Dance Oklahoma Company where she was able to work with and perform work by choreographers such as Carla Maxwell/Jose Limon, Alvin Ailey, Jessica Lang, and Austin Hartel. She was able to perform with Hartel Dance Group, traveling to the International Fringe Festival, and Oklahoma City Dance Project 2012 and 2014. She spent a season working with the talented artists in Hannah Kahn Dance Company in Denver, CO under the artistic direction of Hannah Kahn. Most recently, she has been pursuing her passion for teaching dance, serving the community as a board member of the Oklahoma International Dance Festival, working for Mercy as a physical therapist assistant.



Emily Jacobson graduated from the University of Central Oklahoma in 2012 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Dance Performance and a minor in Biology. While at UCO, she was a member of the Kaleidoscope Dance Company. Following graduation, she attended the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center where she graduated in 2015 with a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree. Emily is a full-time physical therapist at Mercy Therapy Services Edmond I-35. She also serves on the advisory council for the Oklahoma Performing Arts Collective. She continues to take dance classes when able and loves to work with dancers as often as possible.

The OIDF Choreography Showcase

A Celebration of New Voices

The Oklahoma International Dance Festival Choreography Showcase celebrates the creative voices shaping the future of dance. Each year, emerging and established choreographers from across the United States and abroad gather to share original works in an evening dedicated to artistic exploration, collaboration, and innovation.

Presented at Oklahoma Contemporary, the Showcase reflects OIDF's commitment to supporting not only exceptional dancers, but also the artists who create the work they perform. Each piece represents a unique perspective—drawing from different cultures, movement traditions, and personal experiences—while reminding us of dance's remarkable ability to communicate beyond words.

For many choreographers, this performance offers an opportunity to present new creations, experiment with ideas, and connect with fellow artists and audiences in an environment that values curiosity, risk-taking, and artistic excellence.

Thank you for joining us in celebrating the choreographers whose vision brings this evening to life.

I Dream of Shelter

Choreography: Kim Kieffer

Music: Gypsy Moth — Andrew Bird

Performed by: Kee Kee Prewitt

From the repertory of Perpetual Motion Dance Company.

Stepping Through the Fire

Choreography: Kirmani Zayan Montaocean

Music: Loli Cosmica Tzen Tzen / Ri Ri (Shadow Remix)

Performed by: Kirmani Zayan Montaocean, Mocuepani-Xocitl Bax-Toh, Jahruba Lambeth ("Living Legend"), Ben Alvarado, Eugene Stallaby, Janiece Fourkiller, and the Meso-American Dance Team

Hallelujah

Choreography & Performance: Kally Jones

Music: Hallelujah (Live from St. Mark's Cathedral) — Noah Gundersen

Hreblia

Choreography: Maddie Dominick

Music: Hreblia — YUKO

Performed by: Rowen Pace and Maddie Dominick

Breathe

Choreography: Bethania Joaquinho

Music: Arboretum — Max Richter

Performed by: Brihana Ramirez Giesbrecht

The Lord's Prayer

Choreography: Laura Norman Tyson

Music: The Lord's Prayer — The Staple Singers

Performed by: Lily Clark and Audrey Guthrie

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Desplazamientos

Choreography: Cheyla Clawson

Music: Dark Cloud — Frank Bravo

Performed by: Samantha Zimmerman

Like Him

Choreography & Performance: Rowen Pace

Music: Like Him — Tyler, the Creator

I Stand Alone

Choreography: Isaac Knuteson

Music: Keeley Forsyth

Performed by: Abby Adams

The Continuum

Choreography & Performance: Human Creature (Derek Harris & Meegan Hertensteiner)

Music: Anthropocene — Loscil; The Here and After — Jun Miyake & Lisa Papineau

An excerpt from the evening-length work Can You See Me Now...How 'Bout Now?'

--10 MINUTES INTERMISSION--

In the Memory of You

Choreography: Kevin O'Day

Music: Vals Fandango — Mario Mas; Alfajería — Javier Mas

Performed by: Alba Nadal and Kevin O'Day

Damned If You Do

Choreography: Emma Prillaman

Music: The Androgynous Dark — Brambles

Performed by: Summer Brandley

From the repertory of Perpetual Motion Dance Company.

Remanente Orgánico

Choreography: Antonella Alvarenga

Music: Half Life — Ori Lichtik

Performed by: Vianca Ramírez

In the Absence of Light

Choreography: Maizy Windham

Music: Newton's Cradle — Ludovico Einaudi

Performed by: Maizy Windham and Emma Jane Zaher

The Force That Lives in Me

Choreography: Martthin Maciel

Music: Dream On — Aerosmith

Performed by: Milagros Teresita Villalba Cabrera

A Month of Sundays

Choreography & Performance: Clancee Synco

Music: The Light Within — The Westerlies

Woodland Creatures (Excerpt)

Choreography: Austin Hartel

Music: Woodpecker, from Woodland Creatures — Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate

Performed by: Micah Bullard and Carlie Preskitt

An excerpt from a larger work in progress developed in collaboration with composer Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate.

OKDANCEFEST CHOREOGRAPHY SHOWCASE 2026

A
Celebration
of New
Voices



Antonella Alvarenga

Antonella Alvarenga is a Paraguayan choreographer, performer, and educator whose work blends contemporary dance with physical theater and interdisciplinary performance. Her choreography explores identity, memory, and human connection through movement, and her work has been presented throughout Paraguay, Argentina, and international dance festivals.



Austin Hartel

Austin Hartel is an internationally recognized choreographer, educator, and performer whose work has been presented throughout the United States, Europe, and South America. As Artistic Director and co-founder of the Oklahoma International Dance Festival, he creates movement-driven works rooted in collaboration, theatricality, and contemporary dance.



Bethania Joaquinho

Bethania Joaquinho is a Paraguayan choreographer, educator, and director of Cia. Danza Bethania Joaquinho, a professional dance company and school in Asunción. A former member of the National Ballet of Paraguay and Ballet Stágium (Brazil), she has taught internationally and toured throughout Europe and South America, sharing her passion for dance through performance, choreography, and education.



Cheyla Clawson

Cheyla Clawson is a choreographer, educator, and performer whose work investigates movement as a means of storytelling and human expression. Her choreography combines contemporary dance with theatrical elements, creating works that emphasize emotional depth, collaboration, and artistic exploration.



Clancee Synco

Clancee Synco is a contemporary dance artist whose choreographic work reflects a deep interest in storytelling, vulnerability, and human experience. Through movement, she creates intimate performances that invite audiences to connect with themes of memory, resilience, and personal transformation.



Emma Prillaman

Emma Prillaman is a choreographer, performer, and educator based in Oklahoma City. As Artistic Director of Perpetual Motion Dance Company, she creates contemporary works that emphasize collaboration, curiosity, and authentic movement while fostering artistic growth within the local dance community.



Human Creature

Human Creature, founded by Meegan Hertensteiner and Derek Harris, is a contemporary dance collective dedicated to creating collaborative, thought-provoking performance experiences. Their work explores human relationships, shared environments, and the intersections of movement, design, and storytelling through innovative contemporary performance.



Isaac Knuteson

Isaac Knuteson is a choreographer, performer, and artistic director whose work blends contemporary dance, improvisation, and theatrical performance. Through his company, The Initiative, he creates collaborative works that challenge convention while encouraging authentic artistic expression and meaningful audience engagement.



Kally Jones

Kally Jones is a choreographer and performer whose work explores personal narrative through contemporary movement. Her choreography emphasizes emotional honesty, musicality, and the power of dance to communicate shared human experiences.



Kevin O'Day

Kevin O'Day is an internationally acclaimed choreographer, educator, and former Artistic Director of the Nationaltheater Mannheim Ballet in Germany. His work has been commissioned by leading ballet and contemporary dance companies worldwide and is recognized for its musicality, innovation, and expressive physicality.



Kim Kieffer

Kim Kieffer is a choreographer, educator, and Artistic Director of Perpetual Motion Dance Company. Her work combines contemporary dance with collaborative creative processes, producing performances that celebrate community, artistic curiosity, and the expressive possibilities of movement.



Kirmani Zayan Montaocean

Kirmani Zayan Montaocean is an internationally recognized dancer, choreographer, and cultural artist dedicated to preserving and sharing Indigenous and Afro-Indigenous traditions through performance. His work bridges ceremonial practice, contemporary performance, and cultural education while celebrating ancestral knowledge through movement.



Laura Norman Tyson

Laura Norman Tyson is an award-winning choreographer and Executive/Artistic Director of Oklahoma Performing Arts. Her work spans ballet, tap, jazz, modern dance, and musical theatre, including original children's ballets and commissioned productions. Her choreography reflects a lifelong commitment to storytelling through movement, music, and theatrical artistry.



Maddie Dominick

Maddie Dominick is a choreographer and performer whose work draws from contemporary dance, improvisation, and collaborative creation. Her choreography explores themes of identity, connection, and transformation while encouraging curiosity and expressive movement.



Maizy Windham

Maizy Windham is a choreographer and performer whose work explores contemporary movement through collaboration, physicality, and emotional expression. She is passionate about creating meaningful performance experiences that encourage curiosity, vulnerability, and artistic growth.



Rowen Pace

Rowen Pace is a choreographer and performer whose work investigates identity, memory, and personal experience through contemporary movement. Their choreography combines nuanced physicality with thoughtful storytelling to create performances that are both intimate and deeply human.

Martthin Maciel

Martthin Maciel is a dancer, choreographer, and educator whose career spans concert dance, musical theatre, and international teaching. His work combines technical precision with expressive storytelling, reflecting a diverse artistic background and a passion for creative collaboration.

**RACE DANCE
COLLECTIVE**



OKLAHOMA INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL

Directors: Austin Hartel - Thyrsa Da Rosa

2026 FACULTY

Karen Bethel | Vincent Gros | Austin Hartel | Ayinde Hurrey
Jonnesha Hawkins-Minter | Alba Nadal | Kevin O'Day

ACCOMPANISTS

Yuri Erivanov

PHYSICAL THERAPY

MERCY - Emily Oliver-Ham - Emily Jacobson

RESIDENT ASSISTANTS

Trisha Pareizs - Samantha Zimmerman

**OIDF is thrilled to be back at OK Contemporary for the
2026 Choreography Showcase**



**PILATES FOR
EVERY BODY**



OKC - MIDTOWN

**The Oklahoma International Dance Festival
thrives thanks to the generosity of our donors,
partners and sponsors. We are deeply grateful
for your support.**



O | K | L | A | H | O | M | A |
C | O | N | T | E | M | P | O | R | A | R | Y |



Audience Guidelines

We welcome you to capture and share the beauty of tonight's performance! Photography and short video clips are permitted, provided they are taken quietly, without flash, and without disturbing performers or fellow audience members. We'd love to see your perspective! Tag us on Instagram @okdancefest and use #OIDF2026 when you share your moments.

This summer program is made possible in part by a grant from the Oklahoma Arts Council, whose support helps us bring exceptional dance experiences to our community.



Feeling inspired? Use your smartphone to scan this QR code and donate now!

A Heartfelt Thank You

Michelle Moeller, Director of the UCO Dance Department – Beverly Hamilton - Rowen Pace - Adelita Hernandez & Hope Alvarez - Ayden Hartel - Emily Lower - Cameron Lee - Valerie Sebestyen Photography - Oklahoma Contemporary

okdancefest.org



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