



NOTE

Due to a recent injury, Michelle Dorrance is unable to be with us tonight. She is ok, rehabilitating and is with us in rhythm.

At this Performance

Byron Tittle

Byron Tittle made his Broadway debut originating the role of “Cass” in the Tony-award-winning musical *Illinois* choreographed by Justin Peck. He has toured both nationally and internationally with the “virtuosic” tap dance company, Dorrance Dance, with performances at The Joyce Theater, Guggenheim Museum, and Sadler’s Wells (*New York Times*). Commercial credits include Lady Gaga, Janet Jackson, Usher, Doja Cat, Hugh Jackman, Karol G, Jason Mraz, Nicki Minaj, and more. Television/film credits include *In the Heights*, *Maestro*, *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, *The View*, *The James Corden Show*, *Good Morning America*, the *BET Awards*, the *Video Music Awards*, and the 2022 Met Gala. He is humbled to be a recipient of a 2019 Princess Grace Fellowship in dance and a 2024 Chita Rivera nominee for Outstanding Performance in a Broadway Show.



Dear Audience,

Tap dance is an art form that exudes joy. Movie musicals and Broadway shows from the Golden Age uplifted audiences in challenging times.

Tap dancing is all about rhythm—how it resonates with both performers and their audience. Rhythm in dance and music permeates this year’s concert.

“St. Thomas,” an iconic Sonny Rollins tune, is based on a familiar rhythmic idea in support of a Caribbean folk melody. The George Gershwin composition, “I Got Rhythm” from the 1930s show *Crazy Girls*, had audiences humming the song.

Aguas de Marco, *Caravan*, and *Recordame* show how the qualities of rhythmic communication exist in diverse cultures and ethnicities.

Rhythm is traced from the beginning of time. Drums were used in ceremonies, laying the foundation for all music. Tap dance is a percussive experience and connects us to our primal selves.

Enjoy the performance—we hope you feel the rhythm!

Warmly

Denise Scheerer
Tap Chair / Producer

Jerry Kalaf
Music Director

Tap Fest 2025: “Rejoicing in Rhythm”

Trudl Zipper Dance Institute

February 22, 2025
Zipper Hall, 7 pm

Quartet Music

MUSIC BY JERRY KALAF (b. 1951)

Liz Kinnon, Piano
Joel Hamilton, Bass
Gary Solt, Guitar
Jerry Kalaf, Drums

Welcome!
Johnnie Hobbs, Master of Ceremonies

I Got Rhythm

CHOREOGRAPHY BY MELINDA SULLIVAN
MUSIC BY GEORGE GERSHWIN (1898–1937)

Advanced Tap Ensemble

Martin Arenas, Lillian Black-Yow, Marlo Corddry, Sophia Doerr, Brandon Han,
Zyla Harris-Petter, Ela Koepke, Samuel Lingle, Vera Marinescu, Quinn O'Malley,
Dina Zangwill, Talia Zipkin

Aguas de Marco

IMPROVISATION BY JOHNNIE HOBBS
MUSIC BY ANTONIO CARLOS JOBIM (1927–1994)

Johnnie Hobbs

Caravan

Zoe Lesser

CHOREOGRAPHY BY ZOE LESSER
MUSIC BY DUKE ELLINGTON (1899–1974)
AND JUAN TIZOL (1900–1984)

Isfahan

Denise Scheerer
Jerry Kalaf, Vibes

IMPROVISATION BY DENISE SCHEERER
MUSIC BY DUKE ELLINGTON AND
BILLY STRAYHORN (1915–1967)

St. Thomas

Advanced Tap Ensemble

CHOREOGRAPHY BY DENISE SCHEERER
MUSIC BY SONNY ROLLINS (b. 1930)

Mas Que Nada

Aaron Williams

IMPROVISATION BY AARON WILLIAMS
MUSIC BY JORGE BEN (b. 1939)

Quartet Music

MUSIC BY JERRY KALAF

Recordame

Johnnie Hobbs, Zoe Lesser, Denise Scheerer,
Aaron Williams

CHOREOGRAPHY BY DENISE SCHEERER
IMPROVISATION BY DANCERS
MUSIC BY JOE HENDERSON (1937–2001)

Improvisation

IMPROVISATION BY JOSETTE WIGGAN

Josette Wiggan

Improvisation

IMPROVISATION BY MICHELLE DORRANCE

Michelle Dorrance

***Eddie's Bounce* (The Shim Sham)**

CHOREOGRAPHY BY LEONARD REED

MUSIC BY JERRY KALAF

Full Ensemble

Featured Artists

Michelle Dorrance

Michelle Dorrance is a New York City-based artist. Mentored by Gene Medler (North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble), she was fortunate to study under many of the last master hoofers. Career highlights include: *STOMP*, Derick Grant's *Imagine Tap!*, Jason Samuels Smith's *Charlie's Angels/Chasing the Bird*, Ayodele Casel's *Diary of a Tap Dancer*, Mable Lee's *Dancing Ladies*, and playing the bass for Darwin Deez. Company work includes: Savion Glover's *Ti Dii*, Manhattan Tap, Barbara Duffy and Co., JazzTap Ensemble, and Rumba Tap. Solo work ranges from *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert* to commissions for the Martha Graham Dance Company, Vail Dance Festival, American Ballet Theatre, and New York City Center. Ms. Dorrance made her Broadway choreographic debut with James Lapine's *Flying Over Sunset* at Lincoln Center Theater in 2021. A 2018 Doris Duke Artist, 2017 Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellow, and 2015 MacArthur Fellow, Ms. Dorrance is humbled to have been acknowledged and supported by United States Artists, The Joyce Theater, the Alpert Awards, Jacob's Pillow, Princess Grace Foundation-USA, The Field, American Tap Dance Foundation, and the Bessie Awards. Ms. Dorrance holds a Bachelor of Arts from New York University and an honorary Doctorate of Arts from the University of North Carolina. She is a Capezio athlete and was recently named an Associate Artist at Sadler's Wells.



Joel Hamilton

Joel Hamilton is a Southern California native and currently resides in the Bay Area. He studied bass with Jack Cousin of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and played with Bill Holman and Don Preston, Jeff Gauthier, and Nels and Alex Cline. Mr. Hamilton has recorded with Jerry Kalaf and Rich Ruttenberg on *This Side Up*. When not playing music, he likes to ride his bike in the mountains and look at birds through binoculars.



Johnnie Hobbs

Johnnie Hobbs III is a filmmaker, voice director, and tap dance instructor. He has worked on AAA video games *Call of Duty*, Second Chair Director for Capcom's *Exoprimal*, and *Fallout 76*, under Halp Network, House of Moves, and Blindlight as a voice and motion capture director. His short films have screened at several film festivals such as Pan African, Newport Beach, and Seattle Black Film Festival. His short, *Nostalgia*, was nominated for Best Short Film starring Dulé Hill (*The West Wing*, *Psych*), Chloe Arnold (*Syncopated Ladies*), and Jason Samuels Smith. It won Best Short Film at The Cleveland Urban Film Festival and was shown on Aspire TV and SHORTS HD

Channel. *Yuri* was nominated for Best Short Film in 2024 at The Burbank International Film Festival and won Best Cross Cultural Short Film at the Japan Los Angeles Film Festival. The short can be viewed on Omeleto, Youtube's short film channel for award-winning short films with 4 million subscribers.

As a tap dance instructor, Mr. Hobbs has taught in Alaska, Guatemala, as well as an Adjunct Dance Professor at AMDA LA, the Colburn School, and Hollywood Dance Center. He recently provided choreography for Kelly Marie Tran's 2021 *MISCAST* performance for MCC Theatre, from *The Book of Mormon*. He's been an Artist in Residence at the University of Colorado and a guest speaker at Broadway Dance Center, Temple University, Santa Monica College, and The Art Institute of Philadelphia.



Photo: Luiz Guanzon

Jerry Kalaf

A resident of Los Angeles, Jerry Kalaf has been active in the Jazz community for many years. His credits include performances and tours with Eddie Harris, Gary Burton, Gary Foster, Frank Strazzeri, Bill Mays, Bill Perkins, Jimmy Cleveland, The Pointer Sisters, Gregory Hines, and Major Holley. Mr. Kalaf has toured Europe, Asia, Russia, South America, Africa, and the United States as musical director of the Jazz Tap Ensemble, with performances at the Playboy Jazz festival in Los Angeles, Salzburg Jazz festival in Salzburg, Austria, and at Carnegie Hall and the Apollo Theater in New York.



Active in the recording studios of Los Angeles, Mr. Kalaf has participated as both a performer and composer in scoring sessions for hundreds of film and television shows. A recipient of a Meet The Composer/California grant funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council, Mr. Kalaf's recent recording, "Safe Travels," is a collaboration with arranger Doug Walter and features eight of Mr. Kalaf's compositions for string quartet and piano trio.

Mr. Kalaf is also a member of the improvisational group Looper Colony, with a new recording entitled *Looper Colony II*, a collection of improvised music. Evocative and interactive, Looper Colony endeavors to create something out of nothing, drawing influence and inspiration from the diverse worlds of painting, poetry, and film.

Liz Kinnon

Liz Kinnon (pianist, arranger, composer, educator, film coach) is a native of Los Angeles who has performed worldwide with numerous artists including Dizzy Gillespie, Andy Williams, Barbara Morrison, Sherwood Sledge, Kenia, Octavio Bailly, Embrasamba, Maiden Voyage, and Jackie Ryan.

Ms. Kinnon's songwriting credits include "Say Goodbye" on Kenia's album, *Love Lives On*, and her arrangements are featured on recordings and live performances including *The Duke Ellington Memorial Concert* with legendary jazz greats Pepper Adams, Sonny Fortune, and full orchestra; strings for Sandy Graham's album, *By Request*; and tracks heard on multiple CD releases by jazz vocalist Ms. Ryan. In May 2007, Ms. Kinnon was commissioned to write and perform her own arrangement of *Smile* with Maiden Voyage, a 17-piece big band, at the Kennedy Center's Tribute to Women in Jazz and was invited to return in 2010 to play in a concert honoring jazz icon Mary Lou Williams.

During the 1990s, Ms. Kinnon worked as an orchestrator for Emmy award-winning composers Richard Stone, Steve Bernstein, and Tim Kelly on cartoons *Animaniacs*, *Pinky and the Brain*, and *Histeria*. She also worked for composer Shirley Walker on the feature film *Mystery Men*. Ms. Kinnon went on to compose and record the scores for the documentaries *The Life and Times of Jean DePaul* (2005) and *Nicole Wood: Cars & Beauty* (2012). She has worked in music preparation for hundreds of films, live performances, and television shows including many years on the music team for the Academy Awards.

As a young faculty member at the Dick Grove School of Music from 1984–92, Ms. Kinnon taught classes in jazz theory, arranging, and piano. In 2009, she joined the Colburn Community School of Performing Arts faculty as Jazz Piano instructor, and in 2012, she helped to launch Colburn's Adult Studies program. She is currently the Director of Adult Jazz Workshops and teaches other jazz-related classes.

In 2015, Ms. Kinnon coached actor Ryan Gosling through preproduction and filming for his role as an accomplished jazz pianist in the film, *La La Land*, for which he won the Golden



Globe award for Best Actor. Since then, she has continued to coach multiple actors for numerous award-winning film and TV projects.

Ms. Kinnon's solo CD, *Ms. Behavin'*, features top international artists in a dynamic merging of Brazilian, Latin, and bebop jazz.

Zoe Lesser

Zoe Lesser is a Los Angeles-based artist working across dance, opera, and theater. She is an alumna of Jacob's Pillow and was a Performing Apprentice with Chicago Tap Theatre. She has presented original work at Keshet Dance and Center for the Arts in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and at Detroit Dance City Festival in Detroit, Michigan. She has directed and supported work at Denver Center Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, Aspen Music Festival, Santa Fe Opera, and Steppenwolf Theatre Company.

Ms. Lesser was previously on dance faculty at the National Dance Institute of New Mexico, where she taught ages five to adult in their afterschool program. She choreographed new works and revived choreography for the company's productions. She has also taught workshops at MOVE! Dance Space in Denver, Summit Studio in Aspen, Dance Arts in Los Alamos, and several studios in the Chicagoland area.



Denise Scheerer

In Seattle, Denise Scheerer founded and performed with That's Jazz, a Seattle-based jazz dance company. The company performed at the Seattle Center Playhouse and Britt Music Festival. While in Seattle, Ms. Scheerer choreographed for Seattle Opera's *The Ballad of Baby Doe*; Empty Space Theatre's *The Day They Came from Way Out There*; Pioneer Square Theatre's *In a Pig's Valise*; Tacoma Civic Light Opera's *The Merry Widow*; and Seattle Civic Light Opera's *West Side Story* and *Kiss Me Kate*. She choreographed Los Angeles Youth Theatre's *Anything Goes* and *Oliver*. And she choreographed and staged an original piece for Latin pop singer, Cristian Castro, for performances at the Greek Theatre in Los Angeles.



Ms. Scheerer danced in Las Vegas at the MGM Grand Hotel in *Hallelujah Hollywood* for four years before moving to Seattle. She danced in the Albert Brooks film *I'll Do Anything*, and was the featured dancer and choreographer for the Roy Clark Special "Especially Roy."

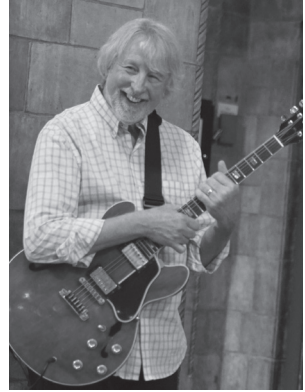
Ms. Scheerer has performed with The Jazz Tap Ensemble. She studied and performed with tap legends Eddie Brown and Sam Weber. She and her daughter, Angel Pennington, performed as a mother-daughter act at the Four Queens Hotel in Las Vegas, The Jazz Bakery, John Anson Ford Amphitheatre in Los Angeles, and the Oregon Cabaret Theatre in Ashland. In 2008, they performed at Black Swan Theatre in Ashland, Oregon, and at the 2008 LA Tap Festival. Ms. Scheerer also performed and choreographed for LA Ironworks under the direction of Steve Zee. She plays the drums and studied music with Jerry Kalaf, musical director of The Jazz Tap Ensemble, and incorporates this skill in her teaching.

Ms. Scheerer has taught workshops and master classes all over the Pacific Northwest and California, and was dance faculty at Loyola Marymount University for five years. She taught in New York City for a *Tradition in Tap* workshop that honored her husband, Robert Scheerer. And she has also taught for the St. Louis, Detroit, and Los Angeles Tap Festivals. Most recently, she taught and performed at the Oregon Center for the Arts at Southern Oregon University in 2019.

Ms. Scheerer teaches at the Colburn Community School of Performing Arts, and is currently chair of the Tap and Musical Theater Dance department.

Gary Solt

Gary Solt has worked as a professional guitarist for many decades. His television credits include: *Knots Landing*; *Star Trek: Next Generation*, *Deep Space 9*, *Voyager*, and *Enterprise*; *Becker*; *National Geographic*; and *Masters of Horror*. His Broadway musical credits include: *Evita*; *A Chorus Line*; *Sister Act*; *DreamGirls in Concert*; *Vanities*; *Mask*; *Stormy Weather*; *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*; *They're Playing Our Song*; *West Side Story*; *Children of Eden*; *Godspell*; *Jaques Brel*; and many others. Mr. Solt has performed and toured with the Boston Symphony, Boston Pops, Santa Barbara Symphony, New West Orchestra, the Chris Walden Big Band, Bruce Paulson LA All-star Big Band, Shirley Bassey, Frank Sinatra Jr., Nancy Wilson, Clark Terry. Mr. Solt joined international tours with the Billy Vaughn Orchestra and the Percy Faith Orchestra. He has played in jazz gigs with mostly everybody. Mr. Solt is a clinician and adjudicator for jazz festivals throughout California and Northern Arizona.



Josette Wiggan

An internationally acclaimed and much sought-after educator, choreographer, and performer, Josette Wiggan has dedicated her life to the perpetuation of African American Vernacular Jazz Dance. She began her dance journey with Paul and Arlene Kennedy in Los Angeles, California. Her love for performing was fostered by the Kennedys and then refined as an adult performing with The Jazz Tap Ensemble until 2007.

A graduate of UCLA, Ms. Wiggan's career highlights include the 2001 Spotlight Award (Non-Classical Dance Category), the first National Broadway Tour of 42nd Street, a 2008 Bessie Award Nominee for Outstanding Performance in the *Baker & Tarpa Project*, movies such as *Idlewild* and *Princess and the Frog*, and studying with Germaine Acogny at L'ecole les Sables in Senegal, Africa. Alongside her brother, Joseph Wiggan, she was a part of two original casts of Cirque du Soleil's *Banana Shpeel* and *Michael Jackson: The Immortal World Tour* from 2009–13. The duo performed in *Tireless*, a show curated by Michelle Dorrance that debuted at Jacob's Pillow in 2017. Ms. Wiggan was part of Ms. Dorrance's all-woman quartet that created the works *Until the Real Comes Along* and *All Good Things Must Come and End*. In 2019, she was a co-creator with Ms. Dorrance and Hannah Heller for the Christmas work, *...The Nutcracker Suite...*, which made its tour debut at the Kennedy Center and performed at the White House in 2023 at the invitation of First Lady Dr. Jill Biden.

In 2021, Josette created her first evening length work, *Praise: The Inevitable Fruit of Gratitude*, in collaboration with Grammy-nominated jazz trumpeter Keyon Harrold and the cast of Dorrance Dance. This work debuted at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and the Queens Theatre in the Park. In 2023, Ms. Wiggan began her own tap company, Josette Wiggan Presents, and developed new works entitled *On Solid Ground: A Celebration of Black Joy* and *Freedom In Our America*, featuring improvisation by the dancers and musicians, and her first solo work, *Threshing Floor: A Place of Meditation and Melody* for the American Dance Platform at the Joyce Theater.

Ms. Wiggan is currently on faculty at the USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance, where she teaches vernacular jazz and tap dance.



Aaron Williams

Aaron Williams is a multi-instrumentalist, composer, and music educator. His passion for all forms of music-making has led him to become proficient in percussion, piano, tap dancing, singing, ukulele, live-looping, and many other instruments, which he utilizes to pursue his mission of spreading joy and elevating humanity.

Mr. Williams achieved internet fame with his viral video, *Mario on Marimba*, which has received over 100 million views worldwide. He is the composer of “Jazzy Note Blocks,” the music behind Alan Becker’s *Note Blocks*, which has racked up over 200 million views. Mr. Williams is one-half of the explosive duo, Collision of Rhythm, where he performs, teaches, and keynotes all over the world with his “rhythmic soul brother,” Bronkar Lee.

In addition to his online and commercial successes, Mr. Williams is a world-class music educator. He holds Level 3 Certification in Orff Schulwerk pedagogy and has presented teacher training workshops for AOSA (American Orff Schulwerk Association), KIPP Schools, CMEA (California Music Educators Association), and several Orff chapters, colleges, and universities. He is a recipient of the ACEMM Winter Spotlight Award, which is granted for outstanding work in learning communities utilizing music and movement. Mr. Williams has done extensive work as a music director, band director, private lessons instructor, and music specialist for humans of all ages.



Thank you

Tap Fest 2025 at the Colburn School is generously supported by Aliza and Michael Lesser.

Special appreciation goes to the Colburn Society members whose annual support of dance makes programs like this at the Colburn School possible, as well as the extraordinary scholarship support of Merle Mullin, Ann Moore, David Kobrin, and Michael S. Turner.

Dance Scholarships

Millepied Scholarships, named for former NYC Ballet Principal Dancer, Benjamin Millepied, who was instrumental in the formation of the Dance Academy, support tuition and dormitory and related expenses for young male dancers each year. This scholarship program enables Colburn to offer a separate boys' training program, which is vital to impart the different technique and skill requirements for male dancers as well as providing a comprehensive and balanced training environment for Colburn's female dancers. In addition, need-based scholarships are available to young women in the Dance Academy and to qualifying children in the afterschool Youth Dance programs.

The Beverly, Donald, and David Kobrin Scholarship Fund supports young male dancers of color, who are traditionally underrepresented in classical dance. In addition to tuition, the Fund helps cover room and board, wardrobe, special classes, and other academic and performance opportunities. This scholarship helps exemplify the School's commitment to access to excellence to all who wish to pursue their dreams here.

The Margaret K. Turner Scholarship supports young dancers in their aspiration to pursue professional careers in ballet. This scholarship is awarded in the fall of each academic year in honor of the late Margaret K. Turner and her passion for dance and youth education.

If you would like to learn more about supporting the Trudl Zipper Dance Institute, contact philanthropy@colburnschool.edu.

ADULT DANCE AT COLBURN SCHOOL!

Whether you're looking to reignite a childhood passion for ballet, join a fun and energetic tap class, want to improve your modern technique or learn basic hip-hop fundamentals, the Colburn School has a class for you.

Our outstanding faculty of former professional dancers offer the following programs from our campus on Grand Avenue in DTLA:

- **Adult Beginning Ballet and Intermediate/Advanced Ballet**
AGES 15+
- **Intermediate Adult Modern**
AGES 15+
- **Adult Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced Tap**
AGES 15+
- **Adult Hip Hop**
AGES 18+

Our Spring semester began January 13 and continues through June 1 with rolling semester enrollment available for classes with space available. Reach out to dance@colburnschool.edu for tuition information or to schedule a free trial in your preferred class.

Drop-In Classes are available for \$25 per class using our online portal to register.

Adults can dance their way through the summer as beginners or continue building their technique! Join us for Summer 2025 Adult dance classes from June 16 through August 3.



Questions?

email: dance@colburnschool.edu



REGISTER OR
LEARN MORE



Dr. Herbert Zipper leads a concert at the 32nd Street Magnet School in Los Angeles.

Herbert Zipper, Champion of Community Music

Dr. Herbert Zipper, for whom the Colburn School's Zipper Hall is named, was a pioneer of the community music movement in the United States. Remembered as a dedicated activist, Dr. Zipper was known for his work in music education and his deep commitment to students. He believed a performing arts education should be available to everyone, a philosophy on which Colburn's mission of "access to excellence" was built.

Born in Vienna in 1904, Zipper was accepted into the Viennese Academy of Music where he studied with Richard Strauss and Maurice Ravel. Later in life, after his release from the Dachau concentration camp, he accepted a conducting position with the Manila Symphony Orchestra where he reunited with his future wife, Trudl Dubsky. The two later migrated to the U.S. where Zipper expanded his efforts in music education. On August 26, 1980, the groundwork for the Colburn School was secured after Zipper approached Richard D. Colburn with the idea of making the University of Southern California's preparatory school independent.

One of the very finest halls for chamber music in the U.S., our beloved 430-seat performance hall is named after Herbert Zipper. Colburn proudly welcomes students, faculty, staff, families, and other members of the community to Zipper Hall each year.

The image from the Herbert and Trudl Zipper Archive is reproduced with permission from Celia Pool and Gavin Perry.



READ MORE
about Zipper's life