



STEWART/OWEN DANCE

Friday & Saturday
April 21 & 22, 2023 at 8 p.m.



Photo by Micah Mackenzie

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WORTHAM CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
2022/2023 SEASON



Co-Founders and Artistic Directors

Gavin Stewart and Vanessa Owen

Managing Director

Nick Kopley

Dancers

Trinity England, Jeff Ewing, Noelle Hauptmann-Anderson, Danie Johnson Turpin, Megan Jones Medford, Vanessa Owen, Taylor Railton, Gabriella Sibeko, Gavin Stewart

Musicians and Composers

Colston Byrd, Douglas Carr

Lighting Designers

Cassandra Klepzig, Michael Lowery

Costume Alterations

Jill Ersham

Stewart/Owen Dance is grateful for the generous support provided by the following individuals:

Leslie Connolly, Cary and Brett Petrussek, Tami and John Summerour, Susan Propst, Stephanie Morgan, Stephen P Hoffman, George Hunker and Alberto Colonia, Ellen and Eric Vontillius, Kay and Mike Layman, Diana Movius, Karen Milnes, Adam and Jamie Devito, Jessica Barrett, Karen Carpenter, Bridget Burke, Erin Tunbridge, Kourtney Ginn

Special thanks to:

Wortham Center for the Performing Arts, Rose Wuertz, Jill Ersham, Ben Phan, Micah Mackenzie, Megan Jones Medford, Baxter Hayes Medford, Cary Petrussek, Leslie Connolly, Gina Cornejo, WNC Dance Academy, Asheville Dance Theater

The performances by Stewart/Owen Dance are funded in part by a grant from South Arts in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the North Carolina Arts Council.

This project was supported by ArtsAVL, Buncombe County Government, and the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.





PROGRAM

Memory Affair

Choreographers: Vanessa Owen and Gavin Stewart

Dancers: Trinity England, Jeff Ewing, Danie Johnson Turpin, Megan Jones Medford,
Noelle Hauptmann-Anderson, Taylor Railton, Gabriella Sibeko

Music: Al Escobar, Carmen McRae, Irving Fields Trio, Mon Rivera

Lighting Design: Cassandra Klepzig

Wardrobe: Vanessa Owen

Why not live blissfully in the past, in complete denial of present reality? Set in an imaginary bygone time, Memory Affair explores nostalgia, escapism, and inhibition.

This work was originally commissioned by T2 Dance Company, who learned the piece via Zoom and premiered the work in a parking deck in January 2021 in Boulder, CO.

Silver Spoon

Choreographers: Vanessa Owen and Gavin Stewart

Dancers: Vanessa Owen and Gavin Stewart

Music: Henrik Schwarz, Arve Henriksen

Lighting Design: Michael Lowery (original) with adaptations by Cassandra Klepzig

Costume Design: Mark Gieringer

Are you possessed by your possessions?

This work was created in 2021 as a part of a residency at HCC-Ybor in Tampa, FL. Virtual premiere March 2021.

What Remains

Choreographers: Vanessa Owen and Gavin Stewart in collaboration with the Company

Dancers: Jeff Ewing, Danie Johnson Turpin, Megan Jones Medford, Noelle Hauptmann-Anderson,
Taylor Railton, Gabriella Sibeko

Music: Colston Byrd and Douglas Carr

Lighting Design: Cassandra Klepzig

Wardrobe: Vanessa Owen

Originally performed in the parking lot of the Asheville Outlets in July 2020, What Remains was developed in collaboration with musicians/composers Doug Carr and Colston Byrd and explored the challenges faced by the dance community in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. This new stage iteration reflects all that's transpired over the last few years and all that society still must work toward.



WORTHAM CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS 2022/2023 SEASON

~ Intermission ~

Again, for the First Time

(World Premiere – Commissioned by the Wortham Center)

Choreographers: Vanessa Owen and Gavin Stewart in collaboration with the Company

Dancers: Jeff Ewing, Danie Johnson Turpin, Megan Jones Medford, Vanessa Owen, Taylor Railton,
Gabriella Sibeko, Gavin Stewart

Music: Kara-Lis Coverdale, Barbatuques, The Books, Muzak Orchestra, Martin Glass, Leon Vynehall,
Pharoah Sanders, Syd Dale, Bendik Giske

Voice Overs: Dixon Christian, Baxter Hayes Medford, Megan Jones Medford, Vanessa Owen, Anonymous

Lighting Design: Cassandra Klepzig

Wardrobe: Vanessa Owen

*To wonder,
to learn,
to play,
to fit,
to thrash,
to trust,
to find,
to wonder,
to learn...*

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Stewart/Owen Dance is the first resident dance company of Asheville's Wortham Center for the Performing Arts and received the Wortham's first commission of new work. The company leads ongoing community dance classes for adults at the Wortham Center and provides educational programming for local schools and community organizations to provide access to contemporary dance. They believe dance has a distinct ability to heal, inspire and connect individuals from all backgrounds and experiences.

Gavin Stewart and Vanessa Owen, a husband-and-wife duo, are the co-founders, artistic directors, and choreographers of Stewart/Owen Dance. Their choreography has been presented by festivals and companies across the U.S., and their careers span over 10 years of producing dance on national and international stages, including fifteen State Department tours with D.C.-based Company E.

In 2017, the duo moved their home base to Western North Carolina, where they seek to enrich the community with contemporary dance by building a sustainable ecosystem where professional dance artists can thrive. Stewart/Owen Dance works toward this purpose by hosting a nurturing, inclusive work culture; providing high-quality educational programming for newcomers and professionals alike; and reflecting the area's already vibrant culture through inventive, elegant, and rigorous performances.



ARTISTS AND STAFF

VANESSA OWEN (Co-Artistic Director, Choreographer, Company Dancer)

Vanessa Owen, originally from Amity, PA, received her B.F.A. in Dance from Wright State University and has danced professionally with Wylliams/Henry Contemporary Dance Company, Washington Reflections, the Kennedy Center's production of Children of Eden, Dark Circles Contemporary Dance, and Company E.

Vanessa performed regularly at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and toured as a Cultural Ambassador through the U.S. State Department during her time with Company E. These tours took her to Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Russia, Cuba, Israel, Palestine, the Republic of Georgia, Azerbaijan, England, China, and Uruguay where she taught, performed, and choreographed contemporary dance and musical theater productions.

Vanessa has received numerous choreographic awards, including a McDowell Regional Artist Grant, a Choreographic Fellowship from Virginia Commission for the Arts, and the Audience Choice Award at the NYC Dance Gallery Festival. She currently serves on the faculty for WNC Dance Academy and leads community classes for Stewart/Owen Dance at the Wortham Center.

GAVIN STEWART (Co-Artistic Director, Choreographer, Company Dancer)

Gavin Stewart is a dancer, choreographer, and instructor. Originally from Tulsa, OK, Gavin graduated with a BFA from UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance and has performed with several companies including Richmond Ballet, Company E, Terpsicorps Theatre of Dance, Dark Circles Contemporary Dance Company, and many others.

Gavin's work as a Cultural Ambassador with Company E involved touring extensively and teaching contemporary dance in fifteen countries including Kazakhstan, Sweden, Russia, and Cuba. He has also choreographed works for numerous universities and festivals, and his choreography has been presented by companies such as Richmond Ballet I, Richmond Ballet II, Wylliams/Henry Contemporary Dance Company, and others.

As a dance teacher, Gavin serves on the faculty of the Ballet Conservatory of Asheville, has taught at WNC Dance Academy and Academy at Terpsicorps, and has served as guest faculty at the YMCA of McDowell County and French Broad River Academy. He has also led master classes across the eastern seaboard with Stewart/Owen Dance and continues to teach in S/O Dance's community class series at the Wortham Center.

JEFF EWING (Company Dancer)

Jeff Ewing is originally from Torrance, CA, where he began dancing from the age of six at Fusion Dance Studio. His opportunities include the Julliard Summer intensive, the apprentice program at the Chautauqua Institution, and assisting Cathy Young at Bates Dance Festival. He earned a BFA magna cum laude in dance performance from the Boston Conservatory. In college, Jeff worked with Danny Pelzig, Cathy Young, Gianni DiMarco, Diane Arvanites, Doug Elkins, Adam Barruch, Omar Carrum, and Claudia Lavista. He spent a year dancing with Charlotte Ballet's second company where he performed the works of choreographers Mark Diamond, Dwight Rhoden, and David Ingram. Jeff has had the pleasure of performing with Lucky Plush Productions and Codaço Dance Project during his stay in Chicago. He has been a company member of Terpsicorps Theatre of Dance for four seasons. Jeff is currently based in Asheville, NC, where he both teaches and dances. Jeff has been dancing with Stewart/Owen Dance since 2018.

NOELLE HAUPTMANN-ANDERSON (Company Dancer)

Noelle Hauptmann-Anderson, from Napa, CA, graduated cum laude from SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Dance in 2019. There she performed repertory by the Trisha Brown Dance Company and Luca Veggetti's restaging of *Watermill* by Jerome Robbins, performed at BAM Fischer. In addition, Noelle studied at the Korea



WORTHAM CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS 2022/2023 SEASON

National University of Arts in Seoul, South Korea, the San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, and the Jacob's Pillow Commercial Program. In the fall of 2020, she joined the Brian Brooks Moving Company. Shortly before moving to Los Angeles during the summer of 2022, she was one of two dancers chosen for a *Vogue Arabia* editorial video shoot, directed by Su Mustecaplioglu. Since moving to the west coast, Noelle has danced for Jhene Aiko, Fitz and the Tantrums, Jadu Jadu, and Buzz. Additionally, she has performed works by notable choreographers and directors such as Child, Genna Moroni, Jerome AB, Ana Maria Lucaciu, Aisha Francis, Mitch Dequillettes, Aerick Luckie, Alex Ketley, Loni Landon, James Alsop, Luca Veggetti, Tom Weinberger, Jeffery Page, and many others. This is Noelle's first project with Stewart/Owen Dance.

DANIE JOHNSON TURPIN (Company Dancer)

Danie Johnson Turpin graduated in 2016 from East Carolina University with a degree in Dance Performance, and a degree in Rehabilitation Studies. During her time at East Carolina, she had the opportunity to perform works from artists including Roni Koresch, Zalman Raffael, and Joe Joe Smith. Danie worked on staff at the Joffrey Ballet School in New York for three years and had the opportunity to train with their faculty. In 2014 she performed at the John F. Kennedy Center at the National College Dance Festival under choreographer John Dixon. Upon graduation, she moved to Chicago to dance as a performing apprentice with Inaside Dance Chicago, under the direction of Robert McKee and Richard Smith. Within her time in Chicago, Danie also performed as a company member with Cocodaco Dance Project, Moonwater Dance Project, and Forward the Movement. She currently resides in Asheville, NC, teaching dance and Pure Barre. Danie has been dancing with Stewart/Owen Dance since 2019.

MEGAN JONES MEDFORD (Company Dancer)

Megan Jones Medford received a BA in Dance Education from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She spent six years living in NYC as a professional dancer and teacher. Along with freelance work, Megan was a company member with Periapsis Music & Dance, LiNK! the movement, and Shauna Sorensen and Dancers. Some of her performances include SummerStage, Jazz at the Lincoln Center, American Dance Guild Festival, Symphony Space, New York Moves, Carnival, and Choreographers Canvas. Megan trained with Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Alonzo King LINES Ballet, Martha Graham School, and American Dance Festival. She was on faculty for the Children & Teen Program at Broadway Dance Center and All-Star Studios in NYC. She has guest taught and choreographed for studios and conventions around the States. Megan moved back to her hometown of Asheville, NC, to start a family and to continue to share the art of dance through teaching and performing. Megan has been dancing with Stewart/Owen Dance since 2020.

TAYLOR RAILTON (Company Dancer)

Taylor Railton is originally from Bermuda where she began dancing at the age of six. In 2012, Taylor attended the University of North Carolina School of the Arts where she performed works by José Limón, Brenda Daniels, Juel Lane, and others. In 2014, Taylor moved to San Francisco to attend the San Francisco Conservatory of Dance under the direction of Summer Lee Rhatigan. She worked with and performed works by Bobbi Jene Smith, Alex Ketley, and Tom Weinberger. Taylor attended summer programs including Gallim, Bodytraffic, Gaga NYC, San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, Sidra Bell Summer Module, and New Dialect Summer Intensive. Taylor earned her BFA from SUNY Purchase College in the Spring of 2019. Whilst at Purchase, she worked with Ana Maria Lucaciu, Danielle Agami, Kyle Abraham, Doug Varone, Annie Rigney, and many more. As a member of Purchase Dance Company, Taylor had the opportunity to perform at New York Live Arts in 2019. After graduating, Taylor had the pleasure of dancing with Uana Dans where she performed at the New York Dance Festival and the Houston Dance Festival. In late 2019, Taylor moved to London where she freelanced before moving to Charlotte, NC in 2020. Since moving, Taylor has worked with Eric Mullis on *Motive Forces* and Paynedance. Taylor has been dancing with Stewart/Owen Dance since 2022.



GABRIELLA SIBEKO (Company Dancer)

Originating from Montreal, Canada, Gabriella Sibeko (she/her) is a freelance dance artist, performer, educator, choreographer and a graduate of The Ailey School Scholarship and Certificate programs. Now based in New York City, Gabriella can be credited in Netflix's *Making Malinche* documentary and Nowness Digital's Top Picks for her work in *Still*. Her artistry has been shaped profoundly by the choreographers she has worked with including Dolly Sfeir, Omar Román De Jesús, Al Blackstone, Avihai Haham, Katherine Maxwell, Ellenore Scott, Akira Uchida, and Jon Rua to name a few. She has danced for musical artists Phish, Alison Sudol, Sondre Lerche and ELENI, and has performed in major venues like Lincoln Center, Madison Square Garden, The Joyce Theater, The Apollo Theater, and The Montalban in Los Angeles. Combining her love for concert, commercial and theatrical work, Gabriella has had the privilege of dancing for a wide range of dance companies including Hivewild, Bocatuya, Stewart/Owen Dance, MICHİYAYA, Abarukas, BARE Dance and TedTed Performance Group, and is represented by New York's Clear Talent Agency. As a dance educator and choreographer, Gabriella teaches and sets choreographic work throughout the United States and Canada and is a faculty member of Luminous Tour Dance Convention. Along with performing and educating, Gabriella is also pursuing a part-time degree in psychology and interdisciplinary studies.

TRINITY ENGLAND (Company Apprentice)

Trinity England is a creative mover originally from Long Island, NY. She studied at various institutions throughout her youth, some of which include Ballet Long Island, Joffrey Ballet School, and Ballet Hispanico. Trinity attended the University of The Arts in Philadelphia earning a BFA, magna cum laude, in Dance in 2022. During her years at the University of The Arts, she performed in an array of works by Doug Varone, Sara Shelton Man, Tommie-Waheed Evans, Jesse Zaritt, Sidra Bell, Montay Romero, and Shayla-Vie Jenkins. She also choreographed her first live piece, *And I Keep Finding Myself Here...*, which has cemented her exploration of the ideas of home, vulnerability, relationship building, and the concept of moments and time. Trinity is interested in a continued practice of working in partnerships and seeing the building of a connection beginning from nothing. This is Trinity's first project with Stewart/Owen Dance.

COLSTON BYRD (Musician, Composer)

Colston Byrd, originally from Morganton, NC, is a self-taught experimental musician, electronic engineer, and entrepreneur. Known for his unique style of combining electronic music elements with rock 'n' roll and hip hop instrumentation, his current musical projects are *Battery Powered Hooker Boots*, *Daisy Chains*, *Cops on Acid*, and the upcoming hip-hop collective *Bzerkr Module*.

DOUGLAS CARR (Musician, Composer)

Douglas Carr, known professionally as Soft Talk, is an experimental electronic musician and producer based in Asheville, NC. With a singular affinity for adventurous sonic textures and emotionally vulnerable song-crafting, the technological lens of Carr's music brings into focus the grit and detail of a human experience, its sharp edges, and its defining flaws.

NICK KEPLEY (Managing Director)

Born and raised in Asheville, NC, Nick Kepley (they/he) has spent the past 20 years working as a professional in the performing arts. In 2010, they founded MOTION Dance Theatre, a summer choreographic residency program based in Asheville. From 2015-2018 they served as Dance Lab/New York's first director of marketing and development where they produced and hosted the *In Step* podcast, and launched the company's first Summer Choreography Intensive. Additionally, Kepley has worked in the marketing departments of the New York City Ballet, Manhattan Theatre Club, and Milwaukee Repertory Theater. Performance credits: Ballet Austin, Kansas City Ballet, *Mary Poppins* (Broadway), *Camelot* (NY Philharmonic), *American Dance Machine for the 21st Century* (Joyce Theatre), *SMASH* (NBC). Choreography credits: *Thrace* (Kansas City Ballet "In the



WORTHAM CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS 2022/2023 SEASON

Wings"), *Season of Innocence* (Ballet Austin II), *Speak Out* (Blanton Museum of Art), Rodgers + Hammerstein's *Cinderella* (Broadway, Assistant), *Waitress* (Broadway, Assistant), *Working* (Prospect Theatre, Associate). Kepley currently serves on the faculty of the Ballet Conservatory of Asheville.

CASSONDRA KLEPZIG (Lighting Designer)

As a local of Asheville and a graduate of Western Carolina University, Cassandra has always considered these mountains and the arts community within them home. Throughout college and educational internships with Sante Fe Opera and Cirque Du Soleil, she discovered a passion for lighting design as its own form of storytelling. Though she moved away to NYC for five years to work at The Juilliard School and various other theatrical companies, the mountains called her home where she is proud to be part of the Wortham Center team as the Production Manager and Resident Lighting Designer. This is her first time having the pleasure to design for the Stewart/Owen Dance and she is thrilled to be involved in such a beautiful and intentional production with this incredible group of artists.

Feedback Panel for "Again, for the First Time"

Sean Comeaux	Henry LaBrun
John Ellis	Hannah Michalove
Erika Gifford	Karen Milnes
Erin Hallagan Clare	Pattie Moore
Stephanie Hickling Beckman	Lex Turnbull
Steve Hoffman	

Anigiduwagi Land Acknowledgement

The Wortham Center acknowledges that we are on the ancestral land of the Anigiduwagi, more commonly known as the Cherokee (ᏍᏏᏉᏃᏉ).



2022/2023 FRIENDS Corrections

The following Friends were either listed incorrectly or omitted from our playbill. We apologize for this oversight.

CELEBRITY and SEASON SPONSOR: \$10,000+ - John & Marsha Ellis

ANGEL: \$500-\$999 - Marcie and Joel Rudell

STAR: \$125-\$249 - Mr. & Mrs. William Schulz