



A contemporary artist residency, dance and performance center,
for Martha's Vineyard and beyond

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The Yard Announces Summer Lineup of Artists in Residence

[May 25, 2021] — (Chilmark, Massachusetts) The Yard announces its summer lineup of artists in residence. From June 1 to August 31, 2021, The Yard will host six choreographers and their collaborators for creative residencies to develop new and in-process work. After over a year without visiting artists living and working on The Yard's campus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization's staff and Board of Directors are overjoyed to provide opportunities for these six companies to create work through safe, "bubble residencies." With all of the artists in this summer's season, The Yard honors commitments made prior to the pandemic induced cancellations of last year.

A stringent COVID-19 policy has been developed to help ensure the safety of artists, Yard staff, and community. It includes quarantining and testing requirements prior to arrival, and all artists are traveling to The Yard in cars to minimize exposure. Companies will form pods for the duration of their residencies, living and working in a sequestered environment (or "bubble") on The Yard's campus.

All of this summer's artists are at varying stages of their works in-process. They include: **Company SBB // Stefanie Batten Bland** in the final stages of developing *Embarqued: Stories of Our Soil*, a project inspired by the Martha's Vineyard African American Heritage Trail and oral histories from the Martha's Vineyard Museum; **Danza Orgánica and Aquinnah Wampanoag Tribal Members** in a continued collaboration to create *âs nupumukânean (We Still Dance)*, which honors stories of the Aquinnah Wampanoag people; and **MOVEMENT**, the latest work from **Netta Yerushalmy**, which experiments with pluralism and discord as guiding creative and political principles.

While in residence, artists have nearly unlimited access to The Yard's studio and theater. The Yard's staff provide on-the-ground support in the areas of technical production, videography, and marketing. With each residency, The Yard's staff strives to meet the choreographer's unique needs and be collaborators in their creative process.

"Creation residencies for choreographers to develop new work have been the backbone of The Yard's mission for nearly 50 years," says The Yard's Executive Director, Chloe Jones. "This year, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, our residency program takes on new meaning. According to a 2021 survey from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, artists have reported a personal income loss of over 30 million dollars in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts alone due to COVID-19. This summer, with the support of our donors and broader community, we are investing in over 45 artists through paid residencies. We are simultaneously investing in our community on Martha's Vineyard through performances and public programs that will take place across the island and online. The absence of live performance over this past year, as well as the

innovative ways that artists and organizations like The Yard found to continue creating cultural experiences during the pandemic, showed us just how essential the arts are to fostering healthy, joyful, close-knit, and engaged communities.”

Each residency will include opportunities for the Martha’s Vineyard community to experience the choreographer’s work. A mix of in-person and online performances and other community programs will be announced over the course of the summer. Because of the recently changed COVID-19 safety guidelines in the state of Massachusetts, we are making decisions about capacity and safety protocols closer to the event date. As a result, tickets will be going on sale throughout June, July, and August. This staggered timing enables our staff to make the most informed decisions in our constantly changing community. Capacity will be reduced to ensure the safety of our resident artists, staff, and audiences alike. Visit dancetheyard.org to stay updated.

2021 Summer Artist Residency Schedule

Learn more about the upcoming artists at dancetheyard.org. Details and information about performances and tickets coming soon. Stringent policies will be implemented to help ensure the safety of the artists, staff, and audiences.

Company SBB // Stefanie Batten Bland **In Residence: June 1 - June 21**

Company SBB // Stefanie Batten Bland is an intercontinental dance-theatre company whose interdisciplinary creations for stages, spaces, and films question contemporary and historical cultural symbolism - and the complexities of human relationships.

Batten Bland came across the Martha’s Vineyard African American Heritage Trail during her first residency at The Yard in 2016, and it inspired her new work. Batten Bland has conducted research on the Vineyard in the years since, including in the archives of the Martha’s Vineyard Museum. The result is ***Embarqued: Stories of Our Soil***, an installation based dance-theater work seeped in island history.

Embarqued centers around a performative shipmast that invites reflection and reveals post-colonial foundations and mythology. The work interrogates existing relationships to memorials and calls up African ancestral stories, enabling us to viscerally and holistically connect our country both forwards and backwards in space and time and through soil itself.

Batten Bland’s residency will culminate in preview performances of *Embarqued* at the Martha’s Vineyard Museum.

The Yard is a Partner of the National Performance Network (NPN). This project is made possible in part by support from the NPN Artist Engagement Fund. Major contributors include the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency). For more information visit www.npnweb.org.

Christal Brown & Lida Winfield **In Residence: June 22 - June 28**

Yard alumna **Lida Winfield** returns to the Vineyard with **Christal Brown** to develop ***Same But Different***. Encompassing live performance, film, and even a podcast, *Same But Different* explores the similarities and

differences between Christal and Lida in a cultural commentary on race, age, and gender. 42 years young and recently orphaned, Lida grew up in the North. Christal grew up in the South. Both of them grew up inhabiting small towns. Lida is white and Christal is black. As children, Christal was considered a genius and Lida was labeled dumb. At this point in their lives, Lida and Christal have both lived the rigors of being artists, professors, educators, and survivors of life.

Christal is a mover and a warrior of change and transformation. She combines her athleticism, creativity, love for people, and passion for teaching to create works that redefine the art of dance, the creation of identity, and structures of power. Lida is an innovative and accomplished dancer, choreographer, spoken word artist, and educator. Her pedagogy is rooted in inclusion, access, and the recognition that our brains and bodies work differently and this difference is a valuable asset.

In addition to live showings of *Same But Different*, Lida's latest completed work, *IMAGINARY*, will be available to stream during the week of her residency.

Funded in part by the New England States Touring program of the New England Foundation for the Arts, made possible with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts Regional Touring Program and the six New England state arts agencies.

Same But Different was commissioned by the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, with support from the National Performance Network and the Middlebury Performing Arts Series and Process Pass holders.

IMAGINARY is a National Performance Network (NPN) Creation Fund Project co-commissioned by the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, Jacob's Pillow, Middlebury College, and The Yard. The Creation Fund is supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ford Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency). For more information: www.npnweb.org.

Raphael Xavier

In Residence: June 29 - July 12

Distilling the art of Breaking to its purest form, **Raphael Xavier** (pronounced ZAH-vee-ay) takes this movement vocabulary to uncharted territory. For the past 20+ years, Xavier has explored Breaking as social, physical, and mental "movement." He has forged an exceptional approach to improvisation—expanding both dancer and audience expectations—and cleared the path for those interested in Breaking as an artform.

Xavier is a multifaceted creator who draws inspiration from his many talents in dance, music, photography, and writing. His original works are a transcendent mix of poetry, precision, and spontaneity.

He returns to The Yard to continue creating **XAVIER'S: The Musician and The Mover**, which highlights the traditions of freestyle and improvisation in both Breaking and Jazz. He will be joined by a saxophonist, bassist, pianist, percussionist, and dancers.

Xavier's residency will culminate in an outdoor performance mixing live music, poetry, and movement at Featherstone Center for the Arts.

The presentation of Raphael Xavier was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Danza Orgánica and Aquinnah Wampanoag Tribal Members

In Residence: July 13 - July 26

Danza Orgánica is a dance theater company that creates antiracist, anti-patriarchal, and decolonizing work. Through high-quality performance, education (Dance for Social Justice™), and the annual festival We Create, they work with-and-for communities interested in embodying a liberated future. They honor the right to express our BIPOC experience, joyfully reimagine ourselves in liberated BIPOC bodies, and leave a legacy that sheds light upon an untold side of history.

Danza Orgánica first connected with members of the Aquinnah Wampanoag Tribe during their 2018 residency at The Yard. Since then, the two groups have been collaborating to create **âs nupumukâunean (We Still Dance)**, which highlights traditional and contemporary stories of the Aquinnah Wampanoag People through dance, song, installation, and storytelling. They continue their work this summer in a two-week residency.

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Supported in part by a grant from the Western Arts Alliance Advancing Indigenous Performance Touring Fund and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

<p>Netta Yerushalmy In Residence: July 27 - August 16</p>

Netta Yerushalmy aims to engage with audiences by imparting the sensation of things as they are perceived, not as they are known, and to challenge how meaning is attributed and constructed. Originally from Galilee, Israel, Yerushalmy now lives in New York. Her work has been presented by Jacob's Pillow, New York Live Arts, American Dance Festival, Joyce Theater, Alvin Ailey ADT, Guggenheim Museum, Wexner Center for the Arts, and Danspace Project, among others.

"Netta Yerushalmy is changing our view of modern masterpieces" (*Dance Magazine*), and she continues her groundbreaking work at The Yard with **MOVEMENT**.

MOVEMENT is a new evening-length dance work that "steals" movement quotes from an expansive range of dance across genres, cultures, and idioms, in order to experiment with pluralism and discord as guiding creative and political principles. The project features a bifurcated electronic sound score from two potent female composers, and performances from seven stunning dancers who hail from Sri Lanka, Senegal, Israel, Taiwan, and across the USA.

MOVEMENT is currently in development with support from City Center Ballet, Dance Initiative, Dance NYC, the Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography (MANCC), New Music USA, and The Yard.

<p>Jenna Pollack In Residence: August 17 - August 31</p>
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Jenna Pollack is an international freelance choreographer, performer, and educator whose creative practice spans the realms of dance, theatre, engineering, film, site, and cultural organizing. Her choreographic inquiries broadly explore the poetics of purpose and the purpose of play. Her work is held by a wider practice

in support of a more sustainable arts ecosystem at the intersection of performance, institutional dramaturgy, and distributed leadership. Pollack offers embodied practices for physical listening, reflexive imagination, rigorous play, and the mobilization of community.

At the core of Pollack's work is a commitment to collaboration. This summer at The Yard, she brings together a diverse group of eight collaborators to embark on a new creative process. They come from the realms of dance, film, performance art, engineering, and sound design.

This residency will be the first time this group of eight has worked on the same project, and their relationship to one another will provide the groundwork for creativity.

Details and more information about purchasing tickets to performances and public events will be released over the course of the summer. Visit dancetheyard.org to stay updated.

The Yard's 2021 summer season is supported in part by the Jerome A. and Estelle R. Newman Assistance Fund and an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. To find out more about how the National Endowment for the Arts grants impact individuals and communities, visit www.arts.gov.

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The Yard is a creation and performance platform for artists from around the globe. We offer exhilarating, wide-ranging, and educational arts experiences through performances, residencies, and community programs for all ages including in Martha's Vineyard schools. With programs on our campus in Chilmark and in partner locations across the island, we provide year-round opportunities for the Martha's Vineyard community to come together and be inspired. Please visit www.dancetheyard.org for more information.

SEED. GROW. REAP. REPEAT: THE NATURE OF THE YARD.

