

## Announcing The Dance Complex's 2018-2019 CATALYSTS Artists Performances



**Cambridge, MA- October 1st 2018:** The Dance Complex's 2018 CATALYSTS artists culminate their 8 month residency with performances January 12th,13th, 18th-20th, 25th and 26th. CATALYSTS artists-in-residence for the 2018-2019 season are modern dancer and educator, Ali Kenner Brodsky; professor emerita in the Studio for Interrelated Media at Massachusetts College of Art and Design, video artist, and founder of Dance Collective, Dawn Kramer; traditional Irish dance performer, choreographer, and educator, Rebecca McGowan; and youth advocate Hip Hop dancer, choreographer, and instructor, Aysha Upchurch.

This year's CATALYSTS are diverse in style, expansive in their impact through their arts practice, and are dedicated to the continued growth and development of their craft. Collectively, their work addresses history and home, the search for a sense of belonging, and the fragility of mortality - individually reflective of their unique experiences. Artists are selected as much for their budding and established talents as they are for their individual self-motivation in making dance happen in their unique ways.

Through this rigorous residency program, The Dance Complex provides artists-in-residence with hundreds of hours of studio space, mentor and peer feedback opportunities, and additional choreographic skill and arts administration development to assist the creation and producing of the CATALYSTS artists' work.

Tickets \$13-21 when purchased in advance. Tickets and more information available at [dancecomplex.org](http://dancecomplex.org). Artists are presenting in rotating repertory, with schedule and guest artists to be announced soon.

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Colleen Walsh Cecchi, Communications Manager

[colleen@dancecomplex.org](mailto:colleen@dancecomplex.org)

## The Dance Complex's 2018-2019 CATALYSTS

### More About The Artists

#### Ali Kenner Brodsky

Ali Kenner Brodsky, the artistic director of ali kenner brodsky & co., makes work that is gesturally rich and thoughtfully crafted. She served as rehearsal director for and danced with national touring company Lostwax Multimedia Dance under the direction of Jamie Jewett from 2012-2015, and has performed with Andy Russ, Jessica Howard, Rose Pasquarello-Beauchamp, Betsy Miller Dance Projects, Emma Hogarth and with 83 paperbirds-moving lab. Kenner Brodsky was a 2016 Emerging Choreographer in Residence at Bates Dance Festival and the 2014 recipient of the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts (RISCA) Choreography Fellowship. From 2003-2004 she was an artist-in-residence at The Joyce SoHo under the mentorship of Phyllis Lamhut. She has also received support from the New England Foundation for the Arts (New England State Touring Artist and New England Dance Fund).

Her work has been performed throughout New York City at venues including Joyce SoHo, the Puffin Room, DanceNow Festivals, Dance Space, WAX, Dixon Place, Judson Church and Dumbo Dance Festival, and in New England at Bates Dance Festival, The Wilbury Theater Group, The Dance Complex, AS220, The Jamestown Arts Center, The Great Friends Festival, Provincetown Dance Festival, Massachusetts Dance Festival, Southern Vermont Dance Festival and Dance for Peace. She has also designed movement for various plays at The Wilbury Theater Group including Spring Awakening (Motif Magazine awarded Best Musical & Choreographed Number), Church and Pirates of Penzance, or slave of duty (nominated Best Choreography 2018 by Motif Magazine).

Kenner Brodsky has had the privilege of collaborating with Providence band Brown Bird and MorganEve Swain on original compositions for her work, as well as with graphic artist Cyrus Highsmith on original art design. She has been on adjunct dance faculty at Salve Regina University and Dean College, and has been a guest choreographer for both schools, as well as for Skidmore College and Providence College. She graduated with honors in dance from Skidmore College. A Rhode Island native, Kenner Brodsky makes home in Dartmouth, Mass with her husband, two children and five chickens.

#### Dawn Kramer

A professor emerita in the Studio for Interrelated Media at Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Dawn Kramer is a founder of Dance Collective which she co-directed for thirty years, creating and/or performing in approximately seventy works. In 2014, Boston Dance Alliance awarded her a Dance Champion award, with her fellow co-directors of Dance Collective. In 2012, the Massachusetts Cultural Council awarded Dawn an Artist Fellowship in Choreography, the sixth fellowship that the Commonwealth has awarded her since she established her career base in Boston. Dawn also received grants and awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the LEF Foundation, the French Ministry of Culture for a residency at the La Napoule Art Foundation in France, the Bogliasco Foundation for a residency in Italy, and the MassArt Foundation for making silent video/movement poems in temple gardens in Kyoto. Kramer's choreography has appeared on 15' high scaffolding (Pipe Dream) and vast rope nets (After Ever), in sites as varied as the Back Bay Train Station and the stairway of the Boston Public Library. Her work has been performed at Jacob's Pillow, Dance Theatre Workshop in NYC, and in Holland, Belgium, Germany, and France as well as throughout New England. Dawn's videos have been shown by WGBH-TV, the NY Dance on Camera Festival, and in Paris.

Since 2007, Kramer and Stephen Buck have been collaborating on pieces involving live performance and video projections on the performers. Body of Water explored the beauty and fragility of water via installation of six silent video/movement poems, and live performances by Kramer in a video projection environment. Cracking and Entanglementt, presented by the Cambridge Science Festival and Cyberarts, used video projections on the performer(s) to reflect on the nature of choice, the relationship of body to self and gender, and to question the idea of the self as a solid, separate reality. Connection is a pervasive theme in Dawn's work that envisions the human being as a non-dominant, integrated part of Nature. <http://dawnkramer.info>

Dawn is the proud parent of Adam and Amber and delighted grandmother of five.

#### Rebecca McGowan

Rebecca McGowan performs, choreographs, and teaches traditional Irish dance. With a strong foundation in traditional step-dancing, her dancing also draws on the musicality of older-style and sean-nós dance, the grace of soft shoe, and the joy of

American and Irish social dance traditions. Rebecca is recipient of a 2017 Artist Fellowship from the Somerville Arts Council, and a 2017 Next Steps for Boston Dance grant (with duet partner Jackie O'Riley) from the Aliad Fund and the Boston Foundation. She began step dancing as a child in the Boston area with Clare Sullivan, and later with Kieran Jordan and the Culkin School. Rebecca has been on faculty at Catskills Irish Arts Week, Pinewoods Camp, and CCE Musical Arts and Dance Week, and directs a non-competitive step dancing program for children and adults.

Veronica Barron creates and performs exuberant interdisciplinary theater. As a puppeteer, she tours with Kid Koala's Nufonia Must Fall, a live puppetry-cinema-string-quartet-DJ show directed by K.K. Barrett (Guadalajara International Film Festival; Walker Arts Center; & others). With Liars and Believers, she co-developed two full-length theater works, ICARUS and Who Would Be King, performing as an actor, puppeteer, and singer (Off-Broadway: New York Musical Theater Festival & Ars Nova; Oberon @A.R.T.). She has acted with Huntington Theatre Company & Central Square Theater, and composed original vocal music for Central Square Theater and Whistler in the Dark Theater. Her original short Winning Higgins's Love: A Clown Tragedy was presented at First Night Boston and Outside the Box. Her knowledge of American history has grown through working as a Freedom Trail historical guide, and developing her own Women's History Tour through Brookline Adult & Community Education. Veronica holds a BFA in Theater Arts from Boston University.

Julia Friend is a banjo player and ballad singer who performs in coffee houses around New England and the mid-Atlantic. Julia is passionate about music-making as a social activity that strengthens communities. She is a founding organizer of Youth Traditional Song Weekend (youthtradsong.org), now in its 6th year of cultivating the next generation of singers and leaders in traditional folk songs, singing styles, and their cultural contexts. She co-authored the Folk Sing Starter Kit for the Country Dance and Song Society, a 100-year-old nonprofit specializing in dances, music, and songs from English and North American traditions. She has recorded a ballad as part of the Heritage Muse Digital Child Ballad Project, and performed at the Old Songs Festival, Eisteddfod Festival of Traditional Music, the New England Folk Festival, Richmond Town Restoration, and others.

### **Aysha Upchurch**

Aysha Upchurch, *the Dancing Diplomat*, identifies as a seed planter, soil agitator, and curious and passionate artist. Professionally, this translates to her working as a dancer, choreographer, instructor and education consultant who is committed to social inclusion, artistry development, and transformative education.

Youth advocacy and Hip Hop culture runs throughout her work as an artist and educator. While based out of Washington, DC, she founded and directed the award-winning dance ensemble, Life, Rhythm, Move Project. In 2007, she was commissioned by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing arts to create *Am I On?*, evening-length Hip Hop work that explored the space between youth and adult voices, standardized testing, and school shootings. The work exemplified her commitment to use Hip Hop dance to entertain, educate, and empower. Aysha and her company went on to win two Metro DC Dance Awards for the innovative work that used youth interviews as part of the score. Her work also led to a performance at the White House and her selection as a US State Department Cultural Envoy in Dance in Bolivia, Honduras and Guatemala.

Aysha holds an M.A. in International Peace and Conflict Resolution from American University, and blending this with her training and Advanced Youth Development, she designs and facilitates conflict resolution workshops for youth. She has been on faculty at George Mason University, Howard Community College, Harvard University, and Salem State University – the latter being only the second college to allow dance majors to concentrate in Hip Hop. She received her Ed.M from the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE), where she has served as Teaching Fellow and Project Zero Classroom faculty member. As a current Visiting Practitioner in Education there, she was the inaugural Artist-in-Residence with the Arts in Education program, exploring the pedagogical implications of cross-disciplinary artistic collaboration, community dance cyphers, and Hip Hop pedagogy. And this fall at HGSE, Aysha will join the faculty and launch HipHopEX - a collaborative lab for high school and graduate student to experience, explore, and experiment with Hop Hop arts in education.