

AWE AND WONDER

TURNING POINT SCHOOL, CULVER CITY



4 CHOREOGRAPHERS INSPIRED BY THE WORK OF 4 SCIENTISTS

AUBRE HILL
WILFRIED SOULY
DONNA STERNBERG
TAI WHITE

YAJIE ZHAO
SHRIKANTH NARAYANAN
DAVID NELSON
AIICHIRO NAKANO

NOVEMBER 16 & 17, 2024

ABOUT AWE AND WONDER

"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science."

Albert Einstein

My work has been inspired by science for over 19 years and I have worked with a number of scientists over that time period. The genesis for Awe and Wonder emerged from the first art and science session of the Djerassi Resident Artists Program, a month-long retreat in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

I am very interested in how other choreographers approach dance making and how that is manifested through different cultural lenses. It is fascinating for me to see how that plays out in working with scientists. This is the sixth iteration of Awe and Wonder, and it is my intent to continue presenting this program. I was most fortunate to assemble the choreographers and scientists that are on this program. I hope that you find this program as intriguing as I do. With this in mind, I would love to hear your feedback, so please talk to me, on Instagram, facebook, or email us. I want to know how this performance has impacted you.

Dana Sternberg

Artistic Director

ABOUT DONNA STERNBERG & DANCERS

Celebrating its 39th year in 2024, DS&D is a non-profit interdisciplinary dance company. Our mission is to discover, transform, connect. DS&D uses contemporary dance to discover connections between dance, science and humankind. We connect scientific inquiry and discovery to human life, opening new areas of awareness and plumbing the emotional and psychological aspects of STEM. We work collaboratively with scientists, artists, organizations, and other key stakeholders to enrich arts ecosystems and expand community engagement, guided by the belief that learning is a life-long pursuit. At its core we strive to elicit awe and wonder through experiential and participatory events. We celebrate the differences as well as the commonality of artists, audiences and associates as a means to fulfill our mission to transform through discovery. DS&D has premiered over 95 works, including 12 full-length performances throughout California and Mexico. The company has been presented in both traditional and non-traditional venues and in 2016 performed at the Venice Biennale in Venice, Italy. DS&D has received funding from state and local governments, corporations, foundations and individuals.

CONNECT WITH US

- DS&D is available for master classes, workshops and educational programs. Email us at contact@dsdancers.com
- Donna Sternberg, Artistic Director, is available for talks and presentations on the nexus of dance and science.
- Volunteer and be part of our team!
- [Sign up](#) for our [email list](#) and receive notifications of performances, events and specials
- Follow us on social media! Facebook [@DSdances](#) & Instagram [@ds.dancers](#)

SUPPORT US

DS&D is a non-profit organization dedicated to sharing our passion for discovery and love of movement. Many of our performances are free to the public, enabling audiences to see us without any economic barriers. Through our life-long learning programs we provide a wide range of programs to audiences of all ages with the belief that learning is a life-long joy and pursuit.

Your support will enable us to continue our programming and expand into new communities. Tax-deductible contributions can be made quickly and safely on our website, www.dsdancers.com or contact Alaya at contact@dsdancers.com.

GRATITUDE

This performance is made possible by grants from the City of Culver City, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, and DS&D donors. Thank you.

Special thanks to Julia Yzaguirre and Turning Point school, Chris Bradford, Susan Kawashima, Alaya Oni and all the participants of the program.

PROGRAM

Please join us for a post-performance discussion with the
choreographers and scientists

Artistic Director: Donna Sternberg

Lighting Designer/Technical Director: Evan Nie

Sound and Video Technician: Mike Grimm

Graphic Design: Alaya Oni

Clean Energy?

Choreographer: Tai Ryan

Scientist: Aiichiro Nakano

Video Artist and Science Consultant: Ken-Ishi Nomura

Story Consultant, Composition, Historical Consultant, Classical Pianist:
Makiko Hirata

Music: Ludwig Goransson, Queen, Shiro SAGISU, Ravel

Costumes: Try23 Designs

Dancers: Tai Ryan White, Teaya Smith, Aryah Mcvay

To Look, Feel, Be

Choreographer: Aubre Hill

Scientist: Yajie Zhao

Music: Joseph Tawadros, Anouar Brahem

Dancers: Qabila Dance Company: Belen Garibaldi, Imari Rose, Preena
Chand, Wendolin Ortiz, Alia Gamal (Sunday only), Aubre Hill (Sunday only)

INTERMISSION

translAltion

Choreographer: Wilfried G Souly, in collaboration with the performer

Scientist: Shrikanth Narayanan

Video Design: Xochitl Loco

Music: Lost by Orange Blossom (remix by W Souly), Tanasim Pt 3 by trio Joubran.

Costumes: Xochitl Loco & W Souly

Dancer: Xochitl Loco

"translAltion" is a solo dance piece that investigates the intricacies of embodied knowledge as a means to communicate. The performer develops a unique dance vocabulary as a political act to discuss themes such as Vulnerability, Accountability and Resilience in the use of Artificial Intelligence".

Thanks: Donna Sternberg & Dancers, UCLA WAC/Dance, Dance Resource Center, Fusion Performing Dance Academy, PiYoda Flow.

Performer bio: Xochitl Loco is a visual and performing artist and educator from the Long Beach area who is passionate about connecting with others through dance. Xochitl is in the process of earning a M.F.A. in Choreographic Inquiry at UCLA after achieving a B.A. in Film and Creative Writing from UC Berkeley. As a queer Chicanx storyteller and choreographer, Xochitl is interested in bringing to light experiences of underrepresented communities and healing trauma through movement. Realizing the importance of arts education, Xochitl has led dance enrichment workshops for students of Long Beach Unified School District through Dramatic Results, and Newport-Mesa Unified School District through Jose Costas Contempo Ballet.

MAYA

“Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one” Albert Einstein

Choreographer: Donna Sternberg in collaboration with the dancers

Scientist: David Nelson

Video/digital artist: Michael J. Masucci

Music: Minassian, De Kadt, Ramzy, Hauschka, Tagap, Ambient Noise

Dancers: Rebecca Aguilar, Alexandria Paige Amstutz, Robert Huerta,
Anna Kazwell, Allyssa Milligan



CHOREOGRAPHERS

Aubre Hill is an international dance artist, choreographer, educator, and producer. She has toured the world through dance, been highlighted in numerous films and projects, and is committed to advocacy through dance. The Artistic Director of the Qabila Project and Dance Company, she is a strong advocate for Arabic culture and building community through movement. She is the president of Dance For Palestine, a collective of dance artists for collective liberation. She has directed numerous dance companies in theater productions as well as cultural events, trained a generation of dancers and was on the faculty at California State University, Los Angeles. She owned and directed Movement Art Space, a dance and fitness studio in Los Angeles offering education for all ages. Aubre has choreographed dance theatrical productions including The Nutcracker, Sketches of Arabia, Nights of Arabe, and most recently Bayt~Home, a celebration of SWANA dance exploring the concept of home and belonging. She holds an MA in Arts Management from Claremont Graduate University.

Wilfried Souly is a choreographer, dancer, drummer, and Taekwondo expert originally from Burkina Faso, West Africa. Trained in both African traditional and contemporary dance, Wilfried co-founded Compagnie Tâ and has performed and co-choreographed works across the globe, including a standout piece showcased at the Great Barbican Centre in London. Since moving to Los Angeles in 2007, he's collaborated with top artists and companies like Baker & Tarpaga Dance Project, Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre, and Viver Brasil. Wilfried's work spans powerful themes of identity, social justice, and cultural connection, with notable performances at the REDCAT NOW Festival and the Africa in America Festival. Beyond dance, Wilfried is also an accomplished martial artist, winning multiple international Taekwondo and Kung Fu competitions. His multidisciplinary approach continues to inspire and energize audiences worldwide.

Donna Sternberg, Artistic Director for Donna Sternberg & Dancers, has professionally premiered over 100 works since 1975 throughout the United States, Europe, Canada and Mexico; frequently collaborating with artists of other disciplines as well as scientists. Her work has been commissioned by institutions such as the California Science Center, festivals, schools and dance companies. She participated in the 2016 Venice Biennale, was chosen for the first artist/science residency at Djerassi, received the Artist-in-Community award from the Santa Monica Arts Foundation, is featured in the documentary LA Woman, published in the journal Leonardo (MIT Press), featured on KCET's Life and Times program and is the recipient of numerous grants.

Tai Ryan White is a dynamic choreographer, creative director, and movement coach based in Los Angeles. Originally from New York and raised in St. Petersburg, FL, Tai discovered his passion for dance at age 3. Overcoming health challenges as a teenager, dance became his driving force, leading him to train with top talent and work with renowned artists like Beyoncé, John Legend, Kanye West, JHope, and more.

Tai's work is inspired by global solidarity, faith, and purpose. He has shared his craft internationally, from Nigeria to South America, and continues to teach, mentor, and create impactful choreography across the globe. Tai believes in using art as a tool for change, driven by love and spirituality. His latest project, It's Working, reflects his vision of hope amid life's challenges, offering a message of resilience and purpose.

SCIENTISTS

Aiichiro Nakano is a Professor of Computer Science with joint appointments in Physics & Astronomy, Quantitative & Computational Biology, and Collaboratory for Advanced Computing and Simulations at University of Southern California (USC). He received his Ph.D. in physics from University of Tokyo, Japan, in 1989. He has authored 505 refereed articles in the areas of scalable scientific algorithms, scientific visualization and machine learning, and computational materials science. He is a recipient of National Science Foundation Career Award (1997), Louisiana State University (LSU) Alumni Association Faculty Excellence Award (1999), LSU College of Basic Sciences Award of Excellence in Graduate Teaching (2000), Best Paper Award at IEEE/ACM Supercomputing Conference (2001), Best Paper at IEEE Virtual Reality Conference (2002), Okawa Foundation Faculty Research Award (2003), USC Viterbi School of Engineering Senior Research Award (2012), Best Paper Award at IEEE PDSEC Workshop (2013), U.S. Department of Energy, Aurora Supercomputer Early Science Program Award (2017), and Best Paper Award at ACM HPCAsia Conference (2020). He is a Fellow of the American Physical Society and a member of IEEE, ACM and MRS.

Shrikanth (Shri) Narayanan is University Professor and holder of the Niki and Max Nikias Chair in Engineering at the University of Southern California (USC) and serves as the inaugural Vice President for Presidential Initiatives on the Senior Leadership Team of USC's President. He is a Professor in the Signal and Image Processing Institute of USC's Ming Hsieh Electrical & Computer Engineering department with joint appointments as Professor in Computer Science, Linguistics, Psychology, Neuroscience, Pediatrics and Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery. He is also the inaugural director of the Ming Hsieh Institute, a Research Director for the Information Sciences Institute at USC and a Visiting Faculty Researcher at Google. He held the inaugural Viterbi Professorship in Engineering at USC (2007-2016). He was also a Research Area Director of the Integrated Media Systems Center, an NSF Engineering Research Center at USC, and was the Research Principal for the USC Pratt and Whitney Institute for Collaborative Engineering, a unique partnership between academia and industry (2003-2007).

David Nelson is the Director of Mixed Reality Research and Development at USC's Institute for Creative Technologies. He has been engaged in research efforts on immersive user experience design, adaptive user interfaces, the power of storytelling to improve learning, imagining the Naval workplace of the future, and innovative mixed reality applications training Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Victim Advocates for the Army SHARP Academy. Nelson has worked in collaboration with ARL-West, USC's Rossier School of Education, the Viterbi School of Engineering, as well as USC's School of Cinematic Arts, leading a research effort on the emerging 'Language of Immersion' and its impact on the future of storytelling. From 2016 to 2019, Nelson served as Lead Advisor at Sony Pictures Entertainment for their Summer Innovation Program and served as the Lead Advisor to the premier 20th Century Fox Innovation Lab. Nelson is an awardwinning Producer/Director, having created content in the arenas of feature films, documentaries, music videos and commercials. He is a recipient of a Hugo Award for Excellence in Television Documentary and has studied the art of storytelling for more than 20 years. David Nelson's expertise in creating engaging immersive content for training, education and entertainment is applicable across many domains.

Yajie Zhao is a Research Assistant Professor in the Computer Science Department at the University of Southern California (USC) and the acting director of the Vision and Graphics Lab (VGL) at USC-ICT. She received her Bachelor's degree in Computer Science from Xi'an Jiaotong University in 2011 and her Ph.D. degree in 2017 from the University of Kentucky. Yajie's research interests lie in high-quality 3D content creation, including human digitization, performance capturing, and scene reconstruction/understanding. She currently leads the VGL in research efforts towards high-resolution human face/body 3D representation, neural rendering, and human/scene-related applications in VR/AR. Yajie serves as a reviewer and editor for CVPR, ICCV, ECCV, ICLR, SIGGRAPH; is the program chair of IEEE AIVR 2022 and 2024; and an Editorial Board member of the journal "Creating Lifelike Digital Humans." Yajie's research is currently supported by DARPA, ONR, IARPA, Sony, Nvidia, Meta, Apple, and Zoom.

DONNA STERNBERG & DANCERS

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DONNA STERNBERG

MANAGING DIRECTOR

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