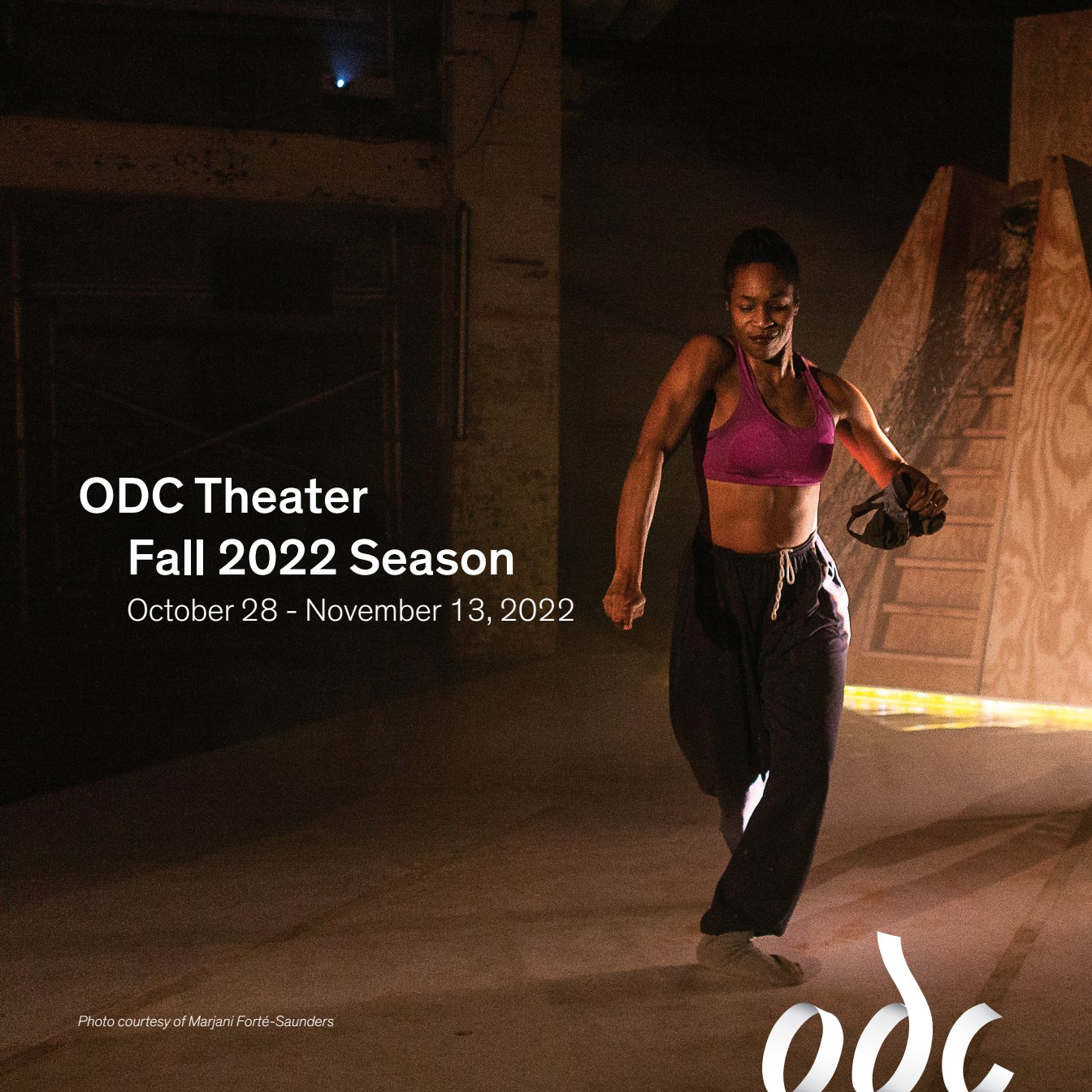


ODC Theater
Fall 2022 Season
October 28 - November 13, 2022

Photo courtesy of Marjani Forté-Saunders

odc

A Note from

CHLOË L. ZIMBERG Creative Director, ODC Theater

Welcome to ODC Theater's fall season, curated by amara tabor-smith and Charles Slender-White. These are three weeks of not-to-be-missed repertory works that draw on African Diasporic art, ritual, and spirituality, as well as wild and mythic fantasy to deconstruct notions of love, warriorship, and fear.

Experimental performance artist Sage Ni'Ja Whitson | The NWA Project kicks us off with *A Meditation on Tongues*. The work will use the ODC Theater space in inventive ways to layer histories, ritual, performance, and (re)imagination of Black and Queer masculinities.

The following weekend, Marjani Forté-Saunders | 7NMS brings *Memoirs of a…Unicorn* to the Bay Area in a co-presentation with CounterPulse, Museum of the African Diaspora, and ODC Theater. Leading up to the performances, you can join us at CounterPulse for a screening of Marjani's accompanying film *BLUEPRINT* and at MoAD for a discussion with Marjani, amara, and artist Trina Robinson.

We are thrilled to wrap with Bianca Cabrera of Blind Tiger Society, who continues in developing her work from our State of Play festival to bring the evening length premiere of *Fever Dreams* on a split bill with *Piece X Piece* by Rosanna Tavarez/LA DANSA DANSA, which was rescheduled from the June festival.

Photo by Anna Rose Warren

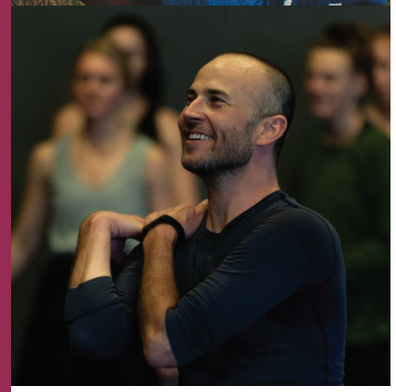
On each Saturday night performance, we will host a young patrons affinity night. Invite a friend to share in groundbreaking art. Join us in cultivating the next wave of live art lovers. All are invited to make ODC Theater the first stop on their night out and to celebrate with us the artists, their work, and our community partnerships.

I am grateful to amara tabor-smith and Charles Slender-White for their continued curatorial guidance as this year has unfolded. When I initially engaged each of them as guest curators I emphasized that part of their selection was based on my trust that we could navigate the unknown together and that they would be thought partners in moments of adaptation. Many such moments occurred. Their collective grace and the grace of the artists they chose to present has persistently stricken me as both a vision and manifestation of what ODC Theater continues to strive to be: an ever-more artist centered organization.

We continue to invite your feedback and voice as we endeavor to grow and change. To connect with ODC Theater, write to us at **theater@odc.dance**. In the meantime, I look forward to seeing you at the theater for some truly remarkable art.

Warmly,

Chloë L. Zimberg
Creative Director, ODC Theater



amara tabor-smith by Jean Melesaine
Charles Slender-White by Robbie Sweeny

Joint Curatorial Statement
by amara tabor-smith and Charles Slender-White

"An artist is a sort of emotional or spiritual historian. (Their) role is to make you realize the doom and glory of knowing who you are and what you are. (They) have to tell, because nobody else can tell what it is like to be alive". – James Baldwin

What does it mean to curate a season of dance and performance amidst an on-going pandemic, a relentless drought, and a time of social and political volatility? What is the purpose of live performance and what does it have the potential to do?

When we came together as two dance artists rooted in the Bay Area, Charles in San Francisco and amara in Oakland, we didn't really know each other well. Through a series of conversations, though, we realized that we both shared a feeling of being overwhelmed by and depressed about our socio-political context, and a vision for how things might be different. We talked for hours about the field of dance, and about how we are still navigating our own challenges of making work. We talked about ODC Theater, about racism and privilege, and about wanting to raise the visibility of queer and BIPOC artists who we felt were making phenomenal art. We talked about performances that blew us away, and we thought about how this could be an opportunity to bring together a group of local and visiting artists whose work excites us, whose work we have long admired, and who we thought would be extraordinary for Bay Area audiences to experience.

Our 2022 ODC Theater season is a significant shift towards curation through a collaboration rooted in us getting to know each other, listening to what we each felt was important at this moment in time, and ultimately a collective desire to invite artists who we think have important and powerful voices, and whose work values community, people, and engagement.

The artists presented in this season range in their areas of interest, perspectives, and aesthetics. If there is a unifying theme in our curated season, it is that these artists are creating work that we feel will provide much needed breath, hope, and inspiration to move through this moment in time that we all find ourselves in. It is our hope that you too will experience the work in this way, being reminded as James Baldwin said, "…what it is like to be alive."

In the Spirit of NOW,
amara tabor-smith and Charles Slender-White

Fall Season at ODC Theater

Sage Ni'Ja Whitson | The NWA Project: ***A Meditation on Tongues***
Friday-Saturday, October 28-29, 2022 at 7:30pm
Sunday, October 30, 2022 at 5:00pm
ASL is offered on Saturday, October 29, 2022 and additional wheelchair seating is offered on Sunday October 30, 2022.

Marjani Forté-Saunders | 7NMS: ***Memoirs of a... Unicorn***
Friday-Saturday, November 4-5, 2022 at 7:30pm
Sunday, November 6, 2022 at 5:00pm
ASL is offered on Saturday, November 5, 2022 and additional wheelchair seating is offered on Sunday November 6, 2022.

Rosanna Tavarez / LA DANSA DANSA: ***Piece X Piece & Bianca Cabrera/Blind Tiger Society: Fever Dreams***
Friday-Saturday, November 11-12, 2022 at 7:30pm
Sunday, November 13, 2022 at 5:00pm
ASL is offered on Saturday, November 12, 2022 and additional wheelchair seating is offered on Sunday November 13, 2022.

To learn more about our full 2022 Season at ODC Theater, please visit **odc.dance/theaterseason**

Individual Tickets to ODC Theater Presents*

In person

Arts Access	$0-$20.00
General	$40.00
Supporter	$100.00

Season Pass

General	$100.00
Supporter	$250.00

Digital Encores

Digital Encores for Marjani Forté-Saunders | 7NMS: *Memoirs of a... Unicorn* and Rosanna Tavarez / LA DANSA DANSA: Piece X Piece & Bianca Cabrera/ Blind Tiger Society: *Fever Dreams* will be available on **ODC Connect** November 18 - December 2, 2022.

ODC Theater is excited to welcome the public back for live performances. Fully vaccinated status is required for everyone on ODC's campus. We ask that you show your physical vaccination card, a photo of your card, or your digital vaccination QR code with your photo ID upon arrival at ODC Dance Commons or ODC Theater. Face masks are mostly optional indoors, including common spaces, studios, and theaters. Face masks are required in certain circumstances, including certain classes, performance events, or other activities. Check individual event and class pages for the most up to date information regarding mask requirements. For up to date information, please visit ***odc.dance/reopening.***

Learn more and purchase tickets at odc.dance/fallseason

Photo by Angel Origgi

ASL is offered on Saturday, October 29, 2022 and additional wheelchair seating is offered on Sunday, October 30, 2022

SAGE NI'JA WHITSON | THE NWA PROJECT: *A MEDITATION ON TONGUES*

OCTOBER 28-29, 7:30PM
OCTOBER 30, 5:00PM

A Meditation on Tongues is a live interdisciplinary adaptation of Marlon T. Riggs' iconic *Tongues Untied* (1989). Part abstract, part performance ritual, part live and historical document, this rigorously layered interdisciplinary project (re)images Black and Queer masculinities. It struts. It snaps. It frames new questions about loss at the height of the AIDS pandemic, while challenging constructions of Black love of/ as revolution. A bold deconstruction of Riggs' collectivist aesthetics and a raw invocation that shape shifts gender, sexuality, and the body, *A Meditation on Tongues*, remixes historic and embodied invisibilities, spilling between the spaces of mourning and celebration.

Photo by Scott Shaw

Company/Artist Bio:

Sage Ni'Ja Whitson (NY/LA) is a multi award-winning Queer Trans/mogrifier Nonbinary artist and futurist. They are a United States Artist Fellow, Creative Capital and two-time "Bessie" Awardee who engages transdisciplinarity through a critical intersection of the sacred and conceptual in Black, Queer, and Transembodiedness. Whitson is an 18th Street Artist in Residence (Los Angeles), 2020-2023 New York Live Feed Artist in Residence, featured choreographer of the 2018 CCA Biennial, 2018-2020 Urban Bush Women Choreographic Center Fellow, and invited presenter at the 2019 Tanzkongress international festival. Residencies and fellowships include Center for Performance Research, Jerome/Camargo, Dance in Process at Gibney, Hedgebrook, Movement Research, Bogliasco Fellowship with commissions including St. Mark's Church at Danspace, American Realness and Vision festivals, EMPAC, and the California African American Museum.

ASL is offered on Saturday, November 5, 2022 and additional wheelchair seating is offered on Sunday, November 6, 2022.

MARJANI FORTÉ-SAUNDERS | 7NMS: *MEMOIRS OF A... UNICORN*

NOVEMBER 4-5, 7:30PM
NOVEMBER 6, 5:00PM

Memoirs of a...Unicorn weaves performance, sound, and media to ritualistically remember, interrogate, and relish in the "Unicorns" of the artist's life. Occupying roles like Father, Husband, Brother, Son, Uncle, Cousin, Homie, Pahtna, and Fam, these powerful figures merge with images of the magical creature that is full of mercurial passion, timelessness, and fortitude. *Unicorn* was spurred by stories from Marjani Forté-Saunders' father's life and came from an urgent need to thicken the common and seemingly inhumane narratives of Black People. These narratives were intersectional for the artist as the mother of a son, so *Memoirs of a… Unicorn* unveils the celestial ecliptic journeys of folks identifying with—and building legacies within—the spectrums of blackness, maleness, and womb-ness. It is a three-time NY Dance & Performance/Bessie Award winning project and and was last presented in Berlin, Germany at Sophiensaele, a co-commissioner for ***BLUEPRINT*** (the *Memoirs of a... Unicorn* ilm that gives an inside look into the making of the stage work and family-line, and is a reinterpretation of the piece, focusing on questions like, "what was your flight pattern?" (i.e., how'd you get to be so fly?) and "what was your blueprint for becoming?".).

This collaboration between ODC Theater and Marjani Forté-Saunders was made possible in part by the Association of Performing Arts Professionals Arts*Forward* program, generously supported by The Mellon Foundation, to aid the presenting and touring field's safe, vibrant, and equitable reopening and recovery.

Photo courtesy of Marjani Forté-Saunders

Screening of *BLUEPRINT*

CounterPulse
Tuesday November 1, 2022
6:30pm
odc.dance/counterpulse

Public Discussion

Museum of the African Diaspora
with Marjani Forté-Saunders, Trina Robinson, and amara tabor-smith
Wednesday, November 2, 2022
6:30pm
odc.dance/moad

This work is co-presented by CounterPulse and The Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD).

Company/Artist Bio:

Marjani Forté-Saunders is a mother, choreographer, performer, and organizer. She is a 2021 Dance Magazine Harkness Awardee, a 2020 recipient of the Foundation of Contemporary Arts Grants for Artists Award. Her work as an artist and organizer is informed by years in anti-racist training with the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond and as a lead facilitator with UBW's Builders Organizers and Leaders through Dance. Anchored in a steady collaboration with partner and composer **Everett Asis Saunder**s, the duo has emerged as **7NMS (seven names)**, currently developing their latest work, PROPHET. They are also founding directors of ART & POWER (2018), a platform and conduit dedicated to Black Radical Experimentalists, driven by purpose and innovation.

Artist: Shar[illegible]

ROSANNA TAVAREZ / LA DANSA DANSA: *PIECE X PIECE* & BIANCA CABRERA/ BLIND TIGER SOCIETY: *FEVER DREAMS*

NOVEMBER 11-12, 7:30PM
NOVEMBER 13, 5:00PM

ASL is offered on Saturday, November 12, 2022 and additional wheelchair seating is offered on Sunday, November 13, 2022.

Piece X Piece presents Tavarez's mother's immigration story to explore the challenges of transitioning from one territory to a drastically new one. It toggles between the escapist, rags-to-riches fantasy narratives of telenovelas and the heartbreaking reality of the immigrant experience, utilizing sewing as a metaphor for the deconstruction of "The American Dream".

Fever Dreams is a ritualistic rave and dizzying dance spectacle based on Mexican folk Artist Pedro Linares' Cartoneria known as Alebrije. Dancers transform into Linares' mythical creatures who are as loud and unapologetic as the hallucinations that sired them. Wild, sensuous and eerie movements are the backbone of these birds of paradise and in an incantation of color and canción, they haunt the space with stories of longing, lust and looming fears.

Photo by Angel Origgi

Company/Artist Bio:

Rosanna Tavarez received an MFA in Choreography from The Ohio State University and a BFA in Choreography from University of Michigan. She has a diverse background as a performer/entertainer and has had the honor of working with Marina Ambramovic, Ryan Heffington, Travis Payne, Tony Michaels and Rosanna Gamson/Worldwide. She also toured with N'SYNC and Jessica Simpson as one-fifth of the girl group Eden's Crush and covered the Emmys, Grammys and Oscars in addition to hosting her own shows as a television personality for FOX, E!, TVGuide Network, and Telemundo/NBC.

As a dance educator, Tavarez is on faculty at CalArts Sharon Disney Lund School of Dance. She has taught as faculty and guest artist at numerous institutions including USC Kaufman School of Dance, University of Michigan, Loyola Marymount University, Scripps College, CalState Long Beach, Studio School, University of Southern Mississippi, Texas State University and Cal State LA. She is also a certified Countertechnique teacher and has had the pleasure of teaching the practice nationally and internationally.

Her work has been presented at The Broad Museum, American Dance Festival, REDCAT, Dance Camera West, The Odyssey, Breaking Ground Dance Festival, LA Department of Cultural Affair's LA Dance Platform, Sarasota Contemporary Dance and Highways Performance Space, and has been supported by CalState LA's Research, Scholarship and Creativity Awards, ARC grant from the Center for Cultural Innovation, UCLA Hothouse Residency and Show Box LA.

Bianca Cabrera/BlindTiger Society's work is driven by the bias Bacchus before Buddha and is built by a vibrant amalgamation of baton twirling, burlesque, ballet, go-go, club, cabaret, camp, contemporary and modern dance. Ferociously femme with an unquiet queerness, Blind Tiger Society is Cabrera's (she/they) main conduit through which she lets loose her Latina, creating song and dance that runs the gamut from graceful to gruesome; from refined to homespun. Between 2012-2022, Cabrera created 10 full length works and many more short works, with performances and commissions for The Garage, ODC Theater, ODC Youth Company, CounterPULSE, vîv dance collective, SAFEhouse Arts, the Seattle Inter|National Dance Festival, Links Hall/Midwest Nexus, RAW Concept Series, Ann Schnake/Mobile InTent, Yerba Buena Gardens ChoreoFest, Sheridan College, SweetPea Festival, CocoSpa and Kate Mitchell Creative. Cabrera's work was nominated for a 2014 Soul of Oakland award and has been supported through the Fleishhacker and Rainin Foundations.

Their two decade performing career includes work with many celebrated dance artists and companies including: Lingo Dance/KT Niehoff, Amii LeGendre, Kristen Tsiastios, Lou Henry Hoover, Kim Epifano, LevyDance, The Fossettes, Sonya Smith, Erika Tsimbrovsky/AvyK Productions, Flyaway Productions and Cielo Vertical Arts. Bianca is a founding member of Latinx Hispanix Danza Unidxs and served on the Isadora Duncan Dance Awards committee in 2019-20.

Accessibility Services

ASL will be provided for Saturday shows of the 2022 Fall Season. Additional Wheelchair seating will be available for Sunday shows of the 2022 Fall Season. Captioning will be provided for Digital Encores. Please see individual performance pages for details and dates. Please contact the ODC Box Office with accessibility requests or questions **boxoffice@odc.dance**.

Ramaytush Ohlone Land Tax Fund Donations

ODC is on the ancestral lands of the Ramaytush People in Yelamu. We pay respects to elders past and present, who are still here and part of our community. We recognize that regenerative land management is not new, but is a continuation of practices from Native cultures and from our own ancestors. It is our responsibility to steward the land ith care, as our elders did before us. ODC is donating $.50 for each in-person ticket (seat) sold to all performances in the Theater in 2022. ODC will donate these funds to the **Association of Raymaytush Ohlone** land tax fund. We encourage you to consider paying land tax donations, and to learn about the land where you reside by visiting **native-land.ca**.

Arts Access Ticketing

ODC is offering a limited number of lower-cost Art Access tickets to every ODC presented performance. These additionally subsidized tickets, available on a first come, first serve basis, are reserved for those for whom price is a barrier.

We know living in the Bay Area is expensive. We also highly value the art onstage and are invested in supporting the artists that create it. Ticket prices only cover a small fraction of the resources invested in the performance and we strive to make them as accessible as possible. Continued financial support through ticket purchases and charitable donations from people like you make Art Access tickets possible.

With any additional questions, do not hesitate to contact the ODC Box Office at **boxoffice@odc.dance**.

All ticket sales are final.

ODC Theater is generously supported by Anonymous, APAP ArtsForward Grants Program, CalOSBA, Fleishhacker Foundation, John and Marcia Goldman Foundation, Hearst Foundations, Hellman Foundation, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Sam Mazza Foundation, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, San Francisco Grants for the Arts, U.S. Small Business Administration, Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation, and our many individual donors.

Thank you to ODC Theater's community partners for supporting our fall season!

Opening Night Pre-Show Receptions

Subscribers and Supporter Level Ticket holders are invited to an Opening Night Pre-Show reception before each Friday Night performance. Open wine bar and light snacks provided.

From 6:00-7:00 pm

Young Patrons' Affinity Night

Saturday Night ticket holders are invited to mingle and enjoy our Young Patrons' Affinity Night, a festive post-show event with drinks from **Mezcal Amaras** and music. Then, continue the night out with a complimentary community discount package (valued at $50).

Photo courtesy of Mission Local

Photo by Sophie Leininger

SHOW

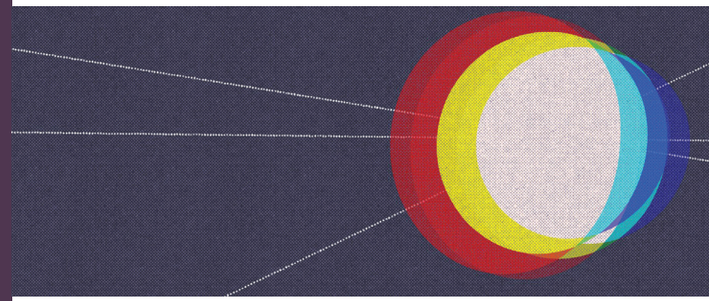
Dance Cast

Dance Cast is a podcast dedicated to critical conversations around all genres of dance. It's for dance insiders, dance lovers, and the dance curious. **Sima Belma**r talks with choreographers, dancers, educators, designers, presenters, bodyworkers, journalists, and scholars about dance theories and practices of yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Listen on Spotify, or read the transcripts at **odc.dance/stories**

LISTEN ON Spotify

odc.dance.stories



Dance dispatches from the most active center for contemporary dance on the West Coast.

odc.dance/stories

Dance Stories wants you writing and reading about live dance. Dance Stories is committed to publishing quality dance criticism of every production at ODC Theater, and supporting new and seasoned writers. Contact editor **Garth Grimball** if you're interested in writing for Dance Stories. Join Dance Stories in celebrating a year of dance writing on December 2, 2022 as part of ODC Theater's Lobby Nights.

Photo by Michael David Rose

Support ODC

ODC Theater exists to empower and develop innovative artists, but ticket sales cover just a portion of a show's total cost. In addition to joining us for our fall programming, your generous donation provides equitable space access and mentorship opportunities to those artists, and allows us to continue presenting dynamic in-person and virtual experiences to dance lovers everywhere.

Make a gift today at **odc.dance/support-theater**

Theater Rentals

Located in the heart of San Francisco's vibrant Mission District, ODC Theater is an innovative venue ready to suit your live and digital needs. The B.Way Theater exists to empower and develop innovative artists. It participates in the creation of new works through commissioning, presenting, mentorship and space access; it develops informed, engaged and committed audiences; and advocates for the performing arts as an essential component to the economic and cultural development of our community. This 171-seat venue is the site of over 150 performances a year involving nearly 1,000 local, regional, national and international artists. The B.Way Theater is a flexible venue able to accommodate your dance/theater/musical production, broadcast, keynote speakers, film or photo shoot, and more.

To learn more about producing your performance or building an event package at ODC Theater, please contact theater@odc.dance or visit **odc.dance/rentals**.

ODC Theater, 3153 17th St, San Francisco, CA

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To learn more about our full 2022 Season at ODC Theater, please visit **odc.dance/theaterseason**

For complete information, including tickets and pricing, visit **odc.dance/fallseason**

Photo by Elena Zhukova

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