



WELCOME HOME

Colleen Thomas Dance

September 16-18, 2016

Nolan Park, Building 10A
Governors Island, New York

Welcome Home

A site-specific dance work
performed by Colleen Thomas Dance

Welcome to our Nolan Park home! Let us give you a tour. We'll begin together on the first floor. Once you're up the stairs, we invite you to explore at will, and let your own journey unfold.

Cast and Crew

Direction: Colleen Thomas

Choreography: Colleen Thomas, with the performers

Design: Rebecca Makus

Production Assistant: Travis Seminara

Original music composition and Sound design: John McGrew

Video design: Jason Akira Somma

Photography and Super 8 Film: Jim Stephens

Costume Design: Rachel Jones Bellas

Dramaturgy: Adrian Silver

Administrative Assistance: Katherine Bergstrom

Performers: Samantha Allen, Oluwdamilare (Dare) Ayorinde, Keith Johnson, Saradiane (Sadi) Mosko, Pedro Osorio, Jessica Stroh, Kathy Stephens, Jim Stephens, Darrin Wright, Olivia Young, Dylan Young, Bill Young

Biographies

Colleen Thomas is a New York based choreographer and performing artist. She began her professional career with the Miami Ballet and went on to work with renowned contemporary choreographers such as The Kevin Wynn Collection, Nina Wiener Dance Company, Donald Byrd/The Group, Bebe Miller Dance Company, and Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company among others. In 1997 a creative collaboration with Bill Young evolved into a company focused on rigorous physicality and dynamic partnering. Their work has been seen throughout the U.S, Europe, Asia, and South America. Now interested in focusing on illuminating her vision of contemporary work, Thomas has formed Colleen Thomas Dance. Thomas has presented her work in Hong Kong, Estonia, Venezuela, Peru, Brazil, and Russia and in New York at Joyce Soho, Danspace Project, DTW, Dance New Amsterdam, The Miller Theater, Danny K. Playhouse, and The Kumble Arts Center, as well as at Cal State Long Beach, East Carolina University, and Minneapolis at the Ritz Theater, Southern Theater, and The New Guthrie.

Thomas is the co-director and a co-curator of the LIT series at 100 Grand. LIT supports the presentation of innovative work in an up-close and personal setting. The series showcases works by emerging artists who are bringing fresh ideas to the form, as well as established artists who are experimenting with new directions.

Thomas received her BA in psychology from SUNY Empire State College and her MFA in Dance from University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. She has been an adjunct faculty member at Long Island University's Brooklyn Campus, The New School, Barnard College, Skidmore College, and Bates College. She is currently an Associate Professor of Professional Practice at Barnard College of Columbia University.

Samantha Allen is a dancer and maker. As part of the Institut IDGAF, she makes live work and films with collaborators Devika Wickremesinghe and Chris Cascarano. She's also worked with choreographers in NYC and Chicago including Katie Workum, Julie Mayo, Yanira Castro, Buck Wanner, Jessie Young and others. She's thrilled to be dancing with Colleen Thomas again.

Oluwadamilare Ayorinde (Dare) is a graduate of Mason Gross School of The Arts. He currently dances in New York with Colleen Thomas, Bill Young, Kyle Marshall and has recently started a specific apprenticeship for Netta Yerushalmy. He is very excited to be performing this unique piece art with his fellow vibrant artists.

Rachel Jones Bellas has costumed dance and theater in New York City since 2007. Credits include Colleen Thomas Dance *Her(e) Repetitive Blueprint* and *Catching Her Tears*, Bluemouth Inc.'s *How Soon Is Now?* and *Death By Water*. She has also worked with Othershore in its premier performance at the Baryshnikov Arts Center, and Bill Young/Colleen Thomas and Dancers in their *LIT* series. Film credits include *Afterwords*, *Ana & Anthony in Love*, and *Drunk Parents*. She holds a BFA in fashion design from FIT and studied theater at Atlantic Acting School.

Originally from Minneapolis, **Katherine Bergstrom** is a New York City-based dance artist and arts administrator. She graduated cum laude from Columbia University with a B.A. in Dance and Psychology. Her choreography has been presented throughout New York City and in Paris. She explores the intersections of race, class, gender, and performance as a member of

Sydney L. Mosley Dances. She is a member of Dance/NYC/s Junior Committee of young dance advocates, and writes about dance on ptofcontact.com.

Keith Johnson is the director of Keith Johnson/Dancers. He danced with Creach /Koester, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, and Doug Varone and Dancers among others. He is a Professor at California State University, Long Beach.

Rebecca Makus holds an M.F.A. from the California Institute of the Arts and is an Associate Professor of Theatre and Performance Studies at Kennesaw State University in Atlanta, GA. Her international portfolio includes work at Lyon Opera Ballet, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Sibiu International Theatre Festival, Tramway in Glasgow, Manchester Metropolitan University, and Lancaster Institute for Contemporary Arts (LICA). Her NY dance work includes designs for Bill Young, Colleen Thomas and Dancers (*A Place in France*, *Life In Progress*, and *For Want*). Rebecca's Atlanta based work includes lighting and/or visual designs for choreographer's Ivan Pulinkala (*Pyromania*, *Rhizome*, *Road Kill*, and *Cocoon*), Lauri Stallings of gloATL (*Hippodrome*, *Vanguard* and *I May Just*) and John McFall with Atlanta Ballet (*Three*). She was honored to receive a Suzi Bass Award in 2015 for Best Lighting Design of a Play (*Marcus; or the Secret of Sweet* at Actors Express). Other Atlanta theatre designs include *Threepenny Opera* and *Inside, I at 7 Stages*, *Serial Black Face* at Actor's Express and an upcoming collaboration with the Alliance Theatre's Theatre for the Very Young. She recently received an NEA Artworks grant for her interactive installation *Ipomoea: the Urban Garden Within*. She is honored to collaborate on this amazing show.

John McGrew is a composer, singer, multi-instrumentalist, performer, and teacher currently residing in Brooklyn, NY. Over the past ten years, McGrew has worked as a composer in the dance and theatre world, creating and performing compositions for artists like Jack Ferver, Colleen Thomas & Bill Young, Judith Sanchez Ruiz, Tony Orrico, & Enrico Wey. In 2013, McGrew composed the theme music for the TED Talk conference, TED Talk: The Young. The Wise. The Undiscovered. (with Graham Fisk, artist Oliver Jeffers, and videographer Mac Premo). McGrew currently performs across the country with his Brooklyn-based rock group Apollo Run, whose "talent for quickly jelling melodies" was recognized by NPR, among others, including Huffington Post, Time Out NY, Crawdaddy!, LAist.com, and FutureSounds.com. McGrew's original dark fairy tale storybook record, 'The Village of Vale' premiered at The Invisible Dog in February, 2015. 'The Village of Vale' has been selected to be a part of The New Victory Theater's LabWorks artist residency program for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 seasons and won Kevin Spacey Foundation's 'Artist of Choice' grant for musical theatre. In addition to his dance and theatre work, McGrew also currently writes songs and stories for toys at Fisher-Price. www.johnmcmcgrewmusic.com

Saradiane (Sadi) Mosko is a senior at Columbia University where she is pursuing a B.A. in Dance and Sustainable Development. At Columbia, through the Barnard College Department of Dance, she has trained with several dance artists including Twyla Tharp, Andrea Miller, Colleen Thomas, Jodi Melnick, Alexandra Beller, Loni Landon, Silas Reiner, Melissa Toogood, and Donna Uchizono.

Pedro Osorio is from the green, blue and warming planet earth.

Travis Seminara is currently working as a freelance lighting designer in New York City. He most recently was the designer for the Planet Connections Theatre Festivity and assistant designer on *Death for Five Voices* with Prospect Theatre Company. He has previously designed *Where all the Rivers go to Sleep* for New York Musical Theatre Festival as well

as *O'Brien & O'Brian* for the New York Fringe Festival, *Stage Fright* for Prospect Theatre Company and *A Christmas Carol* for MOD Theatre Company at Theatre Row. Travis is thrilled to be working with Colleen and Rebecca on this exciting new project.

Adrian Silver (dramaturge) is a freelance dance dramaturge and writer, currently working with Colleen Thomas, the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, and Pontus Lidberg. He has also worked with Karin Coonrod as movement director, and Martha Clarke as assistant director. His translations from Yiddish have been supported by Target Margin Theater, NYSCA, and The National Yiddish Book Center. He holds a BA in English from Colby College and an MFA in Dramaturgy from Columbia.

Jason Akira Somma (video) is a practicing visual artist and choreographer based in New York City with a strong focus on science and engineering new technology. Merging his practices he experiments with transcending performance and kinesthetics into new autonomous mediums. His photography and film work have been featured in The Guggenheim Museum, New Museum, Deitch Project (SoHo), P.S. 1 (MoMA), Utah Museum of Contemporary Art, CCA (Center of Contemporary Art, Glasgow), Location 1 Gallery, and the Chrysler Museum of Art (Norfolk, Va.). Jason is the first American to receive the Rolex Arts Initiative for Dance and has been working under the mentorship of Jiri Kylian over the past 9 years. Jason's solo gallery show entitled "Phosphene Variations" premiered at the Location 1 gallery (SoHo) in 2012, and featured the very first free-floating-interactive-holograph-film installation. Spectators were invited to use the motion of their hands to control the image of floating holographs of such legendary artists as Mikhail Baryshnikov, Robert Wilson, and Carmen DeLavallade among others. Somma was an artist in residence at the Park Ave. Armory in 2014 and was the co-conceiver and co-producer of the show FLEXN with Reggie Roc Grey and Peter Sellars. Jason recently had a solo museum show at the Geemente Museum in Holland that ran for 3 months. He is very excited to work with Colleen on such a special project and engage in such a historical time frame of a special place in NY.

Jessica Stroh is a New York City based dancer, choreographer, and educator. Attaining a BFA in Dance Performance and Psychology in 2015 from The University of South Florida Jessica had the honor to perform works by Ohad Nahrin, Alonzo King, Maurice Causey, Jennifer Archibald, Robert Moses, Rosie Herrera, Chris Evans, Molissa Fenley, Bliss Kohlmyer, Paula Nuñez, and Andrew Carroll. Currently, Jessica is working with Colleen Thomas Dance, Bryce Dance Company, and collaborates with other artists (dancers, choreographers, photographers, painters, singers, actors, gamers, and musicians) in NYC, North Carolina, and Florida.

Mother of Colleen Thomas Young and Dean Stephens, **Kathy Stephens** worked for 45 years as an Executive Assistant for various companies in New York, Washington, DC and Florida. She recently retired and enjoys traveling, exercising and spending time with her grandchildren. From 1973 to 1978 Kathy and her family were fortunate to live on Governors Island and have all the excitement of New York City just a short ferry ride away. Governors Island is where Colleen's dancing career began. When she was five years old, Kathy asked her if she would like to take dancing lessons – and the rest is history! Kathy has fond memories of Colleen and Dean growing up on Governors Island, is thrilled to be a part of "Welcome Home" and is very proud of Colleen's work.

Otherwise known as Dad to Colleen and Dean and Grandpa to Olivia, Pete, Piper and Dylan, **Jim Stephens** has a Masters in Fine Arts from New York University and served 20-years with the US Coast Guard as a Public Affairs Officer. Following his military career he has directed photography, graphic design and production of collateral materials for clients in the travel

industry worldwide. Jim is of course very proud of his dancing daughter. Watching Colleen pursue her dream has been a life story in itself. Jim knew when Colleen returned her cheerleader's outfit in high school, because she couldn't both attend games and go to ballet, that her life's goal was SET! We all should be so lucky to work in a profession that we truly love. And Jim is certain that *Welcome Home* will bring back all the great memories of this amazing place where we worked, lived, played and enjoyed.

Darrin Wright, a Brooklyn based artist, is a native of Los Angeles, California where he started tap dancing at the age of six. His early trainings were taking tap classes which lead into jazz with Ian Gary; learning about choreography and performance in high school with Janet Roston; taking post-modern dance with Rudy Perez. In 1997, Darrin joined The Bella Lewitzky Dance Company as part of its farewell tour. He received his BFA in Dance from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign in 2002. Since graduation, Darrin has had the pleasure of working with The METopera, Susan Marshall, Terry Creach, Jane Comfort, Bill Young/Colleen Thomas, Yanira Castro, Jack Ferver, Tami Stronach, Antonio Ramos, Leslie Cuyjet, Doug Varone, Laura Peterson, Amber Sloan, Nancy Bannon, Linsey Bostwick, Nina Winthrop, Linsday and Jason Dietz Marchant. Darrin teaches master classes in technique, composition and improvisation throughout the country. In 2009, he received a Bessie Award for his work with A Canary Torsi' Dark Horse/Black Forest.

Olivia Young is 10 years old and enjoys playing the piano, adventure and fantasy books, singing, and swimming.

Dylan Young is 5 years old and enjoys, Legos, ninjas (turtles or ninjago), fast cats, and swimming.

Bill Young is a choreographer in NYC. This is my home. This is my life.

Special Thanks

Colleen Thomas Dance sends deep gratitude to the many individuals and organizations that provided support for the creation and presentation of this work. Please join us in thanking our donors and partners!

Thank you to The Trust for Governors Island, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, and everyone who gave to our Kickstarter fundraising campaign this year!

Thank you to Bill, Olivia, and Dylan for being in the center and making it all worth it. Thank you to my parents who are going beyond their usual constant support and joining the creative process in this one!

Thank you to these amazing collaborators (some of whom have brand new babies!) who are so generous and talented that I was moved to tears. Rebecca, Rachel, Jason, John and Adrian – this is a dream team.

Thank you to the performers – some new and some I've danced with for a very long time... I cannot believe how lucky I am to work with you all. Your dedication, humor, and the way you throw your hearts into this is very moving.

None of this would have happened if Paul and Jodi hadn't said, "You have to do this." It also wouldn't have happened without the organization and calm of Katherine, Ananda, and India. Thank you to Travis for helping it run smoothly.

Thank you all for diving so deeply into these memories.

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**Thanks for stopping by, and
please, stay in touch!**

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