

55TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON



ESL ROCHESTER FRINGE FESTIVAL
SEPT 17-20, 2026



A Message From The Artistic Director

Welcome, everyone, as we celebrate Garth Fagan Dance's 55th Anniversary Season in our home right here in Rochester, NY. As a proud participant every year since the Festival's inception in 2012, GFD continues its long-standing Fringe tradition in our Garth Fagan Dance Studio Theater!

This year has been especially meaningful as we deepened our community collaborations and expanded the ways our work engages with Rochester's cultural life. Our return to the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra for American Masters: Dance Festival reaffirmed the strength of our longstanding partnership. We also collaborated with the Memorial Art Gallery and Floating Home Films on the John Rhoden exhibition, creating filmed movement responses that invite visitors to experience Rhoden's sculptures through motion and narrative. We are proud that this season also coincides with Garth Fagan being recognized as the 2025 New York Bessie Award recipient for Lifetime Achievement.

Garth has said, "The art of choreography consumes me," and through the decades of Garth's nurturing, he has instilled in Natalie Rogers-Cropper, our Executive Director, and me a thirst for creative storytelling and inventive movement expression. For our Fringe run, we are honored to present Garth's seminal "Prelude "Discipline Is Freedom,"" and excerpts from Garth's masterwork "Never Top 40 (Jukebox)". The performance will also feature excerpts from Natalie's second work for our company, the mesmerizing Messages to the Storm, and my haunting "Priestess Hill".

I am filled with gratitude for our incredible staff, led by Alec Shiman, and our wonderful Board, chaired by Carvin Eison. This anniversary also honors the generations of dancers who built this company. Their discipline, creativity, and devotion shaped the Fagan technique and carried it across stages around the world. Their contributions live in every rehearsal, every performance, and every young dancer who steps into this lineage.

We are especially grateful to New York State Senator Jeremy Cooney and Governor Kathy Hochul for their extraordinary support in securing \$4 million for Garth Fagan Dance in the FY27 state budget. This capital investment is a profound vote of confidence in our future, ensuring that this world-renowned company remains a cornerstone of Downtown Rochester for dancers, students, and community members for decades to come.

Thank you for joining us in celebrating 55 years of innovation, discipline, and joy in movement. Your presence ensures that this legacy continues to grow.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Norwood Pennewell".

Norwood Pennewell
Artistic Director



GARTH FAGAN

Founder/Distinguished Artistic
Director Emeritus

NORWOOD 'PJ' PENNEWELL

Artistic Director

NATALIE ROGERS-CROPPER

Executive Director

GARTH FAGAN DANCE

NORWOOD PENNEWELL*

NATALIE ROGERS*

STEVE HUMPHREY*

SABRINA SHIMAN

DARIA CLARKE

KIARA JOLIÉ HAYWOOD

JANALYCE LANE

RAEA MOOREHEAD

CHARLIE CURRAN

KAMAL MARSHALL

JAHKIM HODGE-PRICE

GARTH FAGAN DANCE STUDENT ENSEMBLE

NINA ARNOLD

EMERY CROCKTON DAVIS

ABREHET DORIS EATON

ALEXIS HAREWOOD

JOSENA KANE

SIMRAN MOHILE

ELLE PRICE

NAT ROSATO

EDEN SCOTT

SARAH TERRANCE

**THE GARTH FAGAN DANCE STUDENT ENSEMBLE
WILL PERFORM DURING THE SATURDAY AND SUNDAY MATINEE PERFORMANCES**

Check Out Our Website!

www.garthfagan-dance.org

**Bessie Award Winners*

Programs and casting are subject to change.

**ALL CHOREOGRAPHY GARTH FAGAN © GARTH FAGAN
AND © GARTH FAGAN DANCE.**

The taking of photographs/videotaping during the performance is strictly prohibited.

Garth Fagan Dance is supported, in part, with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts.

Special thanks to Deborah Ronnen, Garth Fagan and the Farash Foundation for making this production possible!

Prelude

“Discipline is Freedom”

(September 1981, revised May 1983)

Choreography by Garth Fagan
Music by Abdullah Ibrahim (Dollar Brand) and Max Roach
Lighting Design by C.T. Oakes
Costumes by Zinda Williams

Full Company

Never Top 40 (Jukebox)

(March 1985)

“Life is plurality. Death is uniformity.” - Octavio Paz

Choreography by Garth Fagan
Lighting Design by C.T. Oakes
Costumes by Garth Fagan and Zinda Williams

Court Dance Contemporary

Puccini

Nessun Dorma

Jussi Bjoerling

Sabrina Shiman Raea Moorehead
Kemal Marshall Jahkim Hodge Price

Dance Rainbow Revisited

Harold Arlen

Over the Rainbow

Keith Jarrett*

Sabrina Shiman Raea Moorehead
Kemal Marshall Jahkim Hodge-Price

*Last Solo Concert, Tokyo, January 25 1984

Priestess Hill

excerpt
(January 2026)

Choreography by Norwood 'PJ' Pennewell

Music by Philip Glass

Lighting Design by Lutin Tanner

Costumes by Mary Nemecek Peterson

Kiara Jolié Haywood & Full Company

Messages To The Storm

(May 2026)

Choreography and Costumes by Natalie Rogers-Cropper

Music by Bobby McFerrin, Meshell Ndegeocello, and Sons of Kemet.

Vocalizations by Steve Humphrey

Lighting Design by Lutin Tanner

PPL

PM

IRL

Full Company

Daria Clarke & Raea Moorehead

Full Company

Premiere

(September 2026)

Choreography by Ethan Beckwith-Cohen and Janalyce Lane

Music by Dana and Aldon

Garth Fagan Dance Student Ensemble

*This piece will be performed on Saturday, Sept 19 & Sunday, Sept 20
after Prelude



GARTH FAGAN (Founder and Distinguished Artistic Director Emeritus) has been called “a true original,” “a genuine leader,” and “one of the great reformers of modern dance.” With over five decades of groundbreaking contributions to the art form, Mr. Fagan uses the dance vocabulary born of Garth Fagan Dance- Fagan Technique, as the impetus for his choreography. As an “Irreplaceable Dance Treasure,” Tony, Olivier, and Helpmann Award winner, Fagan used his technique to create the movement that helped build Disney

The Lion King on Broadway to its towering heights, which has earned him the distinction as the longest-running Black choreographer in Broadway history.

Throughout his illustrious career, Fagan has continued to push boundaries, with notable works such as Mudan 175/39, Griot New York, Prelude, From Before, and Oatka Trail, earning critical acclaim. His influence spans globally, with commissions for leading companies and recognition from 2 presidents for his significant contributions to American culture.

Beyond his artistic achievements, Fagan's commitment to education and cultural enrichment is evident in his role as a Chancellor's Award-winning Distinguished University Professor Emeritus and his decades-long tenure at the State University of New York at Brockport. His accolades include honorary doctorates from prestigious institutions and awards and honors such as the Guggenheim Fellowship, Eastman Luminary Award, Fulbright 50th Anniversary Distinguished Fellow, NY Bessie Award, the Samuel H. Scripps American Dance Festival Award, and the Order of Distinction in the rank of Commander, and the Special Gold Musgrave Medal from his native country Jamaica, among many others. Most recently, Garth Fagan is the proud recipient of the 2025 Bessie Award for Lifetime Achievement!

ABOUT GARTH FAGAN DANCE

Garth Fagan Dance is Western New York's leading artist-led, predominately Black cultural institution that develops young dancers, especially those of color. Garth Fagan Dance is founded by the man who taught more than 100 million audience members to move as one global community through Disney's The Lion King on Broadway! Under the creative leadership of PJ Pennewell, GFD champions a process to offset limited opportunities for these dancers with a potential for a professional career. With over 55 years of award-winning choreography, Garth Fagan Dance stands as a beacon of innovation, creativity, and artistic excellence in the world of contemporary dance. The company has recently been welcomed into the 'Archives of the Library of Congress' and designated a 20th-century dance treasure.



**Scan the QR code to be added to
Garth Fagan Dance's Email List**

WHO'S WHO IN THE COMPANY?



NORWOOD 'PJ' PENNEWELL (Artistic Director & Rehearsal Director) joined Garth Fagan Dance in 1978. He is the quintessential Garth Fagan dancer and serves as Fagan's assistant and muse. Pennewell is a recipient of the 1988 New York Performance Award "Bessie" and has been showcased all over the world on tour with Garth Fagan Dance, on "Great Performances," "The Tonight Show," and in Duke Ellington's Queenie Pie. In 1994 he was invited to perform in the "66th Annual Academy Awards" broadcast. He assisted Mr. Fagan

during his work on Broadway's *The Lion King* and the NYC Ballet 50th-anniversary Ellington Project.

Pennewell has choreographed 13 works on Garth Fagan Dance and has been commissioned to create works with Geva Theater, the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Finger Lakes Opera. Of his work, the Village Voice said, "As you'd expect, Pennewell's movement and formal acuity are rooted in his mentor's style. But right away, there's a smart quirk..." The New York Times said, "Mr. Pennewell knows how to organize bodies. And he knows these bodies: their strengths, their weaknesses, their inclinations, in relation to a very particular way of moving." Each work uses the Fagan Technique as a foundation and deftly shows Mr. Pennewell developing his craft by taking risks with musical choices and movement phrases in relationship to the music, lighting, and costuming. As a celebrated and world-class choreographer, he combines the unique elements of the Fagan Technique with sophisticated concepts and movement invention.



NATALIE ROGERS-CROPPER (Executive Director & School Director) joined Garth Fagan in 1989. As a principal dancer, in 1992, she received the prestigious "Bessie" award for her performances. She is also a 1993 recipient of The President's Award from her country of birth, Trinidad and Tobago. Natalie was voted one of the top three female modern dancers in the world, by readers of Dance magazine in the 2004 "Readers' Choice" awards. Natalie has served as one of Mr. Fagan's assistants for the Tony Award-winning

megahit "*The Lion King*" on Broadway, "*Ellington Elation*" on the New York City Ballet, and "*Jukebox for Alvin*" and "*From Before*" on the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Ms. Rogers-Cropper has taught the Fagan Technique worldwide and has had at least 12 major roles created for her over the course of her dance career.

Ms. Rogers-Cropper has created her own choreography for several companies and schools world-wide and two works for Garth Fagan Dance. For her leadership in business, and all her other achievements over her 34-year career with Garth Fagan Dance, Natalie became one of the recipients of the Women of Excellence Award from the Rochester Business Journal in April 2021. She was appointed Executive Director for Garth Fagan Dance in November 2023. She is a graduate of the Juilliard School. (B.F.A. class of 1984).

WHO'S WHO IN THE COMPANY?



STEVE HUMPHREY (Principal Dancer) - is the only original member of Garth Fagan Dance still dancing and is the company's first Bessie Award winner. He helped formulate the Fagan Technique in its early stages and has mentored new Fagan dancers over his 55-year tenure at GFD. Garth Fagan, Humphrey's teacher, mentor, and only choreographer, has created several major roles for him including Oatka Trail which garnered him a Bessie Award in 1984. Steve was also featured on PBS Great Performances "Griot New York" and in Duke Ellington's musical, "Queenie

Pie" at the Kennedy Center.

He approaches every day with a positive attitude and a disciplined work ethic which has allowed his distinguished longevity with the company. Steve is grateful for the ongoing love and support of Garth Fagan, the company, the Rochester community, and audiences around the world and is deeply grateful for the love and support of his wife of 31 years.



SABRINA SHIMAN (Principal Dancer) from Southern California, is a principal dancer at Garth Fagan Dance. She received her BFA in dance and BA in psychology at Fordham University in partnership with the Ailey School. Before college, she studied at Riverside Ballet Arts, The Debbie Allen Dance Academy, The Yuri Grigoriev School of Ballet, and The Ailey School. She has worked with esteemed choreographers including Garth Fagan, Norwood Pennewell, Debbie Allen, Earl Mosley, Adam Barruch, Amy Hall Garner, and Adrienne Hurd. She has had the

opportunity to work on FX's Fosse/Verdon and toured in Debbie Allen's Twist: An American Musical. She joined Garth Fagan Dance in June 2021 and became a principal dancer in November 2022. Also, Sabrina is a proud graduate of the 2024 Dunham Technique Teaching Certification.



KIARA JOLIÉ HAYWOOD (Principal Dancer) was born and raised in Queens, NY. She began her dance training at Step By Step Dance Studio where she then went on to assist and teach for many years. In 2018, Kiara graduated from Professional Performing Arts High School where she studied with the Ailey School. She has trained in Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Hip Hop, Contemporary, Horton, West African, and Modern. Kiara then went on to receive a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance in May of 2022 at University of the Arts in Philadelphia. As well becoming certified in Franklin Method

Art of the Plié and Pilates Mat. Through UArts, she was able to work with and perform works by Katie Swords Thurman and Tommie-Waheed Evans, Jesse Zaritt and Shayla-Vie Jenkins, Sidra Bell and Sara Procopio, Annie Rigney, Emily Wexler, as well as TV Rerun by Merce Cunningham, staged by Andrea Weber. Kiara joined Garth Fagan Dance in August of 2022.

WHO'S WHO IN THE COMPANY?



DARIA CLARKE (Principal Dancer) from Charlotte, NC, Daria began her technical training at the age of seven. At thirteen, she joined Charlotte Performing Arts Academy and met her longtime mentor, Siara Fuller, who pushed her to develop her musicality and individuality as an artist. She toured nationally for six years, winning numerous scholarships, awards, and opportunities to train with various artists in the commercial and concert dance world. In May 2021, She received her BFA in dance with a concentration in choreography and performance from the University of North

Carolina Greensboro. During her time there, she was chosen to perform solo and group works by Ronald K. Brown, Clarice Young, Janet Lilly, Maurice Watson, B.J. Sullivan, and Francine Ott. When she discovered Garth Fagan Dance, she was intrigued by the blending of Africanist movement qualities with European dance styles. Daria joined Garth Fagan Dance in July of 2021. She is excited to continue performing and mastering the Fagan Technique while she is a member of the company.



JANALYCE LANE (Dancer/GFD School Co-Director of Student Ensemble) from Rochester, NY, is a graduate of Binghamton University, State University of New York with a BA in Psychology. Janalyce has consistently been an active member of the Rochester, NY, arts community and performed in various annual local shows. She has served as a senior company member of Borinquen Dance Theater, and taught Modern as well as Latin Social Dance at Hochstein School of Music and Dance. Prior to joining Garth Fagan Dance as a company dancer in August 2024, she was

a part of their pre-professional program. She is grateful to the endless support her friends, family, and teachers have shown.



RAEA MOOREHEAD (Dancer) from Charlotte, NC, began dancing at Charlotte Ballet Academy starting at age five and continuing for the next ten years. Attending Garth Fagan's SMI in 2018, she branched out into other styles of dance. She then attended the University of North Carolina School of the Arts as a contemporary dance major. Raea is trained in Ballet, Modern, Jazz, Cunningham and West African, under distinguished instructors including Brenda Daniels, Kira Blazek-Ziali, Andrea Weber, Ashley Lindsey and Juel D. Lane. Also, she have had the honour of working with the

Merce Cunningham Trust to dance in the first reconstruction of the acclaimed "Travelogue" in 40 years. Raea joined Garth Fagan Dance in August of 2024, and is excited and proud to begin her professional career with Garth Fagan Dance where her love for contemporary dance began!

WHO'S WHO IN THE COMPANY?



CHARLIE CURRAN (Dancer) began his dance journey at The Dance Collective in Lebanon, New Hampshire, where he trained in Ballet, Modern, Contemporary, Jazz, Hip Hop, and Breakdancing. He studied under renowned instructors including Thayne Jaspersen, Ben Cook, Rachelle Rak, Gabby Diaz, and Michael Cusumano. Charlie discovered that bringing joy to others through movement was his true passion. It was also at The Dance Collective where he developed a deep love for teaching—an endeavor he has continued ever since. He joined Garth Fagan Dance in June 2025.



Kemal Marshall (Dancer) is a 27-year-old certified Barbadian Cultural Practitioner, dancer, and choreographer whose creative journey bridges performance, education, and entrepreneurship. They hold a Master of Arts in Creative Arts, specializing in Arts Entrepreneurship, and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance with First Class Honours from the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus. Marshall has worked as a Modern Dance Instructor and Dancer at Power House Academy of The Arts and collaborated with leading Barbadian dance schools and groups, including Riddim Tribe, Dancin' Africa, the Louise Woodvine Dance Academy and Of Another Nature Dance School. They have represented Barbados at CARIFESTA XIV, COCO Dance Festival and Jamaica Dance Umbrella, and in 2025 served as Assistant Dance Coordinator for CARIFESTA XV. Through performance, education, and administration, Marshall continues to champion dance as a tool for storytelling, empowerment, and the growth of Caribbean arts.



JAHKIM HODGE-PRICE (Junior Dancer) from Rochester, NY, Jahkim is a recent graduate of School of the Arts and the Garth Fagan Dance Student Ensemble. He has trained in Ballet, Modern, and Jazz. Jahkim joined Garth Fagan Dance in September 2025 as an apprentice and looks forward to continuing his artistic growth while performing for audiences worldwide.

STAFF AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Email: alec@garthfagandance.org

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Garth Fagan Dance

50 Chestnut Street, Floor 3

Rochester, NY 14604

585.454.3260

IG & FB: @garthfagandancecompany

Interested in joining Garth Fagan Dance

Email your resume and dance reel to Artistic Director, Norwood 'PJ' Pennewell at douala2000@frontiernet.net, and cc:

alec@garthfagandance.org, and include "JOB: Dancer - [Your Name]" in the subject line. We review applicants on a rolling basis.

For more info, visit www.garthfagan-dance.org/careers

The Champions of Garth Fagan Dance

Garth Fagan Dance extends heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed during the last fiscal year. Your support helps us produce innovative, high-quality dance performances and ensures our dancers receive competitive pay. We rely on the generosity of individuals, foundations, corporations, and public agencies to sustain our mission. To make a donation, please visit garthfagan-dance.org/support. Thank you!

The Lion King \$50,000+

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The Champions of Garth Fagan Dance

From Before Under \$999

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We are also grateful to our incredible **university partners** — Nazareth University, Rochester Institute of Technology, and SUNY Brockport.

And lastly, a huge **thank you** to Abbey Germano-Siddiqui, Debrah "Bit" Knighton, Paula Hamada Summit, and Twylla Dillion for their invaluable expertise.

“Rochester is one of the luckiest dance towns in the world to have this company. . .” - Frances Mason
Ballet Review

It is true that Garth Fagan Dance is recognized throughout the world as one of the top modern dance companies. But the recognition that means the most to the company is that of its home town, Rochester. It is the support of people like you that provides the foundation on which Mr. Fagan built its world class reputation, rehearsal studios, costumes, and pays artists and staff. To support the company’s continued growth, please consider making a donation by scanning the QR code below or by sending a check to Garth Fagan Dance at 50 Chestnut St., Rochester, NY 14604.



DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT IN 2026

Thanks to a very generous anonymous donor and long-time supporter, all gifts in 2026 will be matched dollar for dollar - up to \$400,000 - in honor of Garth Fagan Dance’s 55th Anniversary!



FALL REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

Come join us and experience Garth Fagan Dance!

Fall Term: **September 8 – December 12**

Our classes :

Ages 5 to 7:

Saturday 10am to 11am

Ages 8 to 12:

Saturday 11:30am to 12:45pm

Adult Beginner Class:

Thursday 10am to 11:30am

Saturday 10am to 11:30am

Teen/Adult Intermediate Class:

Tuesday 6pm to 7:30pm



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More Info : >>>>>>>>

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