



Tuesday, April 22, 2025, 8:00 PM
Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Princeton Sound Kitchen presents **Dance Collaboration**

Princeton University graduate student composers **Aliayta Foon-Dancoes**, **Hannah Ishizaki**, **Travis Laplante**, and **Justin Wright** collaborate with guest choreographers and dancers **Caroline Beach**, **Aaron Choate**, **Morgan Clune**, **Elliot Hammans**, **Ellexis Hatch**, **Eleni Loving**, and **Jodi Melnick**, to create a host of new short dance works, accompanied by music which includes live performances by **Isidora Jojkovic**, **Justin Kelly**, and **Arnie Tanimoto**.

DEPARTMENT OF **MUSIC** AT PRINCETON

About the Department of Music

The Department of Music at Princeton University provides its undergraduates—whether they major or minor in Music—the opportunity to learn from a world-renowned faculty of scholars and composers. Performance opportunities include student-led and departmental ensembles like symphony orchestras, multi-genre choruses, jazz, contemporary music, African music, steel band, laptop orchestra, and much more, and students have access to private instrumental and voice lessons from eminent performing artists. The graduate program offers two distinct and prestigious PhD programs in composition or musicology; graduate students receive fully-funded, immersive experiences conducting research, advancing their craft, and collaborating with faculty within Princeton University's inspiring, interdisciplinary campus.

For more information about the Department of Music and other upcoming events, and to sign-up for our mailing list, please visit music.princeton.edu.

PROGRAM

**Hannah Ishizaki
and Caroline Beach** *Shifting States*

**Travis Laplante
and Jodi Melnick** *Jodi+Travis*

INTERMISSION

**Justin Wright
and Morgan Clune** *A Study on Unison*

**Aliayta Foon-Dancoes
and Aaron Choate** *Dollywood*

PERFORMERS AND GUEST ARTISTS

Caroline Beach, choreographer
Aaron Choate, choreographer and dancer
Morgan Clune, choreographer and dancer
Aliayta Foon-Dancoes, violin
Elliot Hammans, dancer
Ellexis Hatch, dancer
Isidora Jojkovic, cello
Justin Kelly, percussion
Travis Laplante, tenor saxophone
Eleni Loving, dancer
Jodi Melnick, choreographer and dancer
Arnie Tanimoto, bass viola da gamba
Justin Wright, bass viola da gamba

The use of photographic, video, or audio equipment is strictly prohibited.
Please turn off or mute electronic devices for the duration of the performance.

PROGRAM NOTES

Hannah Ishizaki and Caroline Beach

Shifting States

Caroline Beach, choreographer
Hannah Ishizaki, composer

Aaron Choate, dancer
Morgan Clune, dancer

In 2018, I went to a Twyla Tharp celebration at the Joyce Theater where I saw Tharp's *The Fugue*, a choreography for two dancers and no music. This piece was deeply inspiring, and as a response, I wrote an experimental solo piece exploring embodied sounds in collaboration with choreographer and performer Cyrie Topete. The piece, titled *In the State of Adaptation*, premiered at National Sawdust in November 2019. We explored the interplay between dance and composition, experimenting with methods of communication between us and ultimately foregoing traditional music notation in favor of improvisation and active conversation. The piece, an eight-minute performance, gradually built tension and released it through a series of movements. The score for this eight-minute-long piece became a combination of text-based signposts and videos of formal sections.

In March 2022, I partook in a two-week-long independent residency at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Canada through the Leighton Artist Studios program to review the solo work that I developed and research dance notation and practice to develop a concept for this longer work and refine the artistic goals of the project.

Throughout the process of writing *Shifting States*, I worked with Caroline Beach to write the musical and visual material together. With Caroline's experience in contemporary dance choreography and my experience in music composition, we worked together with Morgan and Aaron, employing both free and structured improvisation to begin the composition process. Together, we isolated and explored sounds that emerged from improvisations to assemble the work and asked how these sounds could ground the piece in humanity, from the human body's embarrassing squeaks to the more serious thuds. The floor, dancers' bodies, and clothing all function as expressive "instruments," with subtle timbral and dynamic shifts manifesting visually and aurally.

Travis Laplante and Jodi Melnick

Jodi+Travis

Travis Laplante, composer and tenor saxophone

Jodi Melnick, choreographer and dancer

Over the past 12 years, my beloved wife Sarah has persistently suggested that I should collaborate with Jodi Melnick. Jodi is a singular choreographer and dancer who changed Sarah's life when she was a teenage dancer and has remained an important influence ever since.

I deeply trust Sarah's instincts, as Jodi is the only artist Sarah has felt so passionately about me working with. I had been hoping for an opportunity to collaborate with Jodi for some time, so I am especially grateful that tonight's Princeton Sound Kitchen presented itself for this long-awaited opportunity.

It's been an incredible gift to be in a room with Jodi throughout this winter and spring. Just being in the presence of Jodi's artistic language that has been cultivated over decades is unlike anything I've experienced before and I instantly feel inspired.

We are both long-term solo practitioners and part of the fun challenge has been to find connection and communication between two wildly different practices and personalities—uncovering an invisible thread that connects our work, creating a location that is both a meeting place between us and an opening into the universe.

– Travis Laplante

INTERMISSION

Justin Wright and Morgan Clune*A Study on Unison*

Morgan Clune, choreographer

Justin Wright, composer

Elliot Hammans, dancer

Ellexis Hatch, dancer

Arnie Tanimoto, bass viola da gamba

Justin Wright, bass viola da gamba

Aliayta Foon-Dancoes and Aaron Choate*Dollywood*

Aliayta Foon-Dancoes, composer

Aaron Choate, choreographer

Ellexis Hatch, dancer

Eleni Loving, dancer

Aliayta Foon-Dancoes, violin

Isidora Jojkovic, cello

Justin Kelly, percussion

Welcome to Dollywood! Here we celebrate the best of life! Thank you for joining the 3 million guests that visit us annually. In addition to the typical thrills you'd expect at an amusement park, we light up the sky with rides, slides, music, food and laughter!

Not only are there award-winning shows and special events: 70% of our guests report that they develop telepathic connections with each other! Isolated from the chaos of the outside world, you can experience the bliss of unquestioned joy and transcendence. Leave the complexity of life behind and enter our garden of delights!

ABOUT

Caroline Beach is a German-based, Texas-born choreographer, performance artist and occasional musician who is best described as a cartoon artist working in the wrong medium. She has made work for a multitude of spaces including theaters, galleries, off-spaces, the internet, and most recently, a media storage closet. Her work is not at the intersection of anything but rather looks at practicing meaning-making in the contested space between the arbitrary and the profound, the living and the living dead. She is interested in technology as human, the politics of nonsense, internet horror micro-genres, dance as dissociation as activation, and synthesis through pop logic. For the past several years she has been exploring making work through the Sailor, who is more of a human-algorithmic processor entangled in the politics of desire and who does not actually possess a boat.

Aaron Choate is in their third season dancing with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, and is a freelance choreographer, and a graduate of The Juilliard School, class of 2022. Prior to Juilliard, Aaron was named a 2018 Presidential Scholar in the Arts. Over the years, they have performed the works of renowned choreographers, such as Kyle Abraham, Aszure Barton, Bob Fosse / Gwen Verdon, Johan Inger, Ohad Naharin, Justin Peck, Jamar Roberts, Bobbi Jene Smith, Rennie Harris, Spencer Theberge, Lar Lubovitch, and Ted Shawn. In 2024, they were a choreographer and Artistic Lead for the Hubbard Street Teen CREATE Summer Intensive. In Summer of 2023 they had a process at Gibney Dance called the Moving Towards Justice Fellowship created by Scott Autry, and in 2022, they presented a work at 92nd Street Y as a part of the Future Dance Festival. In 2021, they received the George J. Jakab Grant Award from Juilliard to create a dance film, and upon graduation they were awarded the Juilliard Career Advancement Fellowship. This coming summer, they will be an Emerging Choreographer for Springboard Danse Pittsburgh 2025.

Morgan Clune graduated from The Chicago Academy for the Arts in 2018. She was recognized as a National YoungArts Winner in New York for Contemporary dance in 2018 where she performed solo at Baryshnikov Arts Center. Upon graduation from Juilliard, Morgan was awarded the Martha Hill Prize for her achievement and leadership in Dance as well as a Juilliard Career Advancement Fellowship for her promise as an entrepreneur and engagement in the arts. She is an emerging choreographer, choreographing at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's CREATE summer intensive (2023 and 2024), The Juilliard School (2023), and The Chicago Academy for the Arts (2024). Morgan is currently in her third season with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago under the direction of Linda-Denise Fisher-Harrell.

Aliayta Foon-Dancoes is an award-winning Canadian violinist, composer and interdisciplinary collaborator. Until this Fall, she was living in London, England, working with the London Symphony Orchestra, BBC, and 12 Ensemble. She has performed at the Musikverein, Wigmore Hall, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Philharmonie de Paris and the BBC Proms. Collaboration is central to Aliayta's practice. She is a co-founder of the commissioning project

Orbit Duo and the interdisciplinary collective THIRTYMINUTES. Through these projects, Aliayta has composed for new instruments designed by sound sculptor Marla Hlady, commissioned and performed pieces by Olivia Shortt, Cris Derksen and Robyn Jacob, premiered work at the Canadian Opera Company, and exhibited experimental audiovisual pieces Sub Tei (Berlin) and Espacio Gallery (London). Recently, Aliayta recorded on Esmerine's Juno award-winning album *Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More*, and, with her sister, Rebecca Foon, co-wrote the soundtrack for *One & One Other*, a film commissioned by the Baryshnikov Arts Centre. Other work includes a collaboration with Patti Smith and Pathway to Paris, performances alongside Patrick Watson at Live At Lost River, and a tour of *Phases*, a live violin and multi-channel sound performance co-created with London based new media design studio Kai Lab. Aliayta holds a BA from the University of Victoria, a MA from the Royal Academy of Music and has held Chamber Music Fellowships at both the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music (London). This Fall, she will begin a PhD in Composition at Princeton University.

Elliot Hammans began his formal dance training in 2008 with Robert Sher-Machherndl and continued his ballet and modern dance education with Moving People Dance in Santa Fe, NM, under the direction of Curtis Uhlemann. Following one season with Cherylyn Lavagnino Dance and studies abroad at Austria's Tanzzentrum SEAD (Salzburg Experimental Academy of Dance), Hammans earned his BFA in Dance in 2014 from Tisch School of the Arts at NYU. Hammans joined Hubbard Street 2 in August 2014 and was promoted to Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's main company in August 2016. He has danced works by Twyla Tharp, Ohad Naharin, William Forsythe, Kyle Abraham, Crystal Pite, Jiří Kylián, Nacho Duato, and Aszure Barton among others.

Ellexis Hatch, born and raised in Orlando, Florida, fell in love with dance at Movement Arts Studio. She received her BFA from The Juilliard School in 2022 and supplemental training from LINES Ballet, Arts Umbrella and GagaLabs. During her time at school, she was fortunate enough to perform works by artists such as Aszure Barton, Trisha Brown, Ohad Naharin, Justin Peck, Jamar Roberts and Bobbi Jene Smith. She joined GALLIM in 2023 and has danced in projects by Aaron Choate and Annie Rigney. She became a soloist with Central Florida Ballet in 2024 and is currently freelancing as a dancer and choreographer. Ellexis feels honored to have been a selected choreographer for Lincoln Center Restart Stages, National Sawdust Festival, and Senior Production at The Juilliard School. She wants to thank the wonderful teachers who have guided her artistic growth and wishes to continue finding joy in every step of the journey.

Hannah Ishizaki is a composer and sound artist based in Princeton, New Jersey. Her music seeks to foster connections between musicians and the audience through the explorations of the physicality of music performance. Ishizaki finds inspiration in the process of composition, leading her to experiment with a wide range of instruments and sound generating methods—from acoustic instruments in an orchestra to digital sensors to rocks and zippers. Immersed in the world of collaboration, Ishizaki has worked with dancers, actors, filmmakers, and visual artists, to connect the seemingly unconnected and create innovative and multidisciplinary projects. Ishizaki is the current Composer-in-Residence with Young Concert Artists. Her work

has been recognized throughout the United States and internationally and has been performed by renowned musicians and ensembles such as Midori Goto, Ensemble Intercontemporain, The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, The Juilliard Orchestra, the National Sawdust Ensemble, and the Dresden Musikfestspiele. Recently, Ishizaki was named one of five 2023 Hildegard commission winners, which is presented by National Sawdust and generously supported by The Onassis Foundation and the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation. In 2017, she became the youngest woman ever to have a world premiere with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (PSO). Ishizaki is currently a PhD student and Mark Nelson Fellow in Music Composition at Princeton University. She studied with Andrew Norman for composition and Areta Zhulla and Ronald Copes for violin at the Juilliard School, where she was the first composer to receive a Kovner Fellowship.

Praised for her “great control” (*Chicago Classical Review*), cellist **Isidora Nojkovic** is an active soloist, chamber, and orchestral musician. She has a passion for contemporary music and commissioning, having premiered over 50 works, and is one half of the contemporary violin / cello duo Orbit (“the new cross-continental duo to pay attention to.” *Classical Post*). A founding member of Varo String Quartet and Mycelium New Music Ensemble, she also performs regularly with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Vancouver Opera, Vancouver Symphony, Illinois Symphony, Vancouver’s Turning Point Ensemble, and the Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra. She has completed two tours with Lincoln Center Stage, performing in twenty-two countries as part of a piano quintet.

With wandering ears and an appetite for adventure, **Justin Kelly** generates rich sound excursions that shift between strange and familiar landscapes with ease. They began their journey in the classical tradition, pursuing an orchestra career through studies at Carnegie Mellon University, and Manhattan School of Music before shifting focus to improvised music, electronic music, and social practice, organizing multidisciplinary performance happenings as well as parties and raves. Their recorded music ranges from live techno-freakjazz conjurings (*Datamaster*, *Seldom Seen*) to zooted sax techno (Johnny Zoloff, *Fields EP*), and most recently an EP of flamboyant dancefloor psychedelia alongside frequent collaborator Kiernan Laveaux (*JZKL, Pancake of the Infinite*). As a drummer / percussionist, they’ve played a gamut venues in Pittsburgh and beyond (Pittsburgh’s Con Alma, Thunderbird Cafe, Collision, Diamond Beach; Cleveland’s Bop Stop; NYC’s Carnegie Hill Concerts; Detroit’s Moondog Cafe), performing contemporary classical music, jazz, creative improvised musik, electroacoustic excursions, and so on.

Travis Laplante is a composer, improviser, and saxophonist. Laplante leads the acclaimed tenor saxophone quartet Battle Trance, as well as Subtle Degrees, his duo with drummer Gerald Cleaver. Recently, Laplante has composed long-form works for new music ensembles such as the JACK Quartet, Yarn/Wire, and the ~Nois Saxophone Quartet. Laplante is also known for his raw solo saxophone concerts and being a member of the avant-garde quartet Little Women. He has performed and / or recorded with Tyshawn Sorey, Yuniya Edi Kwon, Qasim Naqvi, Wendy Eisenberg, Caroline Shaw, Ches Smith, Peter Evans, Sō Percussion, Ingrid Laubrock, Mary Halvorson, International Contemporary Ensemble, Nate Wooley, Tyondai Braxton, Darius Jones, Mat Maneri, Julia Bullock, and Matt Mitchell, among others.

Laplante has released 13 critically acclaimed albums as a leader or co-leader on New Amsterdam Records, Aum Fidelity, Skirl Records, Tripticks Tapes, Out of Your Head Records, New Focus Recordings, and NNA Tapes. Laplante has toured his music extensively and has appeared at many major international festivals such as The Moers Festival (Germany), Jazz Jantar (Poland), Saalfelden (Austria), Jazz em Agosto (Portugal), Earshot (Seattle), Hopscotch (North Carolina), and the NYC Winter JazzFest. As a composer, Laplante has been commissioned by the Lucerne Festival (Switzerland), the JACK Quartet, Roulette Intermedium, Yarn/Wire, the Yellow Barn Music Festival, the MATA festival, and The Jerome Foundation.

Eleni Loving received her BFA in dance from The Juilliard School in 2022 and joined Gibney Company in April of the same year. She has had the privilege of working with esteemed choreographers such as Ohad Naharin, Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, Johan Inger, Tiffany Tregarthen and David Raymond, and Bobbi Jene Smith. She's worked with Shamel Pitts and TRIBE Collective appearing in Calvin Klein's 2022 *This is Love* Pride Campaign and collaborated with the Francesca Harper Project in her work for Works & Process at the Guggenheim Museum. In 2024, she left Gibney Company to join the closing cast of Punchdrunk's immersive theater production, *Sleep No More*. Following a nomination from Juilliard, Eleni received an award from the Princess Grace Foundation and was featured in the October 2024 issue of *Dance Magazine's* "Career Spotlight."

Jodi Melnick is a NYC-based choreographer, performer, and teacher. The profound expression of the dancing body and lucid performing instincts drive her creative process as the work is transformed through the phenomenon of movement. Her rich dance background includes dancing for Twyla Tharp, collaborating with Trisha Brown, and years of creative experiences with esteemed artists such as Sara Rudner, David Neumann, Rashaun Mitchell, Silas Reiner, Liz Roche, Jon Kinzel, Vicky Shick, John Jasperse, Susan Rethorst, Donna Uchizono, Yoshiko Chuma, Charles Atlas, Sibyl Kempson, and most recently, Maya Lee-Parritz. Her post-modern, experimental sensibilities have intersected with NYCBallet principal dancers, and middle- and high-schoolers. Honors include, Doris Duke Impact Award, Guggenheim Fellow, Jerome Robbins New Essential Works Grant, Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grant, two Bessie Awards, Gibney's DIP Residency Grant, Lower Manhattan Cultural Center 2-year extended Life Grant, and Center for Ballet Arts Fellow.

Gold medalist and first-ever American laureate of the International Bach-Abel Competition (2018), **Arnie Tanimoto** has established himself as one of the foremost viol players in the United States. He has performed and recorded in venues across North America and Europe with the likes of Barthold Kuijken, the Boston Early Music Festival Ensemble, and the Smithsonian Consort of Viols. In 2017, he was awarded a Frank Huntington Beebe Fund Fellowship and subsequently finished his studies at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis. His principal teachers include Paolo Pandolfo, Sarah Cunningham, Christel Thielmann, and Catharina Meints. Arnie is a core member of Mountainside Baroque and a founding member of the Academy of Sacred Drama. Alongside harpist Parker Ramsay, he co-directs A Golden Wire. He is a faculty member at Princeton University and regularly teaches at the Viola da Gamba Society Conclave.

Justin Wright is a composer, cellist, and multimedia artist from Montreal, Canada. After finishing his masters in molecular biology, Justin left science and started performing in bands of all sorts before eventually teaching himself how to compose, using the techniques he learned in recording studios. Justin's primary composition tools, for both electronic and acoustic music, are his cello, Ableton Live, a modular synthesizer, and a 4-track tape machine. Lately, Justin has focused on filmmaking, early music, virtual reality, and in situ composition. He has opened for artists such as Johann Johannsson, Hauschka, Thomas Mapfumo, Lubomyr Melnyk, Colin Stetson, Okkyung Lee, and Mount Eerie. Justin's most recent album, *A Really Good Spot*, was released in July 2022 on Beacon Sound and First Terrace Records. This past summer, Justin traveled to Svalbard, an archipelago close to the North Pole, and serenaded the glaciers with the most northerly cello performances in history.



What is PSK?

A lab for Princeton University composers to collaborate with today's finest performers and ensembles, Princeton Sound Kitchen is a vital forum for the creation of new music. Serving the graduate student and faculty composers of the renowned composition program at the Department of Music at Princeton University, PSK presents a wide variety of concerts and events throughout the year.

Upcoming Princeton Sound Kitchen events

Tuesday, April 29, at 8:00 PM, Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall

Elijah Daniel Smith: 'Forbidden Oracles,' ~Nois, Sō Percussion

Elijah Daniel Smith's 'Forbidden Oracles' is a 30-minute work that draws inspiration from the mysterious gospel of the Lots of St. Mary, a Coptic Codex used for divination, translated by Dr. AnneMarie Luijendijk. It will be performed by an octet consisting of two quartets: Sō Percussion and ~Nois saxophone quartet.

**Keep up to date about Princeton Sound Kitchen events
on the Current Season page of our website princeton_soundkitchen.org**