



November 8-10 | Hyatt-Regency | Chicago-Schaumburg

2024 cnadm fall workshop

meet the faculty



Patricia Cohen is adjunct faculty in NYU/Steinhardt's Dance Education program, preparing candidates for the MA in dance education. She created and teaches the course History, Culture, and Pedagogy of Jazz Dance, grounding jazz in the Africanist aesthetic. She also leads the culminating internship and facilitates professional development courses. Pat was the founding student advisor for the program's partnership with American Ballet Theatre (ABT), which integrates the MA with ABT's National Training Curriculum (NTC) in ballet pedagogy. An advocate for jazz dance, Pat contributed chapters to *Jazz Dance: A History of the Roots and Branches* (2014) and *Rooted Jazz Dance* (2022). She co-created the 2016 and 2019 NDEO Jazz Dance conferences and has presented papers and workshops globally. Her work is published in *JODE* and *DEiP*, where she serves on the editorial board. Pat also develops courses for the National Dance Education Organization's (NDEO) Online Professional Development Institute and is a past NDEO Board member and recipient of the 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Photo credit: Faye Ellman



Michael Deeb Weaver is the Managing Director of Zodiaque Dance Company. He is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Dance at the University at Buffalo, teaching jazz, tap, and musical theatre dance styles. An accomplished dancer, actor, instructor, and choreographer, his performance credits have taken him worldwide. Performance credits include national tours of "A Chorus Line" and "Young Frankenstein," in addition to regional productions of "Kinky Boots," "West Side Story," "Singin' in the Rain," "Hello, Dolly," and many more. Recent choreographic projects include "Merrily We Roll Along," "Sister Act," and "Fursona Non Grata" in his hometown of Buffalo, NY. Michael's choreography was recognized as a finalist at the 2023 Industry Dance Awards in Los Angeles. He has served as a faculty member at Nazareth College and a guest instructor at Montclair State University. He has taught for Dance Masters of America, the Chautauqua Institution, and Steps on Broadway. Michael is a member of the Actors' Equity Association and holds his BFA in Dance from the University at Buffalo.

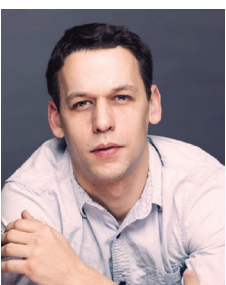


Jacqueline Farina started her classical ballet training in Mexico City, Mexico. She studied the RAD (Royal Academy of Dance) method with Andrea de Andraca presenting all the exam levels including Solo Seal. She then pursued her studies in London with Andrew Hardie and Maria Fay. She has performed in Germany and in France. In Mexico she danced with the Compania Nacional de Danza Clasica de Mexico (sponsored at the time by Ballet Nacional de Cuba). In Chicago, she performed with Venetia Stifter and Concert Dance Inc. as well as with Soul & Duende Spanish American Dance Theater.

Jacqueline is a Cecchetti DFCCA Diploma Certified Teacher with the Cecchetti Council of America. She presently teaches Ballet and Character Dance at Northwest Ballet Academy and Character Dance at Joffrey Academy of Dance.



Sterling Harris (he/him), a Chicago native, fell in love with tap dance at the age of seven and hasn't stopped dancing since. He began training under Lee Howard and Martin "Tre" Dumas at age 11 and studied jazz trombone and improvisation at age 14. Since earning a B.A. in Neuroscience from Northwestern University, he has been devoted to pursuing his passion for the art of tap dance. Sterling currently dances with Chicago Tap Theatre (Artistic Associate), MADD Rhythms, Dorrance Dance, and Music From The Sole. Recent credits include performances at Jacob's Pillow, the Joyce Theater, the Kennedy Center, and the Auditorium Theater. In addition to performing, Sterling has also had the honor of being on faculty at major dance festivals, including CNADM, the Chicago Tap Summit, the STL Rhythm Tap Fest, and RIFF Dallas, amongst teaching various workshops and intensives nationally and internationally. Sterling is also an alumnus of the Tap Program at The School at Jacob's Pillow and the recipient of the 2021 Lorna Strassler Award for Student Excellence.



Brandon Koepsell, a Detroit native and Walnut Hill School graduate (Natick, MA), has performed with Compagnie Coline in France, Rapture Dance Project, and Ron DeJesus Dance in Chicago. He's been a guest performer and choreographer for several college programs, including the University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, Oakland University, Alma College, and Wayne State University. His credits include performing with the Michigan Opera Theater and serving as choreographic assistant on Disney's *Oz the Great and Powerful*. Brandon was also a credited dancer in *A Very Harold and Kumar Christmas*.

In collaboration with Jaclyn Walsh, Brandon presented work at the Boston Contemporary Dance Festival and Green Box Arts Festival in Colorado. He has taught at CNADM and SADM and teaches at Wayne State University's Department of Theatre and Dance. A current dancer with Take Root and company instructor for Eisenhower Dance Detroit, he has also taught weekly Dance for Parkinson's classes in Detroit for the past three years.



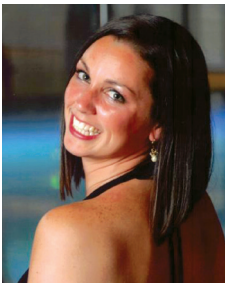
Ishmael Laryea Konney is an interdisciplinary Ghanaian artist born and raised in La, one of the major towns in Accra, the country's capital. He received his undergraduate degree in Theatre Arts at University of Education, Winneba. He was recruited to the US, where he earned his M.A. degree in International Studies at Ohio University and his MFA degree in Dance with an Interdisciplinary Specialization in Fine Arts at The Ohio State University. He is an Assistant Professor of Dance at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. He also serves as a Dance faculty for Kentucky Governor's School for the Arts. He worked with the National Dance Company of Ghana and the National Theatre. His research interests delve deeply into promoting Ghanaian cultural values while examining the relationship and intersectionality between performance and Ghanaian cultural practices. His immediate research focuses on the Ghanaian storytelling tradition and its incorporation with contemporary dance.



Lizzie Mackenzie has spent 21 years dancing, teaching, coaching, and choreographing in Chicago and the surrounding area. She co-founded Extensions Dance Company, now in its 15th year, and Extensions Dance Center, currently in its 10th year. Lizzie has danced with River North Dance Company, Giordano Dance Chicago, Elements Contemporary Ballet, Chicago Repertory Ballet, The Cambrians, and C5 Aerial Arts. She has taught globally for organizations like the Jazz Dance World Congress, Dance Masters of America, and Regional Dance America. Lizzie has been an artist-in-residence at Northwestern University, East Carolina University, Illinois State University, University of Illinois, Webster University, Western Michigan University, and Grand Valley State University. Her teaching style combines intensity and high expectations with a supportive and loving environment, helping students gain confidence as artists and individuals. Known for her extensive knowledge and communication skills, she connects with dancers of all ages and levels. Her feature, "Dance and Confidence," has inspired executives and dance educators through board meetings and conventions.



Eillean Mallary is the Executive Director of Culture Shock® Chicago and has been a company dancer for 19 years. She trained at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts and danced with Clear Lake Metropolitan Ballet, performing in *The Nutcracker*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Cinderella*, *Dracula*, and *Coppélia*. She served as variations assistant to prima ballerina Janie Parker, the first American to win a gold medal at the USA IBC. In 2019, Culture Shock hosted the International Choreographers Showcase at Chicago's Harris Theater, presenting the first all-hip hop program at this iconic venue. Eillean has performed throughout Chicago and toured the U.S. and Canada with Culture Shock. Her credits include a flash mob for Pillsbury with gospel duo Mary Mary and performances for Adidas-Lollapalooza, Coca-Cola, and Nike's "Let's Move" campaign with First Lady Michelle Obama. Her students and choreography have won national championships and accolades. Eillean is a passionate and dedicated teacher who strives to inspire and create positive change through dance.



Connie Sweeney has been dancing for over 35 years. She has advanced level mastery in tap, jazz, ballet, and modern. She is on staff at Jo's Footwork Studio in Western Springs, IL, and at the Dance Workshop/City Nation in Orland Park, IL. Connie attended the NFAA in Madison, WI where she received a "platinum" in tap, and "honorable mention" in jazz. Connie has been on faculty for CNADM, CDC, DMW, and STARQUEST. She has been a member of Matrix Dance Improv - modern, The Kirby Reed Ascension Project - jazz, Instruments of Movement - modern, and Rhythm ISS - an all-female tap ensemble. She has performed with her brother, Jay Fagan, in "Sibling Rivalry" and was a member of Same Planet Different World, a modern company, for nine years. For five years, Connie was also the artistic director of an "all discipline" dance company, Footwork Dance Ensemble. Connie continues to share her love of dance by choreographing for youth dance companies around the Chicagoland area.



Priyank Thakker, founder of Naachchicago, is a Bollywood-trained dancer from Raell Padamsee's acting and dance academy in Mumbai. His journey in acting and dance began in middle school and continued through high school. Priyank pursued his passion while earning a Bachelor's and Master's in Mechanical Engineering from Rutgers University. He was a key member of Bollywood Badmaash Company in Chennai, winning eight prestigious competitions across India. During his master's program, he joined the South Asian Performing Arts (SAPA) team, further honing his skills.

In 2022, Priyank launched Naachchicago, a thriving dance enterprise with branches in Chicago and New York. With a diverse team of 12+ instructors, Naachchicago is more than a dance studio—it's a cultural movement. Priyank's vision is to share the vibrancy of South Asian culture and the captivating performances that define Indian cinema. Through Bollywood dance, Naachchicago serves as a dynamic ambassador, showcasing the allure of Indian culture on the global stage.



Eduardo Zambrana (MFA in Choreography and Performance, University of Arizona) is a dancer, choreographer, and educator from Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia. He has performed with Hawkinsdance, Convergence Ballet Company, and Dance Kaleidoscope. He dances with Giordano Dance Chicago and has become the only Bolivian artist certified to the professional level in the Giordano Technique. Eduardo trained at the University of Arizona's triple-track program in Ballet, Modern, and Jazz, performing works by faculty members Sam Watson, Tamara Dyke-Compton, and Michael Williams, as well as masterworks by Nacho Duato, Larry Keigwin, Paul Taylor, and Martha Graham. Eduardo has danced under the direction of David Hochoy, a former Martha Graham Dance Company member, and performed in site-responsive works at Exhibit Columbus, Penrod Arts Fair, and Tucson Museum of Art. His choreographic commissions include pieces for New Dances 2023 (IL), Simantikos Dance Chicago, and Ten Tiny Dances at Taliesin West. His work has been featured in festivals across the U.S. and internationally, winning Best Student Film at Red Rock ScreenDance Film Festival in 2021.