

DR. PHILLIPS HIGH SCHOOL DANCE MAGNET

PRESENTS

JLC

JON LEHRER

Dance Company



DR. PHILLIPS HIGH SCHOOL DANCE MAGNET



# **JON LEHRER DANCE COMPANY**

*Saturday, September 20, 2025*

Dr. Phillips High School Performing Arts Center  
6500 Turkey Lake Road, Orlando, Florida

**DPHS Principal & VPA Administrator**

*Jackie Ramsey*

**VPA Department Chair**

*Nicole Nasrallah*

**DPHS PAC Theatre Directors**

*Jason Whitehead, Sarah Clark*

**Dance Magnet Director**

*Kathy Follensbee*

**DPHS Dance Assistant**

*Ariaghna Parrilla Rey*

**DPHS Dance Magnet Encore Parent Volunteers**

**TV Production Director**

*Tony Golden*

**Program Design**

*Kieshalia Stephens*

**JLDC Company Images**

*Kieshalia Stephens*

**DPHS Technical Crew**

*Sound: Matthew Reinert*

*Lighting: Ryan Brochu*

*Demerrick Dunlap, Aaliyah Warner, Elena Logan*

# DIRECTOR'S NOTES

*Welcome to the Jon Lehrer Dance Company!*

*The Dr. Phillips High School, "Dance in Motion" Travel Company, Company 2 and Elective Dancers welcome back the Jon Lehrer Dance Company (JLDC) under the direction of Jon Lehrer for our 17th year of an amazing collaboration! None of us could have imagined how this original one-week residency would grow and flourish into a six-week tour in Central Florida for JLDC. This is always a major highlight of the year for all of our dancers! As dancers, we have been enthralled with the athletic and dynamic energy JLDC brings to the class and the stage. We feel fortunate and honored to learn and work with this amazing company.*

*The JLDC members have encouraged joy and a love of physics in our dance community and throughout the State of Florida expanding their outreach during August/September working with Amanda's Dance Center, Howard Middle School, Not Just Dance, Timber Creek High School, University High School, Bak Middle School, Oxbridge Academy, Dreyfoos High School, The Villages Middle & High School, Palm Beach Atlantic College and Valencia College. Jon and his company members also worked with our own DPHS Dance Magnet & Elective students throughout this week sharing their style and repertory work, as well as setting their first work, "A Ritual Dynamic," on the DPHS Dance in Motion Travel Company. What an honor it has been to learn alongside the professionals each day!*

*For the eighth year, Jon set an Opening Act piece on community dancers. This year, dancers from five different schools/studios took part in a Thursday master class to collaborate with Jon & the Company. Many thanks to Amanda's Dance Center, Not Just Dance, Dance Bouchette, University High School, and DPHS. This opportunity gives dancers from different studios & schools a memorable opportunity to be a part of a professional show. In addition, the JLDC will also hold master classes tomorrow for Florida Dance Masters teachers and students coming from around the state.*

*We are honored to be sharing this gifted group of artistic athletes with the dance community throughout the state of Florida. We hope that you enjoy their performance as much as we have loved learning from them. May each of you be touched by their passion and boundless energy! Most important ~ we hope this gets you excited for a new season of dance!*

*Please feel free to meet and greet the cast after the show for autographs and pictures in the lobby.*

*ENJOY!!!*

*Kathy Tollensbee*

*Dr. Phillips High School Dance Magnet, Dance Director*

# JON LEHRER DANCE COMPANY

*Founder / Artistic Director / Choreographer - Jon Lehrer*

*Associate Director - Cristiana Cavallo*

*Rehearsal Director - Michael Miller*

*Technical Director - Eli Medina*

*Costume Designer - Laura Vanner*

*Jon Lehrer Dance Company (JLDC) began in 2007 in Buffalo, NY and has received critical acclaim nationally and internationally. Jon moved the company to his hometown of NYC in 2019, where they have become a vibrant addition to the city's dance community. Under Jon Lehrer's artistic direction, the company showcases his unique choreography and definitive style. His extensive background in both the modern and jazz dance idioms fosters choreography that is organic, athletic, artistic, entertaining, and often humorous, reflecting human experiences.*

*JLDC's expressive style is based on three main elements of movement - Circularity, 3-Dimensionality, and Momentum - which combine to create a form that is best described as "Organically Athletic". With creativity, athleticism, and the ability to make new and innovative modern and jazz dance accessible to all audiences, the company has made quite a name for themselves in the dance world. Striking the elusive balance between art and entertainment, JLDC showcases a dynamic, fun, and distinctive style which fuses jazz and modern dance, creating a true spectacle onstage which can be enjoyed by dance experts and novices alike.*

*JLDC tours extensively, receiving critical acclaim worldwide. Dance Magazine praised "the company took the house not so much by storm as by quantum physics," and Galerie Ortenau in Offenburg, Germany declared, "Dynamic, Powerful, Elegant - brings an absolute passion for the dance." From 2012-2016, JLDC had the honor of touring to Russia, sponsored by the US State Department in order to, as they said, "bring the best in American modern dance to the people of Russia." These cultural diplomacy tours brought the company to Vladivostok, Anadyr, Perm, Yekaterinburg, Chukotka, and Berezniki. JLDC has been touring to Europe since 2014. For their 2022 tour they premiered "Bernstein Celebration" - a full evening set to the music of Leonard Bernstein. JLDC was honored and privileged to be one of only a handful of dance companies worldwide given the rights to use Bernstein's music. At home in NYC, JLDC is a three time recipient of the prestigious CUNY Dance Initiative Award (2022, 2023, and 2025).*

*Jon Lehrer Dance Company's mission is to share and spread the joy of dance through performance, education, community engagement, and artistic collaboration. With choreographic works by Jon Lehrer, the company brings edge-of-your-seat excitement to audiences worldwide through a signature style of movement that is organic, athletic, artistic and accessible.*

[www.jonlehrerdance.com](http://www.jonlehrerdance.com)

# ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

## JON LEHRER



*Jon Lehrer, who was raised in Queens, New York, took his very first dance class at age 19 at the University at Buffalo. While dating a dancer, Jon teased her about how easy it must be to get an A in a dance class. The girl dared Jon to try a beginning level modern dance class and his life was changed. Jon ultimately received his BFA in Dance from the University at Buffalo.*

*As a professional, Jon has danced with the Erick Hawkins Dance Company, Paul Sanasardo, John Passafiume Dancers, in Merv Griffin's "Funderful" in Atlantic City, NJ, and the Radio City Rockettes Christmas Spectacular. In 1997, Jon was hired by Giordano Dance Chicago, the worlds' preeminent jazz dance company. After only three years he was promoted to Rehearsal Director and then became the Associate Director two years later. During his ten years with Giordano, Jon also became the resident choreographer, creating seven original works on the company that received rave reviews all around the world.*

*Jon has choreographed for several professional dance companies and universities all over the country. He teaches master classes throughout the U.S. and around the world, having been on faculty at Dance Masters of America, Jazz Dance World Congress, Dance Teacher Summer Conference, Chicago National Association of Dance Masters (CNADM), Chautauqua Institution, Florida Dance Educators Organization, and Florida Dance Masters to name a few. Jon has received many awards and honors, including the University at Buffalo Zodiaque Dance Company Distinguished Alumni Award, CNADM's Artistic Achievement Award, University at Buffalo College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Alumni Award, and the "Rising Star" SPARK Award for being an integral part of Buffalo's thriving arts and cultural community.*

# THE COMPANY

## MAHALIA BROOKES



*Mahalia is originally from the US Virgin Islands where she started her training at Caribbean Dance School. After moving to Tampa, FL she continued her training at All American Dance Factory, All American Classical Ballet School, and at Blake High School. She has competed in the NAACP ACT-SO national convention where she worked closely with choreographer Anthony Burrell. She went on to receive her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at Marymount Manhattan College in NYC. While there she performed works by Earl Mosley, Jessica Lang, Anthony Morigerato, John Heginbotham, Sidra Bell,*

*and Pascal Rioult. This is Mahalia's fourth season with JLDC.*

## CRISTIANA CAVALLO



*Cristiana is from Utica, NY and began dancing at the age of 3. She received her training at the Dancenter and at Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute School of Dance. Cristiana graduated in 2014 from the University at Buffalo with a BFA in Dance and a BA in Sociology. As a UB student, she was a member of the Zodiacque Dance Company, performed in several musicals, choreographed for many student productions and acted as Director of Dancer's Workshop. She attended numerous summer programs, including NYSSSA, Thodos Dance Chicago Intensive, and Steps Summer Study. During her senior year, Cristiana was chosen for the Jon*

*Lehrer Dance Observership, allowing her to train with the company and gain valuable insight into the professional world of dance. In 2019, Cristiana was invited to choreograph as part of the Barn Dance Project at the Theater at Woodshill, curated by Caitlyn Schrader. She is also the interim Executive Director of JUNTOS Collective. Cristiana has been with JLDC for 12 years, becoming an integral part of the company's success both on and off the stage.*

## KRISTEN HEDBERG



*Kristen was born and raised in Richmond, VA. She earned her BFA in Contemporary Dance from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, where she was dual-enrolled with The Martha Graham School during her senior year. Kristen was a member of the RIOULT Repertory Dancers, under the direction of Pascal Rioult, Joyce Herring and Charis Haines. Other professional credits include: Curet Performance Project, Faustine Lavie Dance Project, and Susie McHugh + Dancers, among others. Kristen is delighted to*

*be in her fifth season with JLDC.*



# MICHAEL MILLER



*Michael grew up on Long Island, New York. He started dancing at the age of eight, focusing primarily on ballet and modern dance at Peconic Ballet Theatre. Michael then received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Dance from James Madison University in Virginia, studying under Rubèn Graciani, Matt Pardo, Fran Kirmser, and Ryan Corrison. While at JMU, he also performed in the pre-professional Virginia Repertory Dance Company, under the direction of Matt Pardo, and was awarded the Excellence in Performance Award his senior year. Michael had the pleasure to work in multiple residencies with choreographers such as Abraham in Motion (A.I.M) directed by Kyle Abraham, Rubèn Graciani, and Ryan Corrison. He also performed in original works choreographed by Omàr Roman De Jesùs, Xiang Xu, and Ricky Ruiz. This is Michael's fourth season with JLDC.*

# RICCARDO PASSERA



*Riccardo is from Milan, Italy and draws on his heritage that spans across the Atlantic Ocean, from Italy to the Caribbean. He started dancing Caribbean dances at the age of 10 at Ratz Matatz school and later continued his ballet, modern and contemporary training with The Ballet School, AreaDance Nuova and New Style Dance. During this time Riccardo performed works by Lino Villa, which toured Italy with New Style Project Dance Company. He also performed choreography by Mattia Cuda while he was an apprentice with MAADE Ensemble. At the age of 18, Riccardo moved to New York City to train at The Ailey School, where he was a member of the Ailey Student Performance Group from 2022 to 2024, performing Alvin Ailey's works across the tri-state area under the direction of Freddie Moore. During his time at Ailey, he performed Bird Lives by Alvin Ailey, an excerpt of Festa Barocca by Mauro Bigonzetti and Mr. Ailey's Memoria for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's 2021, 2022 and 2023 seasons at New York City Center. Between Italy and New York, Riccardo has had the pleasure of working with choreographers such as Clifton Brown, Amy Hall Garner, Ronald K. Brown, Darrell Moultrie, Brice Mousset, Norbert De La Cruz, Johan King Silverhult, Attila Joey Csiki and Rita Pivano. This is Riccardo's second season with JLDC.*

# AUSTIN SHAFFER



*Austin, an Ohio native, received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance from Slippery Rock University with a concentration in Performance and Choreography. He has performed works by Bill T. Jones, Brian Brooks, Helen Simoneau, Joshua Manculich, Hanna Britson, Cameron McKinney, Ursula Payne, and Bill Evans. He has performed and presented his works at the Koresch Artist Showcase, American College Dance Association Conference Gala, Cleveland Dance Festival, Whirlwind Dance Company, El Colegio del Cuerpo (Cartagena, Colombia), and Columbus Arts Festival. Austin just finished his second season as a main company dancer for Whirlwind Dance, a contemporary dance company in Columbus, Ohio. This is Austin's first season with JLDC.*

# LEAH SUSKIND



*Leah was born and raised in Randolph, NJ. In May 2022, she graduated summa cum laude from New York University Tisch School of the Arts with a BFA in dance. While at NYU, Leah had the opportunity to perform works by Yin Yue, Stephen Petronio, Jaclyn Walsh, and Molissa Fenley. In the fall of 2022, Leah participated in the inaugural GibneyPro Training Program*

*where she got to work with artists such as Rena Butler, Maleek Washington, Laja Field, and Elia Mrak. Throughout her summers, Leah has attended programs at Jacob's Pillow, Orsolina 28, the Juilliard School, and with companies such as Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, GALLIM, Parsons Dance, the Rockettes, and the Martha Graham Company. Leah's most recent choreographic work, "VII", was recently selected to perform at the Spring 2023 JCE Jazz Dance Project as well as the 2023 Hartford Dance Festival. She was also the fellowship recipient of the 2021 DM.Connect Choreographer Competition. Leah was an apprentice with JLDC for two seasons and is so excited to be in her third season as a full JLDC member.*

# MITCHELL TAKEDA



*Mitchell was born in Taiwan and raised in Sacramento, CA. He graduated from Ball State University in May 2024 with a BFA in Musical Theatre and was part of the Honors College. Mitchell was introduced to JLDC during the Fall Semester of 2022 when the company visited Ball State for a three-day masterclass series. Since then, he has always dreamed to dance with the company and perform with them one day. He participated in the JLDC Winter*

*Intensive in January 2024, and is excited to be in his second season with the company.*





# OPENING PROGRAM

## MINGOS!

Music: La Caravane Passe

### CENTRAL FLORIDA COMMUNITY PIECE

Not Just Dance: Isabelle Gruenzner, Zora Schneck

Amanda's Dance Center: Caydon Bell, Braylen Moses, Lauren Wilkens

University High School: Gabriele Bihag, Lyric Chaffin, Karlyss Nazario

Dance Bochette: Samantha Vos

Dr. Phillips High School: Piper Allen, Emma Brady-Fitzpatrick,  
Selene Bogart, Mckinzie Brown, Kimani Cooper, Chloe Leon,  
Makhani Lozeille, Kemarae Mayers, Mariah Mcfarlande,  
Nehemyah Morgan, Khloe Randolph, Madison Yu

## SOLSTICE

Music: Volker Bertelmann

### TIMBER CREEK HIGH SCHOOL ELITE DANCE TEAM

Directors: Tabitha Clear, Tara Perry

Dancers: Kendra Beals, Sanaa Carty, Rosie Castro, Zalea Ebbeler, Rory Foranocce,  
Kammy Lee, Paige Singer, McKenzie Swearengin, Ruby Thomson, Olivia Wright

## PANTHEON RISING

Original Music Composition: Damien Simon

### HOWARD MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMY OF ARTS DANCE

Director: Jasmine Henry, Alissa Coombs

Dancers: Alasia Allen, Adelaide Bleakley, Avery Buck, Samantha Cubbage,  
Juliette Goldfried, Ava Green, Liana Jones, Mila Nathan, Dakarai Nesmith,  
Lena Nesmith, Luna Ocampo, Jocelyn Payne, Paola Perez,  
Valentina Sepulveda, Charlissee Viverette, Aurielle Williams

# BRIDGE AND TUNNEL

Music: Paul Simon

## NOT JUST DANCE

Director: Amanda Mendoza

Dancers: Hannah Bender, Nichole Cespedes, Avery Flatt, Jaida Giehl, Isabelle Gruenzner, Alondra Oquendo, Zora Schenck, Miriam Stevens

# THE ALLIANCE

Music: Iva Nova

## AMANDA'S DANCE STUDIO

Director: Amanda Bell

Dancers: Caydon Bell, Abigail Carter, Alicia Kakol, Avani Kasturi, Elizabeth Marion, Braylen Moses, Kaylin Vitale, Myah Warner, Lauren Wilkins

# LA FOLLIA

Music: Antonio Vivaldi

## UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL DANCE MAGNET

Director: Elise Mele

Dancers: Sophia Aspitia, Bailey Carlisi, Maliah Castillo-Canova, Charlotte Christiansen, Giselle Colon, Mikaela De La Rosa, Ariana Jordan, Hannah Mounts, Haleina Nguyen, Emayla Padilla, Brooke Piper, Cameron Powers, Emma Roberts, Daisy Roman, Amelie Rowe, Angelys Ruiz, Jescelly Silvagnoli-Miranda, Aaliyah Turpin, Gabriella Vidal, Scarlett Wanzer



# ACT 1

## SOLSTICE

(2019)

*A celebration of all things summer, Solstice was commissioned by and created at Artpark in Lewiston, NY for their Summer Solstice Celebration.*

**Music:** Will Close and The Earth Harp Collective, Volker Bertelmann

**Lighting:** Kam Hobbs

**Costumes:** Laura Vanner

**Dancers:** The Company

## SUM OF US

**Music:** Gunild Keetman, Carl Orff

## VALENCIA COLLEGE DANCE

**Director:** Dr. Suzanne Salapa

**Artistic Director:** Eric Yow

**Dancers:** Ruby Borges Diaz, Sara Cano, Tiara Cappello, Alex Cooper, Judah Hanson, Maria Mejia, Ariaghna Parrilla Rey, Yariem Vasquez, Krysten Wemyss, Valeria Ysabel

## VOLT

(2024)

*A playful and joyous homage to growing up in Queens, NY.*

**Music:** James Asher, Pablo Samonta, Rhythm Scott,  
Baptiste Thiry, Damen Deshayes

**Lighting:** Eli Medina

**Costumes:** Laura Vanner, after Cindy Darling

**Dancers:** Mahalia Brooks, Kristen Hedberg, Michael Miller,  
Riccardo Passera, Leah Suskind, Mitchell Takeda

- INTERMISSION -

# ACT 2

## A RITUAL DYNAMIC

**Music:** Hovannes K, DJ Disse

### DR. PHILLIPS HIGH SCHOOL DANCE MAGNET

**Director:** Kathy Follensbee

**Dancers:** Olivia Anderson, Claire Atwell, Eva Baez, Noor El-helw, Faith Gant,  
Lara Goncalves, Yelani Hill, NaKai Jessup, Morgan Marotta, Ky McCary,  
Fabi Ocque, Andre Roche, AJ Williams, Sana Williams

## THE WAY WITHIN (2005)

*Inspired by the novel "Siddhartha" by Herman Hesse, "the way within" refers to discovering enlightenment and self-knowledge through one's own experiences, rather than through any external teachings or prescribed doctrine.*

**Music:** Christopher O'Riley, playing Radiohead

**Lighting:** Kam Hobbs

**Costumes:** Laura Vanner

**Dancer:** Cristiana Cavallo

## FUSED BY 8 (2009 - reimagined in 2025)

**Music:** Joachim Horsely

**Lighting:** Kam Hobbs

**Costumes:** Laura Vanner

**Dancers:** The Company

# UPCOMING CONCERT



## OPEN SPACE

SATURDAY

NOVEMBER 1, 2025

7:00PM

DR PHILLIPS  
HIGH SCHOOL  
BLACK BOX THEATRE

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# Dance IN MOTION

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**JON LEHRER DANCE COMPANY**

**9/20/2025**

**OPEN SPACE**

**11/1/2025**

**WINTER WONDERLAND**

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**1/17/2026**

**4 IN MOTION**

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**3/28/2026**

**STUDENT SHOWCASE**

**4/22/2026**

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