



The Music Department Presents

Rhythms and Movements:

**Celebrating Trinidadian Limbo Dance
and Steelpan Music**

Friday, September 19th, 2025, 7:30PM
Arthur Zankel Music Center
Helen Filene Ladd Concert Hall

Program

Carnival Suite

Josanne Francis

1. Drunken Sailor
2. Play Mas
3. Robber Talk
4. Mischief Playground
5. Dance of the Moko

DNA

Mical Teja

Intermission

Pragati

Josanne Francis

Panoramic

Liam Teague

Chant

Liam Teague

Hammer

David Rudder

Nikkara

Robert Chappell

Mabouya

Andy Narell

Calypso Music

David Rudder

Band

Josanne Francis, band leader,
steelpan
Daron Roberts, drums
Ellington Carthan, piano
Knox Barber, bass
Atesh Indarjit, tabla
Modupe Onilu, percussion
Elijah Jamal Balbed, saxophone

Dance Troupe

Makeba Gabriel
Kendra Murray
Kerry Ann Julien
Delores Alexander
Lucette Regis
Cleavand "Arlington" Serries

Costume Design by Gail Edinborough

Presented by the Skidmore College Department of Music in collaboration with the Department of Dance. Sponsored by the Office of Special Programs/McCormack Artist-Scholar Fund, the Presidential Discretionary Fund, and the Arthur Zankel Music Center, with co-sponsors in the Asian Studies, Black Studies, and International Affairs, and Environmental Sciences and Studies programs. Made possible in part by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

Artist Bios

Award-winning artist, composer, and educator **Dr. Josanne Francis** began playing steelpan at age nine in her native Trinidad & Tobago (TT). Josanne approaches steelpan with great reverence for its versatility, a perspective through which she promotes cultural exchange on and off the bandstand. She has appeared at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Strathmore Music Center, Dizzy's Club, Times Square, Zhangzhou, China, and the Port-au-Prince International Jazz Festival. She has collaborated with Phylicia Rashad, David Rudder, Etienne Charles, Jon Batiste, Kes, Andy Narell, and Liam Teague; appeared with the Michigan Philharmonic and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestras; and recorded on several projects.

In recognition of her artistry, Josanne was recently selected as one of two fellows for Strathmore Music Center's inaugural Artistic Advancement Fellowship. She was also honored by the Embassy of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for her outstanding contributions to the preservation and promotion of the national instrument of Trinidad and Tobago. At this recognition, she was presented citations from Pan Trinbago, the world governing body of steelpan, and from the Office of the Mayor of the District of Columbia.

Her other accolades include the 2022 Vanguard Award, presented at the Caribbean American Heritage (CARAH) Gala & Awards, and the Rising Leader Award, presented by His Excellency Anthony Phillips-Spencer, TT Ambassador to the United States. Josanne has held artistic residencies at Michigan State University, Strathmore Music Center, and Johns Hopkins Peabody Institute, and has served on a number of prestigious panels. In 2019, she launched Steel on Wheels LLC, an all-inclusive steelpan and percussion educational program, and in 2022, co-created the thriving performance outfit Elite Pan Consortium. She currently serves as a music lecturer and founding

steelbands director at the University of Maryland, where she also holds a lead role in community engagement.

Dr. Josanne Francis holds a PhD in Music Education from the University of Maryland, a Master's in Steelpan Performance from Northern Illinois University, and a Bachelor's degree in Music Education from the University of Southern Mississippi.

Daron "Synco" Roberts is a Trinidad and Tobago-born percussionist, composer, and educator specializing in steelpan. Based in Norfolk, Virginia, he serves as Associate Director of the Rhythm Project and holds degrees from Northern Illinois University and the University of Southern Mississippi. A former child prodigy, Roberts has earned national recognition in Trinidad and Tobago and performed with artists such as Andy Narell, Liam Teague, and Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez. His work spans live and studio recordings across jazz, gospel, funk, and Caribbean genres.

Dancer, Educator, Limboist Extraordinaire with over 25 years of experience in the performing arts, **Makeba Gabriel** is a seasoned dancer and educator renowned for her exceptional contributions to Caribbean dance, particularly in the art of limbo. A versatile practitioner trained across multiple dance disciplines; she is especially celebrated for her distinctive limbo style.

Her formative training was guided by esteemed mentors, including Imbert Morrison and the legendary Julia Edwards—pioneers in the tradition of limbo performance. Ms. Gabriel has dedicated her career to preserving and promoting Caribbean cultural heritage through dance. She has worked extensively with prominent groups such as Diego Martin Footprints Folk Performers, La Danse Caraïbe, and Dance Dynamics, among others, to ensure the continuity of Trinidad

and Tobago's rich folk traditions. Professionally, Makeba Gabriel began her career in 2002 with the internationally acclaimed Universoul Circus, where she performed for over a decade as a featured limboist.

Her talent has taken her across the globe, representing Trinidad and Tobago in countries including Cuba, Guyana, St. Lucia, and across Europe. Notably, in 2022, she had the distinguished honor of performing for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at the Platinum Jubilee celebrations as part of the Trinidad & Tobago Defence Force's cultural delegation. Throughout her career, Ms. Gabriel has collaborated with some of the Caribbean's most respected creative directors and choreographers, including Allan Balfour, Peter Minshall, Davlin Thomas, and Delton Frank. Her work continues to inspire new generations of dancers and cultural ambassadors.

Kendra Murray, a 33-year-old from Back Hill, Whim, is a distinguished figure in both sports and the performing arts from Tobago. She began her dance journey at the age of seven under the guidance of renowned Tobago dance legend Miriam Scott. Kendra's early passion for dance, particularly in the Masquerade style, allowed her to showcase her talent with precision and flair, captivating audiences locally and internationally. Her extensive experience spans over 26 years, during which she has excelled in various dance genres, including Folk, Contemporary, Jazz, Afro-beats, Hip Hop, and Limbo, emphasizing character development and storytelling through movement.

Kendra's dance career has taken her across the globe, performing in countries such as Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States, and various Caribbean nations. She has become a prominent figure at Tobago's festivals, including the Tobago Heritage Festival and Carnival, and has participated in significant events like the World Travel Market in London and Carifesta in Suriname.

In addition to her artistic pursuits, Kendra has held various positions in education and community development. She started as a book rental clerk and later worked as an Address Improvements Officer and a field officer for the ABCD program. From 2014 to 2020, she served as a Dance Tutor with the Division of Tourism, Culture and Transportation, where she initiated several projects in schools. Kendra also became a full-time dance tutor at the Plymouth Police Youth Club, focusing on guiding youth through culture and the performing arts.

Her notable achievements include stilt walking, West African drum and dance, and receiving awards for community building and folk drumming. Kendra's dedication to her craft and her community is evident in her vibrant personality and commitment to nurturing the next generation of artists.

Kerry Ann Julien is a dynamic and versatile dancer with over 15 years of experience across a spectrum of dance forms. Born on November 1, 1993, in Trinidad and Tobago, Kerry Ann has dedicated her life to the art of dance, captivating audiences with energetic and vibrant stage presence.

Her journey began at a young age, and since then, she has honed her skills through rigorous training and diverse performance opportunities. Kerry Ann has graced stages locally in Trinidad and Tobago at prestigious events, including the International Soca Monarch, Kaiso House Tent, Dimanche Gras Opening, the Prime Minister's Best Village Competition and internationally the Universoul Circus in the United States of America. Her passion for dance has also taken her on exciting cruise ship tours and cultural festivals, such as Carifesta and the Haiti Festivals in 2015.

In addition to her performance accolades, Kerry Ann has made significant contributions to the theatrical landscape, collaborating with renowned playwright Dr. Efebo Wilkinson in productions like "Bitter

Cassava." Her involvement with the North West Laventille Cultural Movement further showcases her commitment to promoting the cultural heritage of Trinidad and Tobago through the performing arts.

Kerry Ann is not only a performer but also a mentor, eager to share her knowledge and inspire both younger and older dancers. She believes in the transformative power of dance and is dedicated to fostering creativity and expression in others. As she continues to evolve in her craft, Kerry Ann remains passionate about captivating audiences and pushing the boundaries of choreography.

Whether on stage or in the studio, Kerry Ann Julien embodies the spirit of dance, making her a standout figure in the vibrant Trinidadian arts scene.

Delores Alexander is a performer from Trinidad with over three decades of experience in dance and acting. Her career began in the 1980s with the Barataria Community Council, where she trained under the late Ms. Elma Romano alongside notable instructors such as Emelda Lynch Griffith, Felix Harrington, and Gregor Breedy. Throughout her career, she has collaborated with esteemed dance companies in Trinidad and Tobago, including Bon Bassa Productions, Astor Johnson Repertory Dance Theatre, and the Continuum Dance Project, and has made guest appearances with the Malick Folk Performing Company and Lydians Music Chorale, demonstrating her versatility and passion for the arts.

In addition to her dance career, Alexander is also recognized as an actress and comedian, known for her energetic performances and comedic talent, particularly through her work with Learie Joseph, which has garnered acclaim for her engaging stage presence and commitment to her art. She has participated in numerous high-profile events in Trinidad and Tobago, such as the Dimanche Gras opening, Soca Monarch, Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

(CHOGM), the opening of Carifesta, and the closing ceremonies of the Prime Minister's Best Village Trophy competition.

Her extensive touring as a dancer and actress has taken her across the Caribbean, North America, and Europe with various companies, including the Barataria Community Council, Continuum Dance Project, Exodus Steel Orchestra, and KDS Foundation, in partnership with MSC Cruise Line. Delores has received multiple awards at the Prime Minister's Trophy Competition for her performances in both acting and dancing and has played a significant role in mentoring young talents in her leadership position with Bon Bassa Productions for the past fourteen years. As a devoted mother, dancer, actress, and leader, Delores Alexander continues to influence the cultural scene of Trinidad and Tobago through her vibrant performances, passion for the arts, and composed demeanor.

Lucette Regis is a dancer, choreographer, and movement specialist with a wealth of dance experience. With foundational teachings from her mother Lucy Regis, Torrance Mohammed (deceased), and other notable industry practitioners, her career and practice have spanned local, regional, and international fronts for over 20 years. She has trained and worked with companies such as the Arawaks Dance Group and the Little Carib Dance Company. Lucette possesses skill and teaching competence in traditional folk, ballet, contemporary, jazz, and classical East Indian (Kathak) dance and possesses a Postgraduate Diploma in Education from the University of the West Indies St. Augustine and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in the Performing Arts from the University of Trinidad and Tobago. In 2016, she formed her dance school, the Sixth Position Studio, now Sixth Position Studio 'NARODNOST'. Lucette has been a resident player with the National Theatre Arts Company of Trinidad and Tobago and is currently a Theatre Arts Teacher (specialization in Dance).

Cleavand Serries, also better known as “Arlington”, is a Trinidadian born Dancer and Choreographer whose creative vision and dynamic presence have made significant contributions to the performing arts across the Caribbean and internationally. Renowned for his bold, expressive choreography and dedication to cultural storytelling through movement, Serries has cultivated a career marked by excellence, innovation, and impact. He is known for his dynamic work with Traditional Caribbean Folk Dance and his fusion of West African and Contemporary Dance, he is also trained in Latin/Ballroom and Indian Classical dance.

Mr. Serries is a holder of a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree and a Diploma in Dance and Dance Education. A career highlight came in 2009 when he was selected to choreograph and direct performances for two globally significant events hosted in Trinidad and Tobago: the 5th Summit of the Americas and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). These opening presentations were attended by world leaders including then - U.S. President Barack Obama and Queen Elizabeth II.

In addition to his work on major international stages, Cleavand Serries has mentored generations of young performers and has been instrumental in the development of regional dance companies and festivals. As an artistic director, he continues to inspire with productions that explore social themes, celebrate Caribbean culture, and challenge audiences to see dance as a vital form of expression and dialogue. Mr. Serries believes that through the expressions of movement one can unlock and manifest the mysteries of the universe.

Kieron Dwayne Sargeant, from Trinidad and Tobago, is an Assistant Professor of Dance at Skidmore College and an expert in African-Caribbean diaspora dance traditions. With an MFA in Dance from Florida State University and an MA in Community Dance from Ohio University, he has over two decades of international teaching and

performance experience. Founder of the Kieron Sargeant Dance and Dance Education Foundation, his travels and research span the United States, Canada, Cuba, Grenada, Barbados, Togo, and Nigeria, delving into the morphology of African diaspora dances in the US. Kieron remains actively engaged in collaborative projects affiliated with Hofstra University and Rutgers University. His collaborations with international scholars and artists further underscore his commitment to understanding and enhancing the global impact of African influences on dance traditions. Kieron was additionally tasked with the implementation of the concept for this concert and serves as the choreographer for the dance troupe from Trinidad and Tobago.

Upcoming Events

SURROUND: Khemist Mayfield
Sunday, September 21, 7:00pm

In It 10 presents:
Sweet Honey in the Rock
Friday, September 26, 7:30pm

Sterne Virtuoso Series:
Dmitri Novgorodsky
Friday, October 10, 7:30pm

Schenectady-Saratoga
Symphony Orchestra
Saturday, October 11, 7:00pm

Filene Scholar Celebration Concert
Friday, October 17, 7:00pm

Caroline Shaw & Sō Percussion (feat.
Ringdown): Who turns out the light
Saturday, October 18, 8:00pm

Ensemble Connect
Friday, October 24, 7:30pm

Skidmore & Bennington Folk Festival
Saturday, November 8, 7:30pm

SURROUND: Julie Doiron
Saturday, November 9, 4:00pm

Tenzin Choegyal w/Attacca Quartet &
Alex Ring Gray: Be the Sky
Friday, November 14, 7:30pm

SKIDMANIA '75
Friday, November 21, 8:00pm
Saturday, November 22, 8:00pm

Skidmore in Concert:
Brass & Woodwind Ensembles
Saturday, November 22, 5:30pm

Skidmore in Concert: Orchestra
Tuesday, December 2, 7:00pm

Skidmore in Concert:
VCE + Chorus Outreach Concert
Thursday, December 4, 10:00am

Skidmore in Concert:
Concert Band
Friday, December 5, 7:00pm

Skidmore in Concert:
Global Music Showcase (String Band,
Indian, Mongolian, + West African
Ensembles)
Saturday, December 6, 2:00pm

Skidmore in Concert:
Big Band + Cuban Music Ensemble
Saturday, December 6, 7:00pm

Skidmore in Concert:
Small Jazz Ensembles + Guitar
Sunday, December 7, 1:00pm

Skidmore in Concert: Guitar Ensemble
Sunday, December 7, 4:00pm

Skidmore in Concert: String
Ensembles
Monday, December 8, 7:00pm

Skidmore in Concert: Vocal Chamber
Ensemble + Chorus
Wednesday, December 10, 7:00pm