

# The most *together* we've ever been

MFA Thesis Dance Concert

New Dance Works by  
Shaina Cantino  
Sara Coffin  
Mat Elder  
Safi Harriott



February 6, 7, 8, 2014

8:00 p.m.

Theatre 14

Mendenhall Center for the Performing Arts

## From the Choreographers

These two years in the Smith College Masters of Fine Arts program have been shaped by finding ourselves, in and out of the studio, with our weight off-balance. Testing our tilt on unfamiliar axes, we continue to discover how each shift tunes us to the world anew. This has been our practice – to seek disorientation and then, within that bewilderment, to invite clarity. As we learn to welcome the confusion and formlessness of our growing pains, it is the creative process that has kept us lovingly tethered together.

Susan Rethorst, in her book *A Choreographic Mind*, says it best:

“One has to know and not know, prefer and not prefer, empty oneself and acknowledge one’s fullness, be passive and charged. It has to happen to you and from you. It has to be too fast for you to take in, and done in baby steps, one leaking into the other.”

*The most together we’ve ever been* is a testament to the supportive, inquisitive community of which we are grateful to be a part. We extend overflowing thanks to our advisors Chris Aiken, Rodger Blum, Angie Hauser, and Candice Salyers.

In moments of dis-ease, we remind each other that “everything’s all already alright.” We share with you our perspective of this wonderfully challenging process.

Shaina Cantino, Sara Coffin, Mat Elder, Safi Harriott

# **“decision/experienced”**

## **Choreography**

Mat Elder  
in collaboration  
with the dancers

**Costume Design**  
Emily Justice Dunn

## **Music**

*Morning Mr Magpie*  
(*Nathan Fake Remix*);  
*Good Evening Mrs Magpie*  
(*Modeselektor Remix*)  
by Radiohead

**Set and Lighting Design**  
Daniel D. Rist

## **Dancers**

Brittany Claiborne  
Mat Elder  
Olivia Fauver  
Kyle Gouchoe-Hanas  
Charlie Markham  
Alison Marsh  
Ali Naranjo  
Brandy Neary  
Natalie Phillips  
Amanda Somma

I would like to thank my Life-Work girls (Stephanie Annessi, Sophia Arnall, Celine Belle, Rebecca Finell, Lily Katz, Hannah Klaes, and Lily Sky) for inspiring me throughout this process. “Decision/experienced” would not be what it is without you. Thank you to my beautiful cast for their hard work, dedication, enthusiasm, and willingness to explore this idea of “risk”. Each day was a new journey and experiment, and each of you welcomed these challenges with determination and a smile. I could not have asked for a better group of individuals to work with, and I cherish each one of you.

Thank you to Tomas Aponte for your encouragement and assistance with the creation of this work. You are an essential member of the “decision/experienced” family. Thank you to Rodger Blum, Tom Vacanti, the Smith faculty, and my amazing cohort for their guidance and support.

Last but not least, thank you Mom and Dad for flying to see this performance. Your relentless love is what got me here, and I love you both.

# **saudade**

## **Choreography**

Safi Harriott  
in collaboration with the cast

## **Lighting Design**

Daniel D. Rist

## **Costume Design and Execution**

Emily Justice Dunn  
and Nancy Horn

## **Music**

*Raven's Lament, Disorder  
and In Memoriam*  
by the Haxan Cloak  
*Elevation*  
by Hildur Gudnadóttir

## **Dancers**

Emma Malbon  
Joy Davis  
Eliza Larson  
Christina Maerlender  
Danielle Tekut

saw.da.de (Portuguese)  
melancholy. deep and abiding longing.

The object of longing may never return, or may not yet exist.  
A summoning.

To the cast for their generosity, resiliency, and willingness to swim in multiple streams at once; to the design and production team for their vision, energy and incredible personal investment; to my advisers for their grace and deep listening

Thank you

**There will be a ten minute intermission between Acts One and Two.**

# **Body Abandoned**

## **Concept and Direction**

Sara Coffin

## **Choreography**

Sara Coffin

in collaboration with the dancers

## **Lighting Design**

Daniel D. Rist

## **Set Design**

Daniel D. Rist

with Alan Schneider

## **Music**

Patrick Valiquet, Phil Thomson,  
Tim Hecker and Miki Yui

## **Sound Design**

Phil Thomson

## **Multimedia Design**

Andrew Hawryshkewich

## **Costume Design**

Emily Justice Dunn

## **Dancers**

Members of Mocean Dance:

Jacinte Armstrong\*

Rhonda Baker\*

Sarah Rozee

\* Members of the Canadian Alliance of Dance Artists

I would like to thank Chris Aiken and Mocean Dance for helping make such a shared venture possible and for their continued support throughout the creation process. My deepest gratitude extends to the dancers Jacinte, Rhonda and Sarah, Andrew Hawryshkewich for his clarity and patience in our remote collaboration, to Mocean's Artistic Director Susanne Chui, to Molly McBride, Shaina Cantino and Shelley Etkin for their support in the media development and initial filming, to the Faculty Mike, Angie, Rodger and Jim for their creative support and input and finally to my graduate cohorts for their steadfast camaraderie and nourishment.

# ***of course off course***

## **Choreography and Direction**

Shaina Cantino

## **Costume Design and Execution**

Emily Justice Dunn  
and Nancy Horn

## **Lighting Design**

Daniel D. Rist

## **Text**

Excerpts and inspiration from  
Rebecca Solnit,  
additional text by Shaina Cantino

## **Dancers**

Shaina Cantino  
Joy Davis

I would like to thank Joy Davis for her unbounded generosity and spirit each and every time we stepped into the studio together. Thank you to Emelia Brumbaugh and Troy Mercier for their dedication at the start of the process and the flavors that they contributed. I extend my gratitude to Angie Hauser and Paul Matteson for their compassionate creative critique throughout our process and to our graduate cohorts, who bring such depth and heart to the process that we share here.

## About the Artists

**Shaina Cantino** is a graduate of the National Theatre Institute and Kenyon College (BA, Distinction in Dance and recipient of the Dance Prize). Her creative and teaching work is grounded in twenty years of contemporary dance training as well as research in improvisation, environmental studies and theater. Cantino's choreography was presented at the Kennedy Center in the 2010 National American College Dance Festival. That same year, she choreographed and produced an evening length dance-theater show *Room by Room*, which took place in five rooms of an old farmhouse. Cantino's experience has included the roles of Sara in *Stop Kiss* and *Ophelia* in the film *Kitchen Hamlet* ([http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1467355/?ref\\_=nm\\_film\\_act\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1467355/?ref_=nm_film_act_1)). Cantino has collaborated with and performed in works by Angie Hauser, Paul Matteson, Chris Aiken, Kathleen Hermesdorf, Colleen Thomas, Karl Rogers, and Alexandra Beller. Intensive training includes St. Petersburg State Theater Academy (2009), Kathleen Hermesdorf/Sara Shelton Mann/Keith Hennessy intensive (2009), American Conservatory Theater (2008), and Bates Dance Festival (2007). <http://www.shainacantino.com/>

**Sara Coffin** is an established professional dance artist from Halifax, Nova Scotia. Multiple award winner, Coffin is Artistic Associate for the Halifax-based contemporary dance company Mocean Dance and is an independent choreographer/dancer and dance educator. Sara graduated from Simon Fraser University, School for Contemporary Arts (BFA Dance, 2003) and Dalhousie University (BSc Kinesiology, 2004). A west coast resident for 11 years, Sara has collaborated and danced with many of Vancouver's and Canada's finest dance artists, where she is a prominent figure in the Canadian dance landscape in performance, creation and arts advocacy. Her endeavors in research, creation and production have been supported by the Canada Council for the Arts, Arts Nova Scotia and the BC Arts Council for both study abroad and in support of her choreographic practice; including attending ADF (2002), Impulstanz (2005), Melt (NYC), and to research dance and on-line performance platforms, among others. As a choreographer, Coffin's work has been presented across Canada in many prominent dance festivals and she has self-produced her own full-length work. As an experienced dance educator, she has led classes, workshops, and creation intensives across Canada for over 10 years. Sara was on the board of directors for the Dance Centre's Artistic Advisory Committee, CADA/BC and was assistant programmer and core faculty at the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts in Burnaby, BC for seven years. [www.saracoffin.com](http://www.saracoffin.com), [www.moceandance.com](http://www.moceandance.com)

**Mat Elder** received his undergraduate degree in Theatre/Dance from Middle Tennessee State University. He has worked with numerous choreographers including Sidra Bell, Laurie Merriman, Alberto Del Saz, Travis Gatling, Cynthia Gutierrez-Gardner, Paul Matteson, and Leah Cox. He performed the "Alwin Nikolais: Leaving a Legacy" national tour, Core Project Chicago's, "The Dust" Fringe Tour, MTSU's "Exodus Project" national tour, and Bill T. Jones' reconstruction of "Love Redefined" at the American Dance Festival. Intensive training includes Doug Varone and Dancers (2011), Dance Theatre of Tennessee (2011), David Dorfman Winter Intensive (2013), and the American Dance Festival (2013). Residencies/Teaching positions include CORE Project Chicago Summer Intensive, Heritage Dance Project, Smith College, American College Dance Festival Northeastern

Division, and the Williston Northampton School. Elder's work, *We Live for the Crows*, has traveled Nashville and Chicago. Currently, he dances and collaborates with BoSoma Dance Company, Core Project Chicago, and DOTA Dance Theatre.

**Safi Harriott** received her undergraduate degree (BA) in Anthropology and Dance from Bard College. Since 2009 she has served as Visiting Lecturer in Dance at the Excelsior Community College, and External Examiner for the Edna Manley College School of Dance in Kingston, Jamaica. She has facilitated workshops and presented choreography for the Kingston on the Edge Urban Arts Festival and the Jamaica Dance Umbrella (JDU) in addition to serving as primary coordinator and assistant to the Curator for JDU. Harriott uses the practice of dance to activate cross-cultural investigation and engagement with the force of bodily norms.

### **ABOUT MOCEAN DANCE**

Based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Mocean Dance creates and performs athletic, vibrant contemporary dance. Led by Artistic Director Susanne Chui and Artistic Associate Sara Coffin, this versatile creation company commissions Canadian and international choreographers and company members to create dance that is highly physical, collaborative, and technically and emotionally rich. Founded in 2001 Mocean Dance is nationally recognized as a leading company from the Atlantic region. The company, now in its thirteenth season, is committed to its home base in Nova Scotia, contributing to the province's growing dance and arts community by providing opportunities for creation, performance, collaboration, development and education. [www.moceandance.com](http://www.moceandance.com)

*Mocean Dance acknowledges the company's generous supporters: Canada Council for the Arts, The Province of Nova Scotia through ARTS Nova Scotia, the NS Department of Communities, Culture & Heritage Industry Growth Program, the Department of Canadian Heritage and artsVest Nova Scotia; company sponsors East Port Properties, Office Interiors, O'Regan's, In-Kind Sponsors: ISL, The Halliburton Hotel, Deloitte, and Halifax Dance.*



## PRODUCTION

Artistic Directors .....	Shaina Cantino, Sara Coffin, Mat Elder, Safi Harriott
Faculty Advisor .....	Chris Aiken
Production Manager for Dance .....	Jean Baxter
Assistant Production Manager for Dance .....	Gwen Niven
Lighting Designer and Technical Director .....	Daniel D. Rist
Lighting and Sound Supervisor .....	David Wiggall
Costume Designer .....	Emily Dunn
Technical Director for Dance .....	Alan Schneider
Publicity Manager .....	Sam Rush
Publicity Assistant .....	Nikki Beck
Technical Intern .....	Josie Verchomin
Stage Manager .....	Annie Rudnik
Assistant Stage Manager .....	Jessie Owens
Lightboard Operator .....	Sarah Achartz
Sound and Video Operator .....	Ana Darrow
Costume Shop Supervisor .....	Emily Dunn
Costumer/Cutter .....	Nancy Horn
Costume Intern .....	Beryl Brachman
Costume Assistants .....	Kelsey Christensen, Nensi Kostallari, Liv Fauver
Costume Shop Crew .....	Jennifer Calabrese, Emma Kelley, Pooja Somasundaram
Lighting Intern .....	Chase Trumbull
Electricians .....	Dorean Collins, Crystal Ford Alejandra Garcia, Jen Graessle, Hannah Jun, Rosangelica Perez, Maryellen Riccio, Toulou Scordilis
Shop Intern .....	Toulou Scordilis
Shop Assistants .....	Fiona Drudge, Emily Singer, Chase Trumbull, Mark Roberts
Scenic Artist .....	Emily Singer
Stage Crew .....	Ella Ansell, Jessica Beliles, Rebecca Davidson,
Publicity Intern .....	Amelia Fitch
Publicity Assistants .....	Carolyn Brown, Mehr Kaur
Box Office/House Managers .....	Brittany Caine, Sophie Fierst
Assistant House Manager .....	Sarena Shafner
Box Office Assistants .....	Kelsey Conti, Sarena Shafner, Julia Sisson, Emily Upin
Photography .....	Derek Fowles

## **SMITH COLLEGE DANCE FACULTY**

### **Professor**

Roger Blum, M.F.A., *Department Chair*

### **Assistant Professors**

Lester Tome, Ph.D.

Chris Aiken, M.F.A., *Director of M.F.A. in Dance*

Angie Hauser, M.F.A.

### **Professors Emerita**

Yvonne Payne Daniel, Ph.D.

Susan Kay Waltner, M.S.

### **Five-College Lecturer in Dance**

Marilyn Middleton-Sylla

### **Musician/Lecturer in Dance Technique and Performance**

Mike Vargas, B.A.

### **Lecturers**

Candice Salyers, M.F.A.

Katie Martin, M.F.A.

Daniel Trenner, M.Ed.

### **Teaching Fellows**

Shaina Cantino, MFA '14

Sara Coffin, MFA '14

Mary Joy Davis, MFA '15

Mat Elder, MFA '14

Eleanor Grace, MFA '15

Safi Harriott, MFA '14

Stephanie Maher, MFA '15

Annie Rudnik, MFA '15

The Smith College Fall Faculty Dance Concert is made possible in part by the Sharonjean Moser Leeds Endowment, a generous fund created by Sharonjean (SC '67) and Richard Leeds for the Smith College Department of Dance. *at the bazaar*, choreographed by Sidra Bell, was made possible by the generosity of Julie Hays, Dean of the UMass College of Humanities and Fine Arts, and Jeff Cox, Chair of UMass Department of Music and Dance.

## **FIVE COLLEGE DANCE DEPARTMENT**

Smith College is part of the Five College Dance Department, which was formed for the mutual benefit of all member institutions (Amherst, Hampshire, Smith, Mount Holyoke and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst). The faculty operates as one department unifying its educational mission to include a well-balanced curriculum emphasizing a broad integration of technical, creative, historical and analytical aspects of dance and a wide variety of philosophical approaches to teaching. The FCDD is a nationally recognized model for excellence in dance in higher education.

## UPCOMING DANCE EVENTS

February 11, 7:00 p.m.

### **THRESHOLD: An evening of dance, music and image**

Created and performed by dancers Chris Aiken, Angie Hauser and pianist Mike Vargas. Inspired by photos and writings of landscape architect Anne Whiston Spirn. Post performance talk with all four artists.

**Theatre 14**

*Free performance*

April 3, 4, 5, 8:00 p.m.

### **Senior Dance Concert**

Select works of outstanding choreography by graduating seniors Olivia Grace Fauver, Brandy E. Neary, Mary Sue Sheppard and Sophia Miriam Steinberger.

**Hallie Flanagan Studio Theatre**

*\$9 general admission, \$5 students and seniors*

April 13, 2:00 p.m.

### **Place of Dance Book Celebration Performance**

Middlebury College dance faculty member, Andrea Olsen, will host this event, featuring collaborators in dance, music, light, and text.

**Scott Dance Studio**

May 2, 8:00 p.m.

### **Spring Grad Event**

This annual spring performance will showcase new solo work by first year MFA candidates: Mary Joy Davis, Eleanor Grace, Stephanie Maher and Annie Rudnik.

**Scott Dance Studio**

*\$1.00 at the door, no reservations, general admission*

## **BOX OFFICE INFORMATION**

**Purchase tickets online by going to [www.smithedu/smitharts](http://www.smithedu/smitharts).**

### **Dance Concerts**

\$9 general, \$5 students and seniors

### **Theatre Productions**

\$8 general, \$5 students/seniors  
\$3 Smith students (with Smith ID at the box office)

### **Smith Music Series Concerts**

Most music events are free.  
See concert listings for any admission charges.

**For ticketed dance and theatre events you may also purchase tickets by calling or emailing the Box Office:  
413.585.ARTS (2787), [boxoffice@smith.edu](mailto:boxoffice@smith.edu)**

The Box Office ticket window is open from 1-4 p.m. Monday-Friday during the week of a show and beginning one hour before show time.

For theatre and dance performances,  
we accept cash, check, MasterCard and Visa.

The Box Office is located on 122 Green Street, Northampton, on the upper level of the Mendenhall Center for the Performing Arts just outside Theatre 14. Tickets must be paid for at the time of reservation of by 4 p.m. on the day of a show (by 4 p.m. on the Friday before a Saturday or Sunday show) or tickets will be released. Please pick up your paid tickets at the box office no later than one half hour before a show.

All shows in Theatre 14 are reserved seating. All shows in Hallie Flanagan Studio Theatre and all other venues are general admission.

There will be no refunds for any reason on purchased tickets.

For a complete list of Performing Arts events (Dance, Music, Theatre) please visit our website:

**[www.smith.edu/smitharts](http://www.smith.edu/smitharts)**

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