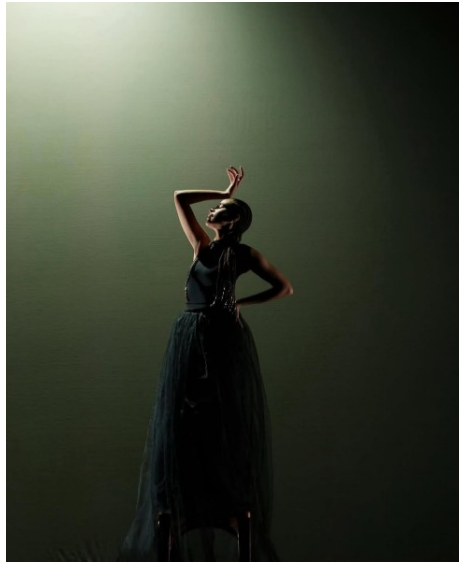


Thursday, May 22, 2025

Stefanie Nelson Dancegroup presents Everyone Dance, Spring 25 Featuring AHRC NYC dancers

Company: Stefanie Nelson Dancegroup
Venue: Columbia University's Miller Theater
Location: New York, NY

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Stefanie Nelson Dancegroup presents Everyone Dance, Spring 25 on Thursday, May 22, 2025 from 12:30-1:30PM at Columbia University's Miller Theater, 2960 Broadway, NYC. Admission is free. To learn more, visit sndancegroup.org/events/everyone-dance-2025. To reserve tickets, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/everyone-dance-inclusive-community-dance-performance-tickets-1304179498989?utm-campaign=social&utm-content=attendeeshare&utm-medium=discovery&utm-term=listing&utm-source=cp&aff=ebdsshcopyurl>.

SND's EVERYONE DANCE program, developed by Stefanie Nelson in 2014 in collaboration with AHRC NYC, a disabilities service organization, provides creative environments for dancers with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Brooklyn, Queens, Bronx, and Manhattan.

Currently offering over 150 free weekly dance classes and performance opportunities with workshops led by Sara Galassini, Ervine Haskins, & Kareem Harris. Disabled dancers participate in classes, workshops, and performances, featuring dancers from various adult day service and employment business service programs to the general public. Intellectual disability, as opposed to physical disability, has been egregiously overlooked in terms of disability funding for art projects and artistic enrichment.

"At SND, we believe that true artistry transcends perceived limitations. Since 2014, my work with disabled dancers at AHRC NYC and my collaborations with visionary designers like Terrence Zhou at New York Fashion Week have deepened my commitment to creating platforms where all bodies and identities are celebrated. This performance reaffirms our belief that inclusion fuels creativity, challenges conventions, and reveals the limitless beauty and joy of human expression," said Stefanie Nelson.

Program:

Prodigal Daughter, excerpt

Choreography, Costume, & Lighting Design: Thy-Lan Alcalay

Performers: Thy-Lan Alcalay, Idea Reid, Abigail Mankin, Grace Woleck, Sarah Ashkin, Noa Kamiya Sound Designer: MESA

"A Black Hole is Everything a Star Longs to Be" - Kara Walker

Choreography: Marjani-Forte Saunders in collaboration with Idea Reid

Performer: Idea Reid

Music: I Won't Complain by Rev. Paul Jones and Empty Grail by Vernon Reid

Serenity

Choreography: Jamel Mills

Performers: Jamel Mills, Wayne Rogers, Letitia Mendez

Music: Serenity by Journey to Ix

Mime Dance

Choreographed and performed by Nadirah Walker and Enrique Viera

Music: Overnight/Lemonde by Richard Carter

The Rhythm of Life

Choreography: Holly Cruz

Performed by AHRC NYC's Our Broadway!

Music: Rhythm of Life from Sweet Charity (sung live)

Untitled

Choreography: Kareem Harris

Performers: AHRC NYC's Everyone Dance

Music: Last Last by Burna Boy

Audience dance party led by Ervine Haskins w AHRC NYC Dancers

NYC free public performance venues have included Theaterlab, Hudson River Park Trust Pier 64, Baryshnikov Arts Center, STEPS on Broadway, REEL ABILITIES FILM FESTIVAL, AHRC NYC's Church Ave residence, Theater MITU, Triskelion Arts.

Everyone Dance is made possible in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts, the West Harlem Development Corporation, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, and in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Thy-Lan Alcalay is a New York City-based dancer and choreographer, and a recent graduate of Barnard College of Columbia University, where she earned degrees in Dance and Architecture with a specialization in Spatial Design and Phenomenology. She has worked professionally with David Dorfman Dance, Roderick George, and Martha Graham II and trained at Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School and MOVE|NYC| under the mentorship of Chanel DaSilva and Nigel Campbell. A recipient of the Robert and Carol Horne Award and LaGuardia Performance Award, she has performed works by Andrea Miller, A.I.M by Kyle Abraham, Francesca Dominguez, Norbert De La Cruz III, Wesley Ensminger, Amanda Krische, Lisa Fagan and Lena Engelstein, and VIM VIGOR. Her choreographic work explores female identity through film, the stage, and—soon—Fashion Week.

Marjani Forté-Saunders is a 3x Bessie award-winning choreographer, performer, teaching artist, and Mother. She is a 2023 United States Artists Fellow, an awardee of the prestigious Dance Magazine Harkness Award (2020) and the (2020) Foundation for Contemporary Arts Fellowship. She is a founding member of the collective 7NMS, alongside composer/sound designer Everett Saunders.

Kareem Harris is an Employment Skills Coordinator at AHRC NYC, dedicated to supporting neurodiverse individuals in achieving employment and independence. Through personalized guidance, he helps individuals work toward their goals, addressing the challenges of inequality and stereotypes often faced by this community. Beyond his role in employment support, Kareem is a passionate dance instructor with over three years of experience teaching students of all ages, from children to adults. For more than two years, he has been an integral part of AHRC NYC's dance program, a vital initiative that fosters confidence, promotes self-expression, and enhances employment skills for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Kareem is committed to expanding access to the arts, recognizing dance as a powerful tool for personal growth and empowerment.

Ervine Haskins has always been passionate about dance and music which formed an integral part of his upbringing. He has translated his personal interests into an educational tool and a job as he is a dancer who receives support from AHRC NYC and who now also teaches his colleagues at AHRC NYC. In 2019, Ervine channeled his talent and enthusiasm for dance into a paid teaching position through Stefanie Nelson Dancegroup via a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, Challenge America program.

Broadway's Dale Hensley has a career that has spanned almost four decades. Some of his Broadway credits include La Cage Aux Folles, Sunset Boulevard, Anything Goes, and Guys And Dolls. His latest act now includes working with special needs groups and bringing Broadway to them. Our Broadway @AHCNYC was started 5 years ago by Dale. Their live theater performances bring together people supported by AHRC NYC with Broadway professional actors, musicians, wardrobe experts, dancers, and choreographers to create theater that brings joy and inspiration to audiences. With AHRC NYC, he has created a special program that enriches the hidden talents in a group of people who are often forgotten, and in return, it has opened up his heart like a show-stopping Broadway number.

Jamel Mills is an accomplished dancer and choreographer hailing from the vibrant streets of New York City. His passion for dance ignited at an early age, cultivated at AHRC New York City through mentors Dale Hensley and Cheryl Nelson, where he developed a deep appreciation for movement and performance. His training has equipped him with a diverse range of styles; including contemporary, hip-hop, and jazz, allowing him to express himself with power and grace. In 2023, Jamel was a featured performer with Stefanie Nelson Dancegroup for Bad Binch TONGTONG's NYFWSS24 show.

Idea Reid is a recent graduate from Barnard College, where she studied Dance and Psychology. She received her dance education from the Professional Performing Arts High School (Alvin Ailey Program), Manhattan Youth Ballet, and Staten Island Ballet, and is a recipient of the Homer Avila Merit Award from Alonzo King LINES Ballet.

Stefanie Nelson Dancegroup (SND) is an NYC-based contemporary performance ensemble producing original work; and a public service-driven and education-focused organization invested in using dance for joy, healing, and empowerment. Led by women since its founding in 2000, SND has developed a repertory of collaborative, multidisciplinary works presented at premiere venues such as Aaron Davis Hall, Baryshnikov Arts Center, Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors & Jacob's Pillow in the US; and internationally in Canada, Mexico, and throughout Italy. SND created Dance Italia in 2011, a vibrant community of international students, performers, educators, and choreographers who regularly gather in Lucca, Italy each summer; and Motore 592 in 2021, a vibrant space for contemporary movement-based arts in Lucca, Italy. In NYC, SND provides over 150 annual creative community classes and performance opportunities for intellectually and developmentally disabled adults in collaboration with AHRC NYC, and children underscoring creativity as a cultural asset. Innovative contemporary collaborations include Terrence Zhou, designer of Bad Binch TONGTONG, featuring intellectually disabled dancers in New York Fashion Week shows for SS23, 24, and 25; and the NYC store opening of Flying Tiger. SND produces annual curation and performance opportunities for the next generation of contemporary choreographers.

AHRC-SND Partnership

Since 2014, SND has enjoyed a close and active affiliation with AHRC NYC to support artistic and creative practices for a wide range of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Each year, AHRC NYC touches the lives of over 15,000 people with intellectual & developmental disabilities throughout the 5 boroughs. Together with SND, AHRC NYC is committed to advocating for people who are neurodiverse to lead full and equitable lives under its guiding principle of Equalism. This strong, active partnership upholds the highest standards in supporting people to lead full and equitable lives and propels social justice grounded in common humanity.

Since 2014, EVERYONE DANCE fosters equitable inclusion, self-expression, and artistic growth. In collaboration with AHRC NYC, EVERYONE DANCE provides classes for dancers with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities in Brooklyn and Manhattan, free of charge. EVERYONE DANCE champions inclusivity, challenges stereotypes, and provides meaningful opportunities for disabled dancers. Through its innovative approach and commitment to socioeconomic accessibility, the program serves as a model for promoting diversity, equity, and inclusivity within the dance ecosystem.

Launched in 2019, the Moving Memory Project (tMMP) - a subsidiary of Everyone Dance, brings together artists, caregivers, and seniors to create a community of care surrounding issues connected to memory loss and destigmatizing the diagnosis of dementia, with the ultimate goal of raising awareness until a cure is found. Artist Sara Galassini leads sessions, split between 4 AHRC NYC Adult Day Service Programs located in Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens, & Manhattan. Each session begins with a warm-up, followed by storytelling and memory sharing based on early memories. From these stories, participants collaboratively develop movement together (seniors unable to stand sit in chairs). tMMP is co-produced by David Shenk, whose writings on Alzheimer's and dementia garnered him international acclaim as an authority on the subject.

INCORPORATING UNIQUE LIVED EXPERIENCE Cultural programming co-led by individuals within historically underrepresented communities is of paramount importance to SND. For instance, an EVERYONE DANCE Teaching Artist, Ervine Haskins, is a disabled dancer of color who was once a student of EVERYONE DANCE classes. Haskins' teaching career serendipitously began one day when Nelson was running late for class and asked AHRC staff to have Haskins take over. When Nelson walked in, Haskins had taught the entire class a Beyonce music video, everyone loved it. After trial classes, Nelson hired Haskins to regularly teach. From teaching, Haskins gained newfound purpose and financial independence. He's been teaching weekly Everyone Dance classes with the assistance of trained AHRC NYC support staff since 2015. All workshops are developed by SND's founder Stefanie Nelson, who brings her 25+ years of experience in designing and teaching dance-based education programs both locally and internationally. To date, SND's local and international programs have served over 3500 students and employed over 108 artists from 21 countries around the world. Through the power of dance, these Creative Empowerment Workshops contribute to the vital role that arts and culture play in the health of the economy and people. By providing inclusive and accessible arts opportunities, SND recognizes the vast diversity of individuals and ensures access to the joy and therapeutic benefits of dance.

Stefanie Nelson Dancegroup
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Schedule
May 22, 2025: 12:30pm

[< back](#)

[previous listing](#) • [next listing](#)