



**DAVALOIS
FEARON DANCE**

PRESS KIT

davaloisfearon.com



ABOUT DAVALOIS FEARON DANCE

Davalois Fearon Dance Company's mission is to collaboratively create, perform and teach a versatile body of work that draws from Artistic Director, Davalois Fearon's richly diverse movement vocabulary and cultivate the next generation of dance artists. Fearon is passionate about creating work that push both artistic and social boundaries. Her choreography is often driven by the aim to confront difficult issues and prompt contemplation. Multimedia elements are used to carry audiences on a journey of ideas.



THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



The work of Davalois Fearon, Artistic Director of Davalois Fearon Dance (DFD), has been lauded by colleagues as “unapologetic” and by critics as “electrifying.” Born on the island of Jamaica and raised in the Bronx, New York, Fearon is an accomplished choreographer, dancer, and educator. She received a **Bessie Award** for her performance in “the skeleton architecture, or the future of our worlds” in 2017, and was named among “7 Up-and-Coming Black Dance Artists Who Should Be On Your Radar” by Dance Magazine in 2018. She is also a member of the Joyce Theater’s Young Leaders Circle Artist Committee and has been featured in prominent publications such as *The New York Times*, *Dance Magazine*, *Dance Spirit*, *The Village Voice*, and *The New Yorker*.

From 2005–2017, Fearon performed and taught around the world with the Stephen Petronio Company, before founding DFD in 2016 with the mission to push artistic and social boundaries and help cultivate the next generation of dance artists. With that mission at its core, Fearon’s choreography often aims to confront difficult issues and prompt contemplation by the audience. She creates visual imagery that is fluid yet meticulous, assertive yet thoughtful, and critics have remarked that her choreography “holds audiences in the moment, promising to deliver a bold engagement,” communicating “tenacious virtuosity” through a movement vocabulary that is “both gymnastic and natural.” Fearon’s choreography reflects the collaborative process she considers integral to her work, which has led her to partner creatively with artists from countless other disciplines, including internationally renowned poet Patricia Smith, multi-reedist Mike McGinnis, visual artist Jasmine Murrell, fashion photographer Nigel HoSang, and interdisciplinary artists Andre Zachery and Deborah Castillo.

In New York City alone, Fearon’s work has been performed at prestigious dance venues including the Joyce Theatre, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the New Victory Theatre on Broadway, as well as regular performances at the Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance. Her work has also been presented at The Yard in Martha’s Vineyard, The Museum of African American Diaspora in San Francisco, the Wassaic Projects (Wassaic, NY), the Warwick Summer Arts Festival (Warwick, NY), and the Edna Manley College in Kingston, Jamaica. Fearon has completed commissions for the Bronx Museum of the Arts, Gibney Dance Solo to Solo, the Pentacle Rubin Museum Dance Series, the University of Florida, Harlem Stage, Barnard College, and Purchase College.

Fearon was a 2019 recipient of the esteemed MAP Fund Grant and has been a recipient of the Pentacle Art Award in 2017–2019. She is also a multi-year recipient of support from the Bronx Council on the Arts (BCA), including the Bronx Recognizes Its Own (BRIO) Fellowship, the BCA Arts Fund award, and the BCA Artist For Community grant. For 2019–2020, Fearon was awarded a BRIC House BRIClab residency and the Brooklyn Art Exchange (BAX) Space Grant. Her previous residency awards have included the Alvin Ailey New Dance Directions Choreography Lab, the Mabou Mines Suite/Space Residency, the Choreoquest Residency at Restorations Arts, and the PearlDiving Movement Residency at PearlArts Studio in Pittsburgh. In 2016, The MuKha Arts & Science Foundation recognized Fearon with a Dance Award for *Consider Water*, a multidisciplinary work that calls attention to global water issues.

Educating others plays a central role in Fearon’s work, both to engage audiences and to foster the next generation of dancers. Thus, DFD performances are frequently accompanied by panel discussions and interactive educational activities for audience members. DFD also offers a spectrum of community engagement opportunities, including workshops that invite participants to ponder difficult topics through embodied movement activities.



Photo: Marcus Middleton

"To lift the energy, then, the choreographer and her dancers return to celebrate the life and spirit C.J. with the exuberance I remember of forceful, high-flying Fearon dancing for choreographer Stephen Petronio."

- Eva Yaa Asantewaa, InfiniteBody

"I had chills by the end of this performance, as I watched these women quite literally bringing each other back to life and embracing one another after hardship...My favorite piece, Walk Good "Lady" by Davalois Fearon, which literally blew my mind- it was raw, emotional, vulnerable, and unlike anything I had ever seen before!"

- Alyse Rovner, BWOG

"This project was everything in a nutshell the Vision Festival represents: a collaboration of improvised music, dance, visual arts and poetry."

- Martin Schray, Free Jazz Blog

"Davalois holds audiences in the moment, promising to deliver a bold engagement with their picturesque surroundings through a combination of choreographed entrancing movements and improvisational inspiration."

- New Jersey Herald

"Davalois Fearon--actually a frequent critics' favorite for her dancing...ventures out more as her own dancemaker, we can see a personal, introspective focus that tempers crowd-pleasing, quirky agility. In her and her dancers' movement for Water, Thirst & Storm--as well as a bewitching video by collaborator André M. Zachery--she puts a quiet, ritualistic beauty in the service of expressing nature's power and preciousness."

- Eva Yaa Asantewaa, InfiniteBody

"Among the dance projects, the presentation by the Davalois Fearon Dance company, musicians Mike McGinnis, Peter Apfelbaum and Gerald Cleaver and poet Patricia Smith achieved the sort of vivacious coming together of movement, music and poetry that summed up the festival ethos in a production that was sexually charged and empowering."

- John Sharpe, The New York City Jazz Record

"Fearon's movements are both gymnastic and natural, as the dancers combined crouching and running with sudden bursts of dynamic, leg-thrusting energy, and the work was a haunting reminder that Americans are so lucky to be able to take our water for granted, turning on a tap without effort."

- Mary Cargill, DanceViewTimes

ADDITIONAL PRESS

"This Harlem Stage series pairs choreographers with mentors in the creation of new work. The 17th edition features... Davalois Fearon — whom audiences may know from her fearless dancing with the Stephen Petronio Company"

– Siobhan Burke, New York Times

"Fearon tunes us into the new slant on movement...working her body as if forces inside it were migrating here and there..."

– Deborah Jowitt, Arts Journal

"...some of most powerful dance I've encountered recently uses water itself as inspiration Stephen Petronio dancer Davalois Fearon made an electrifying Bay Area debut as a choreographer last December at the Berkeley Arts Festival performance space with her solo piece, "Consider Water," performing a ritualistic piece to a live score by reed expert Mike McGinnis."

– Andrew Gilbert, The Mercury News

REPERTORY

Herstories

"Herstories" looks at how cross-cultural movements, mainly stemming from the African diaspora, play a role in the development of contemporary dance and celebrate the forms that helped build American dance, often without acknowledgment or credit. The project was born out of Stephen Petronio Company 2021 Bloodlines(future) program commission of "Finding Herstory."

This "Herstories" performance includes "Excerpts of Finding Herstory" by Davalois Fearon, which is inspired by Afro-Jamaican dance forms, such as reggae and dancehall, and is the first solo from The Finding Herstory Solo Series Project.



Photo: Courtesy of THPAC-Photographer Bob Gorel

Choreography: Davalois Fearon
Dancers: Davalois Fearon, Careitha Davis, and Tess Montoya
Music: Mike McGinnis
Costume: Hopie Lynn Burrows, Davalois Fearon
Stage Manager: Julieta Rodriguez-Cruz
Curated by Walter Rutledge
Premiere Date: June 22-24, 2022,
The Mark O'Donnell Theater



Photo: Robert I. Sutherland-Cohen

KERNEL

"KERNEL," a Brooklyn Arts Council 2022 Awarded project, is inspired by Afro-Jamaican dance forms, such as reggae and dancehall, and is the second solo from The Finding Herstory Solo Series Project. The solo series looks at how cross-cultural movements, mainly stemming from the African diaspora, play a role in the development of contemporary dance and celebrate the forms that helped build American dance, often without acknowledgment or credit.

Choreography / Dancer: Davalois Fearon
Music: Mike McGinnis
Choreography Assistant: Careitha Davis
Premiere Date: June 22, 2022, Roulette

REPERTORY



Tony Turner Photography

Finding HerStory

Finding HerStory is a solo dance project created and performed by Davalois Fearon. It is commissioned by the Stephen Petronio Company for the 2021 Bloodlines (future) Program, made possible, in part, by public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts with support from Governor Hochul and New York State Legislature. *Finding HerStory* is inspired by Africanist forms such as reggae and dancehall that have contributed to the American dance landscape and shaped Fearon as an artist.

Choreography: Davalois Fearon

Dancers: Davalois Fearon

Music: Michael McGinnis (Clarinet, Saxophone), Rasaan 'Talu' Green (Drum), Ryan 'Rizz' Greenidge (Drum), Agyei 'Jay' Phillip (Drum)

Audience Plants: Danion Lewis, Tess Montoya, Careitha Davis, and Caleb Dowden

D.J.: Ayanna Heaven



"I was inspired to make *Finding HerStory* because I was interested in developing new work in relation to my Time to Talk solo project. Time to Talk deals with the exclusion of African Americans; the current work aims to make the invisible visible by tracing contemporary dance forms to their African Diasporic roots. I wanted to develop a piece that physicalizes my Afro-Caribbean dance history and pays homage to various dance forms that have contributed to the American dance landscape and helped shape me as an artist."

– Quote from Dava, Art Spiel Reflections on the work of contemporary artists

REPERTORY

FOR C.J.

For C.J. is a new multimedia dance ensemble piece investigating the asthma-related issues people of color from the inner cities face. It seeks to create awareness of such issues and provide tools to combat them, as well as honor the life of Davalois Fearon's nephew, a young man who fell victim to an avoidable fatal asthma attack. It is created in part from *As Above, As Below*, a site-specific piece commissioned by the Bronx Museum as part of the BxMA Co-Lab dance series, created in dialogue with Gordon Matta-Clark's exhibition "Anarchitect."

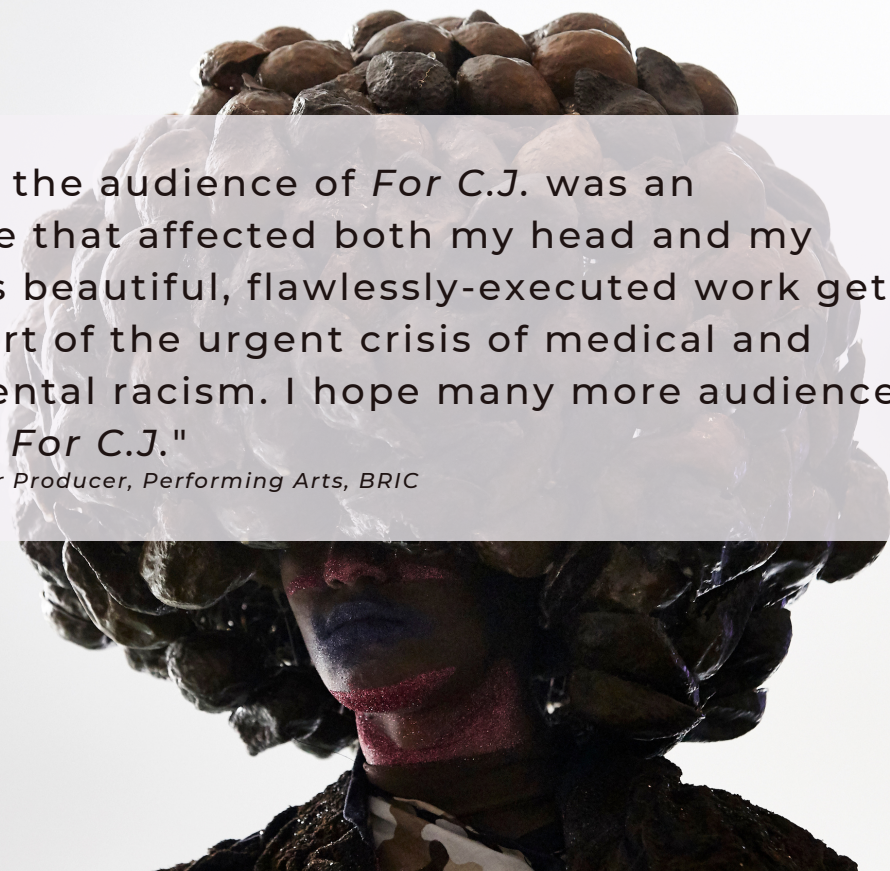
Choreography: Davalois Fearon
Dancers: Morgan Anderson, Mikaila Ware, Njeri Rutherford
Music: Mike McGinnis
Makeup, Costumes, Wearable Sculptures: Jasmine Murrell
Set: Myssi Robinson



Tony Turner Photography

"Sitting in the audience of *For C.J.* was an experience that affected both my head and my heart. This beautiful, flawlessly-executed work gets to the heart of the urgent crisis of medical and environmental racism. I hope many more audiences get to see *For C.J.*"

– BJ Evans, Senior Producer, Performing Arts, BRIC



REPERTORY



Photo: Kitoko Chargois

TIME TO TALK

Time to Talk is a multimedia dance piece rooted in research on American history, dance history, racial identity formation and systemic racism. It is inspired by Davalois Fearon's own experience of oppression and racial bias within academia that she encountered in 2015. Dynamic fluid dance, live music, poetry, and visual art are used as tools to bring attention to inequalities within the dance field and society at large. "Time to Talk" aims to encourage audience members to question how they may knowingly or unknowingly contribute to maintaining social norms that support a status quo of inequity.

Choreographed by Davalois Fearon
Music: Mike McGinnis
Projections: Andre Zachery
Lighting Design: Sarah Hamilton
Dancers: Davalois Fearon
Premiere Date: March 27-29, 2018, Mabou Mines

Time to Talk is a new work that addresses both current and historical issues that remain important to discuss and dismantle. It's time we all join the conversation."

– Charles Rice-Gonzalez, Executive Director, BAAD! Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance

REPERTORY

CONSIDER WATER

Consider Water combines three types of artistic expression – dynamic and fluid dance, original music, and visual arts – and was inspired by domestic and global water issues, such as water scarcity, water contamination, water quality, and water-related natural disasters. Fearon envisioned the multimedia elements of “Consider Water” as a way to create an immersive experience that invites audience members to bring new consideration to one of the earth’s most precious resources.

Choreography: Davalois Fearon
Dancers: Morgan Anderson, Davalois Fearon, Jaqi Medlock,
Morgan Anderson, Lucia Rodriguez
Music: Mike McGinnis
Costume: Deborah Castillo
Projections: André Zachery
Premiere Date: January 5, 2017, The Joyce Theater



Photo: Andrew Lee Imaging



Photo: Nan Melville, courtesy of the artist and Rossi & Rossi Gallery

POWER INSIDE AND BETWEEN

Power Inside and Between is a site-specific piece commissioned by Pentacle for their Dance Series at the Rubin Museum of Art on April 10, 2019. The *Power Inside and Between* reclaims the trope of the “Angry Black Woman” to find the power inside rage, inside the community, and inside the black female body.

Choreography: Davalois Fearon
Dancers: Morgan Anderson,
Davalois Fearon, Mikalla Ware, Njeri Rutherford
Music: Mike McGinnis
Makeup, Hair, Wearable Sculptures: Jasmine Murrell
Premiere Date: April 10, 2019, Rubin Museum of Art

REPERTORY

ÄNGSUDDEN SONG CYCLE

Ängsudden Song Cycle is a dance piece commissioned by composer/clarinetist and Davalois Fearon's collaborator in life and art, Mike McGinnis. The music, bearing the same title, is a landscape tone poem. The catalyst for the music was the work of Filipino American visual artist MuKha, in which she used the disappearing language of a small tribe in the Philippines to create a series of poems and paintings, about the Swedish archipelago at Ängsudden.

Choreography: Davalois Fearon
Music: Mike McGinnis
Visual Artist: MuKha
Premiere Date: October 13, 2013



Photo: Daniel Robinson

Winner of New York City
Jazz Record's Concert of
the Year 2013



Tony Turner Photography

LIFT UP

Lift Up was created in response to Fearon's solo work *Time to Talk*. *Lift Up* looks at the roles cross-cultural movements stemming from the African diaspora played and continue to play in the development of contemporary dance; in an effort to celebrate those who helped build American dance, often without acknowledgment or credit

Choreographed by Davalois Fearon
Dancers: Morgan Anderson Davalois Fearon, Mikaila Ware
Music: Mike McGinnis
Lighting Design: Sarah Hamilton
Dancers: Davalois Fearon
Preview Date: August 11, 2017, Wassaic Project's August Festival

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