

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

Kathrine G. McGovern College of the Arts
School of Theatre & Dance

August 6, 2020

Re: UH Dance Ensemble 2020-2021

Dear Students,

I hope this e-mail finds you and your loved ones safe and in good spirits!

It sure has been an interesting summer and is proving to be an interesting fall semester as well! The faculty of the University of Houston Dance program have some different opportunities that reflect the current pandemic situation in new and exciting ways.

That said, the show will go on! We look forward to a fun and fulfilling learning experience through UH Dance Ensemble this year. By joining Ensemble, students will be able to:

- 1) Participate in various UH Dance faculty choreographed pieces preparing for an Ensemble Dance Works concert in the spring of 2021. Whether the show will be virtual or presented live onstage will be decided next year.
- 2) Develop learning, teaching, and creativity skills through sharing dance movement techniques for fellow Ensemble members during the 1-2pm slots of "Ensemble Virtual Dance Fridays".
- 3) Participate in artistic collaborations with myself and other Ensemble members, creating original dance solos that will embody the concept of *home* as an experience rather than a place. These dances will be filmed and streamed "live" or presented in their recorded forms via Zoom and YouTube in November. Filming and/or performing locations will be decided at the discretion of each Ensemble member and the UH Dance Ensemble Director (me.) For students who may be on or near campus, a possible site to use (I am still waiting for confirmation), will be the University of Houston's Blaffer Arts Museum.
- 4) Audition for guest artist Tina Mullone (Louisiana dance artist) during the beginning of the spring semester of January 2021. She will be creating a new group dance for Ensemble. A brief summary of Tina: she works with Beckles Dancing Company, Contemporary Dance/Fort Worth (as Associate Artistic Director) and co-director of m² (m squared.) She also served as Dance Education Specialist for the International Association of Blacks in Dance and ACDA board member for two consecutive terms. She is thrilled to be able to collaborate with UH Dance students!

All of the performance opportunities being offered for Ensemble this fall semester, with the slight possible exception of the collaboration dance solos, will be virtual. With the trying times facing the country currently, the need for virtually accessible art and safe, meaningful arts education is more important than ever. Creating art is not just biding time while we wait for the catastrophe to pass. It gives us meaning and connection to each other and the world. It inspires us to take our thoughts in different and new directions. What excites me the most is, is that art can help weave the different parts of our lives, our thoughts, and our communities together. Ensemble is an opportunity to do just that with your fellow classmates, so I hope that you will consider joining the group this semester!

If you are interested in participating in Ensemble, please find the attached "UH Dance Ensemble Audition Instructions" to this email. Read through the document carefully.

UH Dance looks forward to a great semester of creativity and learning that adapts to the ever-changing circumstances of COVID-19. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at any time (my email address is listed below).
Dance on!

Sincerely,



John Beasant III - UH Dance Ensemble Director
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