

CONCEIVED, DIRECTED AND CHOREOGRAPHED BY THOMAS WARFIELD

ASTRODANCE II

ACROSS THE UNIVERSE



DECEMBER 1-3, 2023

SKLARSKY
GLASS BOX THEATER

RIT

College of Liberal Arts
School of
Performing Arts

National Technical
Institute for the Deaf
Performing Arts

Dance at RIT



proudly present

ASTRODANCE II

ACROSS THE UNIVERSE

Conceived, Directed, and Choreographed by

Thomas Warfield

Assistant Director

Julia Nguyen

Costume Designer

Amanda Doherty

Technical Director

Eric JJ Moslow

Interactive Projection

W. Michelle Harris

Lighting Designer

Nic Minetor

Stagecraft Manager

Joseph Hamilton

Set Designer

Erin Auble

Motion Capture/Augmented Reality

Joe Geigel

Projection and Sound Design

Dan Roach

Aerial Dance Choreography

William D'Ovidio, Aerial Arts of Rochester

Production Stage Manager

Sharon Vandezande

Performer flying effects created by VertigoTM – getvertigo.com

RIT recognizes that we gather on the traditional territory of the Onöndowa'ga:' or "the people of the Great Hill." In English, they are known as Seneca people, "the keeper of the western door." They are one of the six nations that make up the sovereign Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

We honor the land on which RIT was built and recognize the unique relationship that the Indigenous stewards have with this land. That relationship is the core of their traditions, cultures, and histories. We recognize the history of genocide, colonization, and assimilation of Indigenous people that took place on this land. Mindful of these histories, we work towards understanding, acknowledging, and ultimately reconciliation.

Sklarsky Glass Box Theater

Frank S. Sklarsky '78 and Ruth Sklarsky

Part black-box theater and part exhibit space, the Glass Box Theater seats up to 220 people for experimental performances and various exhibits. This flexible space includes multi-level viewpoints, retractable floor-level seating, and automated blinds to provide daylight and blackout modes, making it the perfect space for a variety of activities.

"AstroDance II: Across the Universe" is the inaugural production in the new theater.

Director's Note

Albert Einstein once said that imagination is more important than knowledge, and I would extend that to say that imagination is a form of knowledge, an intuitive intelligence all its own. It is in cultivating the imagination, that creative spark within us, that gives our lives meaning and purpose and moves us forward. Here at NTID Department of Performing Arts and RIT School of Performing Arts we nurture creativity. Creativity is characterized by the ability to perceive the world in new ways, to find the connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena, to engage beyond what we think we know, to generate solutions. In science, creativity is an important aspect of scientific skill and pursuit. The problem solving, creating hypotheses, designing experiments, and technical innovation require a special type of scientific creativity. Relying on cognitive skills, conceptual tools, the knowledge of precedents and processes, along with the merger of intention and intuition from an arts perspective helps guide the questions we ask, the search we take and the answers we discover. More than 13 years ago when I had the idea of creating the first AstroDance project, funded by the National Science Foundation, and collaborating with RIT astrophysicist, Manuela Campanelli, we used dance to broaden and deepen deaf, hearing students', and mainstream audiences' knowledge of general information and basic concepts in the fields of gravitational physics by engaging them in an aesthetic educational experience. Today, *AstroDance II: Across the Universe* takes us further with the addition of technology as an aspect of performance exploring galaxies and dimensions of the universe in ways we never imagined before. I'm grateful to my collaborative design and production team and, of course, the students who have worked so committedly to create something new and vibrant! I invite each of us to celebrate our creativity in large and small ways; to recognize the poetry in every moment of living; and bring that forward and share it – So as Joseph Campbell writes: "...our life experience on the purely physical plane will have resonances with our own innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive."

Finally, I am grateful and indebted to Dr. Joe Bochner, former chairperson of the Department of Cultural and Creative Studies, who had the foresight to encourage me to attend the Science and the Arts conference at CUNY Graduate Center many years ago. His guidance, his persistence and his belief in me and my ideas are why and how we are here today. I dedicate these performances to his memory and his vision.



AstroDance II: Across the Universe

Pre-Show Digital Interactive Media

Scene 1: Stelliferous- Matter evolves into mesmerizing stars, planets, nebulae, and the birth of galaxies.

Dancers: Amanda Hill, Emi Llewellyn, Meagan McBride, Katie Miller, Mara Tysick

Music

Kronos.....J. Field

Andante Con Moto.....N. Britell

Mein Schoner Stern, Op. 101, No.4.....R. Schumann

Nigel Joseph, vocalist

Dane Noble-Rosema, pianist

Choreography: Thomas Warfield

Scene 2: Cosmic Portraits - Embark on an enchanting exploration through planetary systems, observing the captivating dance of non-stellar objects orbiting a star or star system.

Dancers: Alyssa DeGregory (understudy), Molly Hazelton, Ben Miron, Teresa Uhl

Music

Le Concile des Zoogs.....H. Torgue & S. Houppin

Toxic.....C. Dennis, C. Karlsson, H. Jonback, P. Winberg

Choreography: Alyssa DeGregory, Molly Hazelton, Ben Miron, Teresa Uhl and

Thomas Warfield

Scene 3: Galactic Spectra - Witness the incredible power of black holes, where even photons racing at the speed of light are unable to escape their immense gravitational pull.

Dancers: McKenna Barker, Bri Cahoon, Talia Felgenhauer, Emi Llewellyn,
Mayah Phillips (understudy), Sam Sit, Mara Tysick, Evelyn Zou

Music:

Minuet in B Minor.....N. Britell

Footprints.....W. Shorter

Choreography: Thomas Warfield

Scene 4: Cosmic Encounters - Witness the incredible power of black holes, where even photons racing at the speed of light are unable to escape their immense gravitational pull.

Dancers: Sydney Brien, Brooke Buttner, Talayah Delis, Shefali Maurya, Cami Pereira,
Catherine Roe, Ace Tarsia, Mara Tysick, Lea Wetzel

Music:

Where She Goes.....Bad Bunny (Instrumental - Danzel Beats), S. Del Freo

Choreography: Julia Nguyen

15 Minute Intermission - Digital Interactive Media 'Space Mirroring'

Scene 5: Ascension - Marvel at the mesmerizing distortion of spacetime, as the presence of mass-energy curves and bends the fabric of the universe from one point to another.

Dancers: McKenna Barker, Amanda Hill, Marc Ellis Holland, Emi Llewellyn,
Meagan McBride, Katie Miller, Mara Tysick

Music

Geistliches Lied Op.30J. Brahms (Arr. E. Higginbottom)
Lyric for Strings.....G. Walker

Choreography: Thomas Warfield

Scene 6: Continuum - Embark on a thrilling journey through multi-messenger astronomy, where the coordinated observation and interpretation of signals from electromagnetic radiation, gravitational waves, neutrinos, and cosmic rays reveal the infinite expansion of the universe, with each point we reach becoming the center of our exploration.

Dancers: Keyazsha Ashford, Bri Cahoon, Alyssa DeGregory, Karaline Foley, Kalena Hope Porteous, Dessa Shapiro (understudy), Sam Sitt, Ace Tarsia, Evelyn Zou

Music

Saltimbanco.....R. Dupere
Glimmer.....Liquid Cinema
Path to Faith.....Liquid Cinema

Choreography: Thomas Warfield

Cast

Continuum.....	Keyazsha Ashford [^]
Galactic Spectra and Ascension.....	McKenna Baker [^]
Cosmic Encounters and Continuum.....	Sydney Brien ^{**}
Cosmic Encounters.....	Brooke Buttner ^{**}
Galactic Spectra and Continuum.....	Bri Cahoon [^]
Cosmic Portraits and Continuum.....	Alyssa DeGregory ^{**}
Cosmic Encounters.....	Talayeh Delis ^{**}
Galactic Spectra.....	Talia Felgenhauer ^{**}
Continuum.....	Karaline Foley
Cosmic Portraits.....	Molly Hazelton ^{**}
Stelliferous and Ascension.....	Amanda Hill ^{**}
Ascension.....	Marc Ellis Holland
Stelliferous, Galactic Spectra, and Ascension.....	Emi Llewellyn [^]
Cosmic Encounters.....	Shefali Maurya ^{**}
Stelliferous and Ascension.....	Meagan McBride ^{**}
Stelliferous and Ascension.....	Katie Miller ^{**}
Cosmic Portraits.....	Ben Miron ^{**}
Cosmic Encounters.....	Cami Pereira ^{**}
Galactic Spectra.....	Mayah Phillips ^{**}
Continuum.....	Kalena Porteous ^{**}
Cosmic Encounters.....	Catie Roe ^{**}
Continuum.....	Dessa Shapiro ^{**}
Galactic Spectra and Continuum.....	Sam Sitt
Cosmic Encounters and Continuum.....	Ace Tarsia ^{**}
Galactic Spectra, Cosmic Encounters, and Ascension.....	Mara Tysick ^{**}
Cosmic Portraits.....	Teresa Uhl [^]
Cosmic Encounters.....	Lea Wetzel ^{**}
Galactic Spectra.....	Evelyn Zou

^{*} Indicates that student is currently enrolled in Theatre Ensemble

^{**} Indicates that student is currently enrolled in NTID Practicum

[^] Indicates that student is currently a Performing Arts Scholar

Crew and Administration

Conceived, Directed, and Choreographed by	Thomas Warfield
Assistant Director	Julia Nguyen
Technical Director	Eric JJ Moslow
Musical Voice Instructor	Amy Cochrane
Aerial Dance Choreography	William D'Ovidio, Aerial Arts of Rochester
Stagecraft Manager	Joseph Hamilton
Assistant to the Director	Zoi Henry
Production Stage Manager	Sharon Vandezande
Assistant Stage Managers	Robin Bochnik, Keriann Croy, Taylor Hanners
Projection Designers	W Michelle Harris, Gary Jacobs, Dan Roach
Motion Capture Supervisor	Joe Geigel
Animation Student	Enzo Lontoc
Pre-Show Experience	Chengyi Ma, Solomon Shulman, Jaelin Vernon
Projectors Operators	Adam Gilbert ^{**} , Simon Mastroserio [*]
Tech Coordinator Student	Solomon Shulman
Motion Capture Team	Enzo Adorno, Noya Cai, Jivitesh Debata, Vigneshwar Jayakumar, David Robinson, Atharva Sawe, Nicholas Stalker, Matthew Thompson
Sound Designer	Dan Roach
Electrician	Zachary Riback
Carpenters	Kristina Chenevey, Lee Cornell ^{**} , Olivia Croteau, Maggie Epure, Chimamanda Eze ^{**} , Cameron Harrington ^{**} , Tyler Huber ^{**} , Matthew Oley, Zachary Riback, Courtney Sawyer
Charge Artist	Erin Auble
Painters	Jordan Cochenour, Keana Gamara ^{**} , Maia Kromer
Costumes and Props Manager	Rosie Mazique
Prop Master	Saige Kanik
Props	Curran Dillis, Maggie Epure
Costume Designer	Amanda Doherty
Costume Shop	Maggie Epure, Mac Leong [*] , Emily Ohl
Wardrobe Supervisor	Ayushi Patel ^{**}
Wardrobe Students	McKenna Barker ^{**} , Zellian Dettmer, Grace Monohan
Lightboard Operator	Mitchell Sulkowski ^{**}
Soundboard Operator	J Russ ^{**}
Backstage Crew Supervisor	Joseph Hamilton
Backstage Crew	Amariah Spencer ^{**}
Dancer Fly Operators	Tyler Allen ^{**} , Timothy Brook, Ben Kiefer, JP Queenan [*] , Ben Sindler ^{**} , Haiden Whitney ^{**}
Photography	Matthew Sluka
Poster and Graphic Design	Claire Downey
School of Performing Arts Inaugural Director	Erica Haskell
NTID Performing Arts, Chair	Jill Bradbury
School of Performing Arts, Director of Operations	Ben Willmott
School of Performing Arts, Senior Staff Assistant	Emily Rhone
NTID Performing Arts, Senior Staff Specialist	Denise Morgan
NTID Performing Arts, Marketing and Communications Specialist	Joseph Fox
NTID Performing Arts, Senior Staff Assistant	Jerald Creer

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Bios



Keyazsha Ashford [Continuum] is a second-year graphic design student from York, Pennsylvania. They've played as one of the stars in *25 Years Through Movement and Space*. They're looking forward to performing with everyone, to create a wonderful and beautiful performance as one of the dancers.



McKenna Barker [Galactic Spectra and Ascension] is a first-year industrial design student. This is her first performance at RIT. She is so excited to have the opportunity to perform with the incredible people in this production, and to learn and grow as a dancer.



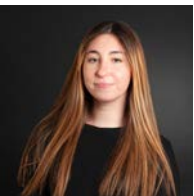
Sydney Brien [Cosmic Encounters and Continuum] is a first-year interior design student from Rochester, New York. Sydney has been dancing for the past 15 years, and she is a new member of RIT's Velocity, Urban Dance Crew. She is very excited to be a part of this amazing production, and is proud to share her love of dance with an even more amazing audience.



Brooke Buttner [Cosmic Encounters] is a fifth-year BS/ME mechanical engineering student from Allen, Texas. They have been a member of Vis Viva Dance Company (a student run dance club) their entire college career. This is the second NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts production they will be a part of, and they can't wait to see technology come together with dance to create an incredible show.



Bri Cahoon [Galactic Spectra and Continuum] is a third-year psychology student from Norton, Massachusetts. This is their first performance with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts, but she has been dancing for as long as she can remember. Previous show experience includes being part of the crew on *Thy Name Is Woman* and Hannah in her high school's production of *Freaky Friday*. They love the visual concept of the show and are very excited to perform with the amazing dancers in this cast. Tap is their favorite style, so they are overjoyed to be able to share their love of it with the audience.



Alyssa DeGregory [Cosmic Portraits and Continuum] is a first-year ASL interpreting major, from Long Island, New York. This is their first performance with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts, and they are honored to have been chosen for this production. She is so excited to perform in the brand-new Sklarsky Glass Box Theater, and is happy to do tap, her favorite style.



Talayah Delis [Cosmic Encounters] is a third-year laboratory science major from Queens, New York. Her favorite performance she did was *Everybody* and played as Usher/"God"/Understanding. She's extremely excited to see how the performance will turn out in the new theater.



Talia Felgenhauer [Galactic Spectra] is a third-year medical illustration major from North Carolina. Talia is a circus artist used to performing under a big top tent, and can't wait to perform aerial silks with RIT for the first time.



Karaline Foley [Continuum] is a third-year management information systems major from Stoneham, Massachusetts. This is their first time performing in an NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts production, and they are thrilled to soar as an aerial silk artist.



Molly Hazelton [Cosmic Portraits] is a first-year interior design major from Holderness, New Hampshire. She has been dancing for the past 16 years and has participated in many theater productions as well. Some of her favorites have been Sharpay in *High School Musical* and Marty in *Grease*. *Astrodance II* will be Molly's first time performing with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts and she is beyond excited! She hopes you all enjoy the show as much as she does!



Amanda Hill [Stelliferous and Ascension] is a first-year double major in psychology and criminal justice from Souderton, Pennsylvania. She has been dancing since the age of five and doesn't plan on stopping any time soon. *Astrodance II* is her first performance with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts, so Amanda is greatly looking forward to the experience as a whole! She hopes to create lasting friendships and grow her dancing skills, and Amanda cannot wait to perform for everyone!



Marc Ellis Holland [Ascension] has performed on Broadway, Bus and truck tour IV and Austria with the show *Cats*. He holds a Bachelor's Art degree in Jazz Dance and is Cecchetti certified. He is currently on faculty at RIT/NTID teaching Jazz and Modern and is pursuing his master's at SUNY Brockport.



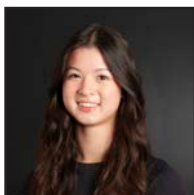
Emi Llewellyn [Stelliferous, Galactic Spectra, and Ascension] is a first-year bioinformatics and computational biology major from Springfield, Pennsylvania. She performed the role of Cupid in her hometown studio's *Don Quixote* ballet last spring. *Astrodance II* is her first performance with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts, and she can't wait to get back onstage!



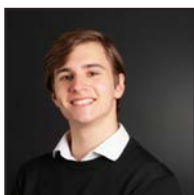
Shefali Maurya [Cosmic Encounters] is a second-year software engineering major from Exton, Pennsylvania. She played a Star in *25 Years Through Movement and Space* in February 2023. She has been dancing for six years in various styles, but she is most fond of hip hop and was elated to hear she would be playing another star in this performance.



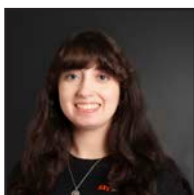
Meagan McBride [Stelliferous and Ascension] is a first-year in the engineering exploration program and is from Hazle Township, Pennsylvania. She performed as The Raven in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* ballet and was a part of the Spanish Variation in *Nutcracker: Magical Christmas Ballet*. This is her first time performing with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts production and is excited to continue her dance journey in college.



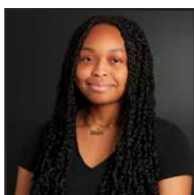
Katie Miller [Stelliferous and Ascension] is a second-year chemistry major and cross registered NTID student from Eagan, Minnesota. She performed as Water in *Singring and the Glass Guitar* and in "Havisham Interludes" for *25 Years of Dance*. Her dream has always been to fly, so she can't wait to take to the sky in *AstroDance III*!



Ben Miron [Cosmic Portraits] is a fourth-year mechanical engineering major from Milford, New Hampshire. He has previously performed in Vermont's *Circus Smirkus* in acts ranging from juggling, hoop diving, Chinese pole, and banquine. It is his first time with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts production and he is very excited to be a part of the production!



Cami Pereira [Cosmic Encounters] is a second-year graphic design major from Greenville, Rhode Island. Cami's most recent and favorite productions she's been in is her high school's *Gatsby The Musical* written by her friend, and *Pippin* as a featured dancer for the RIT Players. This is Cami's first time performing with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts and is very excited. She not only gets to dance but she's also learned some sign language.



Mayah Phillips [Galactic Spectra] is a first-year in computational biology and bioinformatics. She is from Reisterstown, Maryland (close to Baltimore). This will be her first time in a dance production in six years. She's extremely excited to be a part of *Astrodance II*.



Kalena Porteous [Continuum] is a third-year psychology major student looking to minor in photography or business from Modesto, California. She danced hip-hop, jazz and a little bit of ballet back in high school from 2016-2017, however this is her first time in a production and her very first performance. She looks forward to being a part of this amazing opportunity in *AstroDance II* and can't wait to perform!



Catie Roe [Cosmic Encounters] is a second-year software engineering student from Huntingtown, Maryland. She played Star Arcturus in *25 Years Through Movement and Dance* in February 2023. She is looking forward to being in a hip-hop scene as it is her favorite genre of dance!



Dessa Shapiro [Continuum] is a first year computing exploration major, from Northern California. This is her first performance with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts. Although she has been performing aerial silks for years. She is excited to be part of this production, which will be the first help in the new SHED Glass Box Theater. And is looking forward to seeing how the concepts of performance and technology intertwine within this space.



Sam Sit [Galactic Spectra and Continuum] is a first-year graduate student from Quincy, Massachusetts pursuing a computer science MS. He played Wind in *Singring and the Glass Guitar* and Man 2 Man for *25 Years Through Movement and Space* as a dancer. Since this is the first dance production ever that will take place in the SHED, he is very excited to contribute to it as one of its dancers.



Ace Tarsia [Cosmic Encounters and Continuum] is a third-year environmental sustainability, health, and safety major from Fishkill, New York. They previously performed in February's show *25 Years of Dance*, in the *Havisham Interludes* piece and have been an active participant in the dance classes and workshops offered on campus. They are thrilled for everyone to see *Astrodance II* in the brand-new performing arts space in the SHED!



Mara Tysick [Galactic Spectra, Cosmic Encounters, and Ascension] is a second-year biology major from Buffalo, New York. She has performed in two NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts productions as Fire in *Singring and the Glass Guitar* and in *Havisham Interludes* for *25 Years of Dance* as a corpse bride. She is thrilled to be in the opening production for the Skalsky Glass Box Theater and can't wait for everyone to see what we have been working hard on all semester! It will be out of this world!



Teresa Uhl [Cosmic Portraits] is a fourth-year interior design student from Syracuse, New York. She has been a member of Vis Viva Dance Company her whole collegiate career and has recently joined the RIT Cheer team. This is her first production with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts production, and she is so excited for everyone to see the show!



Lea Wetzel [Cosmic Encounters] is a fourth-year packaging science student at RIT. She comes from an extensive background in hip hop with over 8 years of competition and performance experience.



Evelyn Zou [Galactic Spectra] is a fourth-year RIT computer science major from Clifton Park, New York. She started dancing competitive ballroom in college and has recently joined the Chinese Dance Club's performance team. When she heard that *Astrodance II* would be combining science and technology with dance, she knew she had to give it a shot. This is her first time performing with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts. It is also her first time being a part of a dance production since graduating high school so she is super excited!



Robin Bochnik [Assistant Stage Manager] is a second year Industrial Design Student and this is the second dance show that they have Assistant Stage Managed for at RIT. They have also worked on *25 Years Through Movement and Space*, *And Then There Were None* and the New Albion Radio Hour as a part of the backstage crew. They are from Westchester, New York. They hope everyone enjoys the show!



Kerriann Croy [Assistant Stage Manager] is a first-year physics major from Elon, North Carolina. While this is her first time working with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts, she's been involved onstage or backstage in over 50 productions in the last 11 years! A few recent highlights include, *The Comedy of Errors* (Director), *Clue! On Stage* (Stage Manager), and *The Little Mermaid* (Technical Ursula Operator). Kerriann can't wait to see what the next 4 years at RIT have in store for her!



Taylor Hanners [Assistant Stage Manager] is a second-year psychology major from Cabot, Arkansas. Her favorite show that she has participated in was being an ensemble member in her high school's production of *Camp Rock*, and she also enjoyed being part of the costume crew for RIT Players production of *Something Rotten* in Fall of 2022. This is her first time working with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts production and her first time as an ASM so she is very excited to be part of this production.



Sharon Vandezande [Stage Manager] is a Sponsored Research Administrator at RIT with her passion and education in "administration of the stage." After 30 years in theatre, a few highlights include Geva Theatre (Asst. Stage Mgr. & Assoc. Production Mgr.), *Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Stage Mgr.), and 8 years as Blackfriars Theatre Executive Board Secretary. This is her first opportunity stage managing with NTID Performing Arts and School of Performing Arts production and she's honored to mentor the ASMs, cast & crew to have a positive, transforming learning experience.



Zoii Henry [Assistant to the Director] is a fifth-year integrative medical design student from Jamaica. She has been a dancer for 12 years and a modern dance choreographer for 6 years. She has assisted in choreographing *Singring* and *The Glass Guitar* in Spring 2023. She fell in love with the *AstroDance II* visual concept and knew she had to come on-board for this artistic endeavor. Zoii is looking forward to a wonderful display of creative movement at the intersections of science, dance, art and technology.

**This production is dedicated to the memory of
Dr. Joseph Bochner former chairperson of
NTID Department of Cultural and Creative Studies**

Special Thanks

Dr. Jill Bradbury
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Josh Labman
Chris Licata

Mark Lindenmuth
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Dr. Kelly Martin
President David Munson
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Command G Design Lab
MAGIC Spell Studios
University Arenas