

**BHM24 Screening & Panel Discussion****Film: *Black Ballerina*****Discussion: A Seat at the Table, a Place on the Stage**

February 10, 2024 at 2:30pm



**Sandra C. Atkinson** is the Jim Henson Academy of Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator at Northwestern HS where she previously served as VPA Dance Department Chairperson. She is also the Founder/Executive Director of Light Switch Dance Theatre where she creates socially conscious multidisciplinary work to be performed in non-traditional spaces. She is most known for her work *The Girl Child Project*, *RedLines*, and *NEST for LSDT*. Sandra has a B.A. in Dance from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, an M.A. in Performing Arts: Dance from American University and a Maryland Certification Educational Administration I from Trinity Washington University. Sandra has taught at Montgomery College, Black Rock Center for the Arts, City Ballet, American University, Goucher College, Community College Baltimore County, American College Dance Festival, Washington Ballet School, Dance Place (ReVision Dance Company class), and for Equinox Dance Company. She serves on the Dance Student Growth Outcomes/Assessment Committee and CVPA Curriculum Committee for PGCPs. She was recently voted to serve as the Executive Board President of the Maryland Dance Education Association, Co-Chair of the Faculty Advisory Council for Northwestern HS/PGCEA, and the Early Career Educators Committee for PGCEA.



**Chandini Darby**, a native of Washington, DC, is a dancer, actress, choreographer, educator, mentor and artistic coach. She is Co-Founder and Artistic Director of The VIVA School, which prioritizes young dancers of color, merging world-class dance training with leadership development to cultivate the creative leaders of tomorrow. She is a 2007 Magna Cum Laude graduate of Towson University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance Performance and a recipient of the Washington Post Music and Dance award in Dance Scholarship. Her professional credits include: Lula Washington Dance Theatre, Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, Washington Reflections Dance Company, DC Contemporary Dance Theatre and Earl Mosley's Diversity of Dance. Ms. Darby is a certified Progressive Ballet Technique Instructor and is the founder of The Beauty for Ashes Project, a dance performance company committed to uplifting unpopular stories. Her choreographic work has been commissioned by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Dance Metro DC, the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities and Arena Stage.



**Dr. Truly A. Davis** is a Life Coach, Choreographer, Educator, and Scholar. Dr. Davis obtained her BFA in Dance Education (East Carolina University), MFA in Dance (Hollins University), and PhD in Visual Arts (Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts). Her scholarly works focus on Black Dance and the Black Dancing Body, delving into the connections across geographies, space, and time. As a Choreographer and Educator, Dr. Davis has taught workshops and set performative works in collaboration with various artists and institutions throughout Maryland, Virginia, Washington, D.C., Japan, and Costa Rica. Currently serving as an assistant professor of Dance at Bowie State University, Dr. Davis is also the Artistic Director of The Collective, the resident student-based pre professional dance company of Bowie State University's Fine and Performing Arts Department.

In 2023, Dr. Davis founded her company, Kidensha Dance Group, LLC, through which she specializes in helping Women of Color Creatives in the education field maintain high quality performance at work while still having time and energy for their life outside of the classroom. In addition to coaching services, Dr. Davis offers her services as a keynote speaker, having not only presented for multiple public school systems, but also the National Dance Education Organization and the Maryland Dance Education Association annual conferences. She has also served as a mentor for first year Dance Educators.



**Kahina Haynes**, Executive Director, is a passionate arts activist and the visionary architect behind DIW's strategic revitalization following the significant loss of its Founder/Artistic Director, Fabian Barnes. Prior to her appointment by The Board of Directors, Ms. Haynes worked in program and process evaluation for a number of philanthropic and non-profit organizations including the United Nations (Bureau for Development Policy at UNDP), The Fulbright Scholar Program, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, SafeKids Worldwide, and the World Bank Group. She trained at schools including The Maryland Youth Ballet, School of American Ballet, and danced with Kodama Ballet Group. Ms. Haynes holds a B.A. from Princeton University with a Minor in African American Studies and a concentration in Dance; as well as, a Master's Degree from Oxford University in Evidence Based Social Intervention.



**Alvin Mayes** has worked choreographically and collaboratively with colleagues at the University of Maryland in Dance, Theatre, Music, and Athletics; and he made more than 150 works for the university community. His extended partnership with the Maryland Youth Ballet has produced ballets TAHQUAMENON FALLS, THIN ICE, CELESTIAL ORBITS, and EIREANN KENTE, which he restaged for MYB's 2023 season. Grants from Greenbaum Charitable Foundation have afforded him the opportunity to travel to Manta, Ecuador where he created award winning dances LOS OJOS SOBRE MANABÍ for Compañía Ceibadanza and DÉSDAMONA, which is based loosely on Othello in celebration of Shakespeare's 500th death day. Alvin has been recognized by the Maryland Council for Dance, the Washington Performing Arts Society (the Pola Nirenska Award), Metro Dance Award and the Philip Merrill Presidential Scholars Program. And lastly, Alvin is the recipient of the 2023 MDEA Living Legacy Award presented by the Maryland Dance Educators Association for his teaching, choreographing and coaching dance in the state of Maryland.



**Larry Miller (Moderator)**, an MYB alum, grew up in Baltimore County, Maryland and lived in the Washington Metropolitan area before moving to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He holds a Master of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communication from Point Park University and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from the University of Pittsburgh. Larry got his start on TV in Medford, Oregon where he spent three years working as a Morning Anchor/Supervising Producer. He earned an Edward R. Murrow and Associated Press awards for hard news reporting while at WBMA-TV in Birmingham, AL. He joined the WUSA9 morning team in February 2015 and anchors the news at noon along with Get Up DC.



A graduate of LaGuardia High School of the Arts 88', and Howard University with a Bachelor of Science in Biology 95', **Amanda Standard** serves as Founder, ED/AD for both Divine Dance Institute, Inc. (DDI) and SoundXpressed Dance Company (Washington DC). Through each, she's provided novice, pre-professional, and professional dancers the opportunity to study and perform all over the D.C. Metropolitan area, nationally, and abroad. - After over 22 years of owning and running DDI, the Maryland Dance Education Association presented Amanda with the "Dance Educator of the Year for Private Studios" award, in 2018., FAME "Educator of the Year" in 2019, and the National Dance Education Educator of the Year award (Private Sector) 2020. She has taught K-12 while tackling multiple subjects at various levels, and currently serves at Benjamin D. Foulois Creative and Performing Arts Academy, a K-8 specialized program. She is currently a national teacher leader for the Connected Arts Network, and through DDI, she has launched the Emerging Artists Showcase, Creative Impact Awards, the Pneuma Dance Project Summer Intensive, Seedz Summer Dance Lab, PG Powerdanz Project and the Divine DESIGN Summer Enrichment programs.



**Vincent E. Thomas**, dancer, choreographer and teacher, received his MFA in Dance from Florida State University and a BME in Music from the University of South Carolina. He has danced with Dance Repertory Theatre (FSU), Randy James Dance Works (NY/NJ), EDGEWORKS Dance Theater (DC), and Liz Lerman Dance Exchange (MD). His choreography has been presented at various national and international venues including DUMBO Festival (NY), Velocity Festival (DC), Modern Moves Festival (DC), Philly Fringe (PA), Edinburgh Fringe Festival (UK-Scotland). Vincent has a number of theater credits including Movement Coach/Choreographer for

Everyman Theater's Brother's Size by Tarell Alvin McCraney in Baltimore, MD (2012), Mosaic Theatre's Unexplored Interior by Jay Sander in Washington, DC (2015), and Everyman Theater's Los Otros by Ellen Fitzhugh in Baltimore, MD (2017), and Associate Choreographer/Movement Coach for Williamstown Theater Festival's Most Happy in Concert in Williamstown, MA (2022) directed by Daniel Fish. He is the Artistic Director/Choreographer of the national touring What's Going On project. Vincent is the Associate Choreographer for the INTELLIGENCE Opera, written and conceived by Jake Heggie, Gene Sheer, and Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, premiered at Houston Grand Opera. He is an Urban Bush Women BOLD Facilitator, faculty member for the UBW Summer Institutes (NY), and Professor of Dance at Towson University (MD). His multi-dimensional company VTDance builds on the use of contemporary dance, improvisation, text/movement, a variety of sound sources, and collaborations with other artists, including dancers, musicians, poets, visual artists, and others [to be discovered].