

DANCE SERIES

Elise Knudson +
rebeca medina

with Lawrence faculty guests in a U.F.O.



Saturday, January 18, 2025

7:00 p.m.

Esch Studio, Warch Campus Center

150
years

U.F.O. (Uncharted Forms of the Occasion) is an improvisational performance practice bringing together musicians and movers to spontaneously compose for an audience. Inspired by a lineage of improvisational group performance formats such as Hyperlocal MKE and Lower Left's Available Space in San Diego, U.F.O. is a site for artists to gather and create – relying on their years of individual improvisational research and practices to support this delightful and sometimes precarious community endeavor.

Tonight's iteration of U.F.O. is directed by special Dance Series artists:
Elise Knudson + rebecca medina

Collaboratively and improvisationally created and performed by:

[Elise Knudson](#) is a New York City based dance artist who recently relocated to San Jose, CA to teach at SJSU. She loves trees and improvisation as they both distill life out of thin air with the help of a little water. Elise taught Contact Improvisation for Movement Research and facilitates CI at festivals and studios such as Touch Festival (China), Leviathan Studio (Canada), WCCI Jam (Berkeley, USA) and Moab Jam (Utah). Elise has taught repertory and CI at Manhattanville College and Theory and Practice of Dance Improvisation at Yale University. She created NEXToNow, modeled after The Impermanent Society of Philadelphia to provide a platform for the practice of performing interdisciplinary free improvisation. Honored by the opportunity to perform improvised dance with Nancy Stark Smith, David Appel, Chris Aiken & Angie Hauser, Alicia Greyson, Bradley Teal Ellis and Margaret Paek, Elise is also grateful for the opportunity to perform choreography with various artists, including Christopher Williams, Jenni Hong Dance, Kiori Kawai/Purring Tiger, Risa Jaroslow, Jody Oberfelder, David Appel, Koosil-ja/DANCE KUMIKO and as a 'community member' with Bill T. Jones in Deep Blue Sea. Over the years Elise has choreographed aerial dances, experimental installations and concert dances for stages large and small.

[rebecca medina](#). Improviser. Dancer. Choreographer. Craniosacral Therapist. Mother. Admirer of plants and disciple of their secrets. Interested in the magic of time and the power of community. Addicted to interdisciplinary collaborations. Curious about slow rhythms. Devoted to practicing Contact Improvisation since 2002. Immigrant from Bogotá, Colombia. Her choreographic questions and ideas about interdisciplinarity led her to obtain a master's degree in theater and live arts from the National University of Colombia in 2011. That same year she moved to New York City, where for twelve years she performed and collaborated with theater companies, choreographers, video artists, poets, photographers, musicians, and herbalists, like Sister Sylvester, Agnes Borinsky, Dai Jian, Yoshiko Chuma and The School of Hard Knocks, Megan Byrne, Alex Zaccarello, Tatyana

Tenembaum, and Miriam Parker, among many others. Between 2009 and 2024, rebecca has been granted various dance residencies in Colombia, Uruguay, Chile, Venezuela and the United States. She organized, curated and produced the monthly dance series Dãncēhølø in Ridgewood, Queens, in 2018 and 2019.

Lawrence University Faculty Collaborative Artists:

[Greg Riss](#) teaches drum set and Ghanaian music and dance at Lawrence University. He has performed with various groups, including Mama Digdown's Brass Band, La Combi, Panchromatic Steel, Triangulus, hunter & wolfe, the Dubuque Symphony, Fox Valley Symphony, Madison Symphony, and Eastern Wind Symphony. He has accompanied dance at Alvin Ailey Extension, New York Live Arts, Broadway Dance Center, Rutgers University, and UW Madison. He has studied traditional Ewe music and dance with the Agbeli family in Kopeyia, Ghana. Greg recently began teaching applied percussion at UW Oshkosh.

[Jean Carlo Ureña González](#) is a versatile performer, composer and educator that connects western and nonwestern tradition into concert settings. He has performed with the National Symphony Orchestra of Santo Domingo, Jackson Symphony, Toledo Symphony and Adrian Symphony. He has performed on multiple occasions in New Music Detroit's, Strange Beautiful Music (SBM) annual concert series. He is the founder and co-director of the first Dominican percussion ensemble that combines western and Caribbean musical traditions, ATEZA'O. Ureña González joined the faculty of the Lawrence University Conservatory of Music as an assistant professor of percussion in the fall of 2023.

[Loren Kiyoshi Dempster](#) uses a combination of cello, computer, electronics, composition, improvisation, notated scores, and world music influences to create and perform music with many fabulous collaborators, over many years and many places. He also teaches at Lawrence, Renaissance School for the Arts, and private studio.

[Margaret Sunghe Paek](#) is a collaborative dance artist whose research engages in practices of connection, curiosity, and rigorous play as methodologies of inclusion and ensemble making. As a mixed-race maker, educator, performer, and community builder, she finds connection in liminality and is deeply influenced by her relationships with contact improvisation, Ensemble Thinking, Alexander Technique, and the collectives Lower Left, the Resident Artists/Dancing Mamas, Uh Oh Trio, and Dr. Shamell Bell's Street Dance Activism, Barbara Dilley, Shireen Hamza and Alison Kopit, and her family trio. At Lawrence University, she co-directs with Mauriah Donegan Kraker, the minor and Interdisciplinary Area - "Dance: Embodied Collaborative Practice."

[Matt Turner](#), cellist and pianist, teaches in the Jazz & Improvisational Music Department at Lawrence University. Improvising in myriad styles, Turner appears on over 100 recordings and has performed in Canada, Europe, and Asia.

[Mauriah Donegan Kraker](#) is a midwesterner, a collaborative performance maker, a long-distance walker primarily invested in slow travel: walking around the block and through the city as a means of attending to choreographic unfolding of time cycles in the body + land. Her movement practices are shaped by her time competing as an Olympic-level athlete; endurance, duration + precise framing of body/land are drivers in the creation of place-based works. She is a recent recipient of Ucross + MacDowell Fellowships.

[Tim Albright](#) is a husband, father, trombonist, improviser and knitter. He has performed around the world with orchestras, jazz ensembles, chamber ensembles and edgy indie bands. He is currently learning how to circular breathe on the trombone which is a lot easier than he thinks it is.

[Lawrence University's Appleton and Door County campuses are located on the ancestral home of the Menominee and Ho-Chunk Nations. Currently there are 11 federally recognized and other non-federally-recognized Native American sovereign nations in Wisconsin. We acknowledge and honor these indigenous communities who have stewarded this land throughout the generations and pay respect to the elders past and present. We also acknowledge the foundational and often invisibilized influence of Native American culture, practice, and traditions on theatrical concert dance.](#)