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## Elizabeth, The Dance

Office of Arts + Cultural Programming

PEAK Performances at Montclair State University

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**THE 18/19 SEASON**  
THE HEIGHTS OF IMAGINATION

# *Elizabeth, the dance*

by Ann Carlson

performed by Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company

Artistic Director Daniel Charon

Raphaële Boitel. Photo: Emmanuel Simiand



**March 28–31, 2019**  
Alexander Kasser Theater

**Large  
Print**

**Arts + Cultural  
Programming**



**MONTCLAIR STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

Dr. Susan A. Cole, President

Daniel Gurskis, Dean, College of the Arts

Jedediah Wheeler, Executive Director, Arts + Cultural Programming

## **East Coast Premiere**

# ***Elizabeth, the dance***

**by Ann Carlson**

**performed by Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company**

**Artistic Director Daniel Charon**

Concept, Direction, and Choreography **Ann Carlson**

Set Design **Torry Bend**

Musical Conception **Ann Carlson**

Soundscape **Matthew McMurray**

Costume Design **Ann Carlson, Daniel Charon, Mary Lyn Graves, Melissa Younker**

Lighting Design **Cliff Wallgren**

Adapted by **William Peterson**

**Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company**

Executive Director **Jena C. Woodbury**

Dancers **Yebel Gallegos, Megan McCarthy, Brian Nelson, Breeanne Saxton,  
Bashaun Williams, Melissa Younker**

World Premiere: **April 13, 2017, Salt Lake City, Utah**

Commissioned and Performed by **Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company**

Young boy's voice reading *The Art of Making Dances* by Doris Humphrey:

**Joseph Carlson-Strom** at age 5.

**First Impressions:** Saturday, March 30, post-performance

Share your first impressions of *Elizabeth, the dance* with director and choreographer Ann Carlson, artistic director of Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company Daniel Charon, and Arts + Cultural Programming's executive director, Jedediah Wheeler.

Note: *Elizabeth, the dance* contains partial nudity.

*Elizabeth, the dance* is made possible with additional support from: Zions Bank | John & Marcia Price Family Foundation | Sam & Diane Stewart Family Foundation | Marriner S. Eccles Foundation | Bick Robbins

Duration: 75 minutes, no intermission.

In consideration of both audiences and performers, please turn off all electronic devices. The taking of photographs or videos and the use of recording equipment are not permitted. No food or drink is permitted in the theater.



"Seeing the Stage: Moving in and breaking out of the frame for contemporary dance" by Clare Croft in *PEAK Journal*, Claudia La Rocca, editor

## Program Notes

*homage*

1. respect or reverence paid or rendered

*Elizabeth, the dance* pays homage to:

- visionaries and teachers whose shoulders we stand upon.
- the history of dances that have inspired this one.
- the walls outside ourselves and within.
- copyright, access, ownership, oppression.

- the activists and artists who have paved the way.
- dancers as shamans.
- those who shame us.
- those who inspire our liberation.
- the joy, disappointment, and mystery of desire.

## About the Artists

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**Ann Carlson** (Choreographer/Director) is an interdisciplinary artist whose work borrows from the disciplines of dance, performance, and theater as well as visual, conceptual, and social art practices. Her work takes the form of solo performance, land-based projects, ensemble dances, theatrical works, and performance video. She often works within a series format, creating performance structures over a period of years that adapt and tour to multiple sites. Carlson is the recipient of many commissions and numerous awards for her artistic work. Her awards include a Creative Capital Award, a Doris Duke Performing Artist Award in Contemporary Dance, a National Dance Project Creation Award, five Multi-Art Production Fund Grants, a USA Artist Fellowship, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship, and a Fellowship from the Foundation for Contemporary Art. Carlson received the first Cal/Arts Alpert Award in Choreography and a prestigious three-year choreographic fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Currently Carlson is touring *Doggie Hamlet*, a work with a flock of sheep, three herding dogs, and five human performers; and *The Symphonic Body*, a gestural orchestra piece.

*The Symphonic Body / Water* was recently commissioned by Mountain Time Arts in Bozeman, Montana, and an upcoming iteration, *The Symphonic Body / Food*, will be performed at the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH, in April.

**Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company** is Utah's most established institution for contemporary dance. The Company actively embraces and commissions the work of contemporary choreographers, tours worldwide, and develops dynamic education and community outreach programming. Through performance and educational undertakings, the Company pursues its mission to make dance a viable part of everyone's life—whether it be as creators, performers, dance educators, critics,

or as participating audience members. Over the 55 years of its history, Ririe-Woodbury has toured nationally and internationally, always advocating the philosophy that “dance is for everybody.”

Under the direction of executive director Jena Woodbury, artistic director Daniel Charon, and education director Ai Fujii Nelson, Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company is committed to building upon the vision of its founders as it continues to evolve as an important voice for innovation in contemporary dance and dance education.

**Torry Bend** (Set Designer) is a set designer, puppet artist, and associate professor at Duke University. Bend’s set design includes *Animal Dance* (The Children’s Theatre Company); *Are They Edible* (La Mama, Incubator Arts Project, and Dixon Place, New York); *Circle Course* (Katmandu); *Pygmalion* (Southwest Shakespeare Co.); Stephen Wadsworth’s *Agamemnon* (Getty Villa); and *References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot* (Empty Space Theatre, Seattle). In Portland, OR, she did *Omnium Gatherum*, *The Bald Soprano/The Lesson*, and *Brilliant Traces*, for which she received a Drammy, and *A Tuna Christmas* with Oregon Repertory Theatre. She created and directed the toy theater piece *The Paper Hat Game* (3-Legged Dog Art and Technology Center, New York; Manbites Dog Theater, Durham, NC; the Great Small Works Toy Theater Festival, Brooklyn, NY; the Den Theatre, Chicago, IL; and Open Eye Figure Theatre, Minneapolis, MN); and *Nesting* (Great Small Works International Toy Theater Festival, NY; The Port City Puppetry Festival, NC; Douglas Paasch Puppet Festival ’13, Seattle; and Open Eye Figure Theatre, Minneapolis, MN). *The Elephant* premiered at Disney Music Hall’s International Toy Theater Festival 2008 and was performed with Jumbo Shrimp Circus, Los Angeles. She created and directed *Loser* in 2007, Prague, New York, Minneapolis, and Los Angeles. *Love’s Infrastructure*, a collaboration with the band Bombadil, premiered with Duke Performances in 2014. Bend has received funding from the Jerome Foundation, Henson Foundation, Minnesota State Arts Board, the Durham Arts Council, and the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation.

**Matthew McMurray** (Soundscape) is a multidisciplinary artist and musician based out of both Salt Lake City and Los Angeles. A native Utahn, he works as a creative producer and tech consultant across a variety of multimedia projects in corporate and art-world settings with clients ranging from Apple to Kanye West. With musical projects extending as wide as his kaleidoscopic influences, he performs music as a



solo artist, band leader, and collaborator on a local and national level—most recently with Karl Jørgensen of Utah-based experimental electronic label Hel Audio.

**Daniel Charon** (Artistic Director), artistic director of Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company since 2013, has been active as a choreographer, teacher, and performer for more than 25 years. While based in New York City, Charon maintained a project-based company and danced primarily with Doug Varone and Dancers (1999–2010) and the Limón Dance Company (1997–1999). He is a BFA graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts and an MFA graduate of the California Institute of the Arts in Choreography and Integrated Media. As Ririe-Woodbury's artistic director, Charon has created numerous original works for the stage and gallery installations and has designed video for his and other choreographers' works. As an independent choreographer he has presented multiple full-evening concerts in New York City, has been produced by various theaters, and has been commissioned to choreograph new works for many companies, universities, and festivals around the country. Charon choreographed *The Pearl Fishers*, *Aida*, and *Moby-Dick* at the Utah Opera. Charon regularly teaches master classes and workshops nationally and internationally and has taught at the Metropolitan Opera, the Bates Dance Festival, Salt Dance Fest, North Carolina School of the Arts Summer Comprehensive, Varone Summer Dance Workshops, and Limón Summer Workshops. He has been a guest artist and adjunct professor at numerous universities. Charon has staged the works of José Limón, Jirí Kylián, and Doug Varone at schools and companies around the world.

**Jena C. Woodbury** (Executive Director), a native of Salt Lake City, Utah, began dancing at the age of three and continued her dance training in Utah, California, New York, and France. At the age of 19, Woodbury enrolled as a Dance major at the University of Utah and at the same time founded her own dance company, which toured throughout Utah for two years. She completed her BA at the University in Communications. In 1986 Woodbury became the marketing and education director for the Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company and during that time developed an educational outreach program that continues to be one of the Company's most important contributions to schools in Utah. Upon moving to Portland in 1993, Woodbury became the associate general manager for Imago Theatre, whose innovative works have delighted audiences around the world for more than 20 years.

During that time, she was also an admissions panelist for the School of Arts and Academics in Vancouver, WA. In 1998 Woodbury was hired by Do Jump Movement Theater in Portland to be the touring director for their new endeavor to tour their performances. From 2000 to 2003, she was booking/tour manager for the Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company and company manager for Marcel Marceau's North American and Asian tours. Since 2004 she has been the associate managing director/touring director of the Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company and assumed the position as managing director in 2011. Along with a fantastic staff, directors, dancers, and board members, Woodbury looks forward to ushering Ririe-Woodbury into the future.

## Dancers

**Yebel Gallegos** is a dance artist from El Paso, TX. He played an important role in the founding of Cressida Danza Contemporánea in Yucatán, Mexico. While in Cressida Danza, he served as company teacher, rehearsal director, and a dancer for five years. In the US, he has performed with Dance Theatre X, Sharir + Bustamante Danceworks, and Nickerson-Rossi Dance. He earned a BFA in Dance from the University of Texas at Austin and graduated from the prestigious Delfos Dance Company's school, the Mazatlán Professional School of Dance in Mazatlán, Mexico. Gallegos has performed pieces from artists such as Doug Varone (US), Twyla Tharp (US), Roberto Olivan (Spain), Michael Foley (US), Raja Feather Kelly (US), Claudia LaVista (Mexico), Lourdes Luna (Mexico), Paula Gonzalez (Chile), and Charles Anderson (US). He has traveled as a performer to Asia, Europe, and Latin America and has taught dance throughout Asia, Mexico, Chile, and the United States. Gallegos joined the Company in 2013.

**Megan McCarthy** (Portland, OR) received her formative training at the School of Oregon Ballet Theatre and is a graduate of the California Institute of the Arts BFA Program in Dance. She has worked with a variety of choreographers, including Julie Bour, Stephanie Nugent, Daniel Charon, Paul Destrooper, and Patrick Kilbane. McCarthy has been a guest artist with the Des Moines Metro Opera, Portland Opera, Portland Festival Ballet, Pasadena Dance Theatre, szalt, Nugent Dance, Nickerson-Rossi Dance, and in numerous independent projects. Recently, she danced with Rebecca Lemme's Acts of Matter and Rosanna Gamson/World Wide in Los Angeles and toured to Jacob's Pillow with The Union Project Dance



Company. Additionally, she has had her choreography produced in Portland, OR. McCarthy joined the Company in 2017.

**Brian Nelson**, originally from Tridell, UT, joined Ririe-Woodbury for their 55th season. He initially attended Southern Utah University as a Musical Theater major, where he was first exposed to the world of concert dance. He eventually transferred to the University of Utah, where he graduated in 2016 with a BFA in Ballet (Most Outstanding Senior) and a minor in Modern Dance. He has been lucky enough to dance with BodyVox, Now-ID, Municipal Ballet Company, and Salt 2. As a theatrical artist, he has had the pleasure of working with companies such as Tuacahn, Pioneer Theatre Company, Utah Shakespeare, and Utah Festival Opera.

**Breeanne Saxton**, a proud Salt Lake City native, received her BFA in Modern Dance from the University of Utah in 2015. While there, she worked with artists such as Scott Wells, Yannis Adoniou, Eric Handman, Shaun Boyle, and Molly Heller. Since graduating, she has performed for Utah Opera, LajaMartin, Nichele Van Portfleet, Graham Brown, Sackerson, and Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company as a guest dancer and the Nikolais/Louis Foundation for Dance. She has worked as an educator in K–12 environments with Tanner Dance as well as professional communities through her education platform Open Contemporary Technique (O.C.T.). Her choreography has been presented throughout Salt Lake City and premiered in Berlin, Germany, in December 2018. Saxton joined Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company in 2018 and revels in each opportunity to explore various sides of her artistry with the company.

**Bashuan Williams** started dancing at the age of 16 in Texas with Ballet Lubbock under Yvonne Racz Key, artistic director. He was captain of his varsity basketball team and a member of Ballet Lubbock's preprofessional company. Williams attended the University of Utah on both academic and artistic merit scholarships, in the Department of Ballet. He joined Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company in 2011 and has had the pleasure of working with renowned choreographers such as Eddy Toussaint, Stevan Novakovich, Edward Truitt, Val Caniparoli, Rick Tija, Johannes Wieland, Bill T. Jones, Charlotte Boye-Christensen, Doug Varone, and Daniel Charon, among others. Williams is grateful for the opportunity to dance and grow in the community of Salt Lake City.

**Melissa Younker**, a native of Southern California, is a movement artist based in Salt Lake City, UT. Since joining Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company in 2014, she has had the privilege to embody an array of works by artistic director Daniel Charon along with choreographers Adam Barrach, Ann Carlson, Tzveta Kassabova, Raja Feather Kelly, Joanna Kotze, Alwin Nikolais, Kate Weare, and Netta Yerushalmy, among others. Younker holds a BFA from California State University, Long Beach and has been dedicated to dance for more than 25 years. She has toured throughout the United States, France, Mongolia, and South Korea as a performer and educator.

## Acknowledgments

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This work is dedicated to Joan Woodbury.

Ann Carlson wishes to thank: Limón Dance Company, Forrest Cuch, Joan Woodbury, Daniel Charon, Kim Colosimo, Betty Hayes, Elizabeth Streb, Lisa Arnett, Prescott Muir, Ailine Kinikini Lao, Melanie Joseph, and Jena Woodbury.



### Next Up

Shanghai Quartet  
35th Anniversary Concerts  
Haochen Zhang, Piano  
April 6, 2019 @ 8:00pm

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The **Office of Arts + Cultural Programming** (ACP) enhances the cultural, creative, and academic life of the Montclair State campus and the broader community. Its signature program, Peak Performances, features innovative works by international contemporary artists of exceptional merit, and by the next generation of great artists training at Montclair State University's College of the Arts. Through its Cultural Engagement program, ACP offers master classes, workshops, lectures, and discussions designed to deepen participants' understanding of the aesthetic, cultural, and social contexts of the performances presented.

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## Programs in this season are made possible in part by funds from:

The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts



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