

CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER  
& UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF DANCE  
PRESENT

# *Through the Distance and Birds of a Feather*

A SHARED EVENING BY MFA CANDIDATES  
VANNIA IBARGUEN AND APRIL GRUBER



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2009 • 8PM  
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2009 • 8PM  
DANCE THEATRE

## THROUGH THE DISTANCE AND BIRDS OF A FEATHER

A SHARED EVENING BY MFA CANDIDATES VANNIA IBARGUEN  
AND APRIL GRUBER

*This evening's shared concert is supported by*

**Directors:** April Gruber and Vannia Ibarguen

**Lighting Designer:** Paul D. Jackson

**Stage Manager:** Erin Glasspatrick

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Baakari Wilder

### PROGRAM ORDER

#### BIRDS OF A FEATHER, SECTION I:

##### NESTLING

**Choreography:** April Gruber

**Japanese Fan Dance:** Saki Kawakita

**Performance by:** Alexandra Daniello, Jessica Goldberg, April Gruber, Saki Kawakita, Lauren Knudsen and Rachel Jordan Wolfe

**Music:** Satomi Saeki, Alvin Takegawa Ramos, Radiohead, Andrew Bird, Barbara Bonney and Daniel Bernard Roumain

The traditional Japanese fan dance, *Takasago*, featured in this piece tells the story of the red crowned cranes' annual migration from the Japanese city of the same name.

### INTERMISSION

#### BIRDS OF A FEATHER, SECTION II:

##### DREAMS OF FLIGHT

**Choreography and Video:** Dawn Springer

**Performance by:** April Gruber

**Music:** "I am a Cinematographer" by Palace Brothers. Performed by Karinne Keithley with Josh Keithley.

# PROGRAM

### THROUGH THE DISTANCE

**Choreography:** Vannia Ibarguen

**Costume Design:** Stephanie Shaw

**Video by:** Vannia Ibarguen and Betty Skeen

*Through the Distance* was born as an idea based on the last seven years of my life after living in four different cities and visiting more than 12 different countries. Through this journey, I have made amazing friends and seen extraordinary places but the hardest part was always to leave them behind. I would love being able to bring them with me, to have close to me all the people who I care about the most. Pack them and check them at the airport? Probably not an option.

Technology offered me a way to stay in touch with those people and those places, but it has been always limited. When will technology allow me to bring them with me? When will I be able to go to them whenever I want disregarding where I am?

### SECTION ONE "Doubt"

Why separate miles from your friends and family? Why migrate? Why change? It is challenging to leave your place and go to another. A decision must be made. Some sort of sacrifice is necessary. Hopefully a rewarding experience is awaiting you wherever you are going.

**Music:** "When Angel Died" by Pauchi Sasaki

**Performance by:** Vannia Ibarguen

### SECTION TWO "Migration"

Communities and groups break up and sometimes they never join again. One by one, everybody leaves saying good bye, leaving the place empty.

**Music:** "OsoII" by Pauchi Sasaki and "La Vie Quotidienne" by Yann Thiersen

**Performance by:** Christina Jackson, Molly Kirkup, Kathryn Lerner, Noelle Ribsam, Emily Schwarz, Kristen Vlacancich

### SECTION THREE "Departing"

Once decided, it is time to pack your things, your feelings and your dreams. You will need them all where you are going.

**Music:** "Wayno y Harawi" by Shin Sasakubo

**Sound Editing by:** Eduardo Vargas

**Performance by:** Vannia Ibarguen



#### SECTION FOUR “*Mentiras*”

Fight between two girls because of love, jealousy and insecurity. Distance creates misunderstandings, lack of communication. The body language is missed. How well you can hate at the distance?

**Music:** “El Angel” by Astor Piazzolla

**Performance by:** Kathryn Lerner and Emily Schwarz

#### SECTION FIVE “*Through the Distance*”

Distance creates absence of physical contact. You can bring yourself and the beloved one to a common space, to see him, hear her, but you cannot touch, smell or taste through technology. At least not yet.

**Music:** “Legions” by Zoe Keating

**Performance by:** Vannia Ibarguen

**Live performance via Skype by:** Antonio Ayesta from Magdeburg, Germany

#### SECTION SIX “*Virtual Closeness*”

What if, through the distance, you are able to see people from other places, look at them in the eyes and interact with them? What if technology brings your friends to you even if they are far away?

**Music:** “La Quebrada” by Pauchi Sasaki

**Performance by:** Christina Jackson, Molly Kirkup, Kathryn Lerner, Noelle Ribsam, Emily Schwarz, Kristen Vlacancich

**Video performance by:** Adriana Arrunategui and Elizabeth Munoz from Lima, Peru. Lauren Cosentino, Sara Loder and Megan Schaffer from Long Beach, California

#### EPILOGUE

The future. Will technology really defeat the distance? Will people be able to meet each other through the distance?

**Performance by:** Christina Jackson, Molly Kirkup, Vannia Ibarguen, Kathryn Lerner, Noelle Ribsam, Danilo Rivera, Emily Schwarz, Kristen Vlacancich

Join us for a post-performance Talk Back with the artists.

## SPECIAL THANKS

*April Gruber would like to extend her heartfelt thanks...*

To **Mom** and **Dad** for your unconditional love and support. There will never be words to fully express my awe and gratitude for all you did to make me the woman I am today. You taught me how to work hard and follow my dreams — this moment is possible because of you. You are simply amazing and I am so honored to be your daughter. I love you more than you will ever know.

To **Alyssa**, my little sister, whose childhood shyness caused Mom to enroll you into dance classes. I vividly remember attending your first performance and realizing that’s what I want to do! Thank you for allowing me to follow your lead. I love you and am so proud to share this passion with you.

To my **dancers** — for your hard work, commitment and contributions throughout this process.

To **Dawn Springer** and **Saki Kawakita** for taking this leap of faith with me. Your gift of movement and dedication to this project leaves me speechless. I am honored.

To my thesis committee: **Anne Warren, Sharon Mansur, Paul Jackson** and **Dawn Springer** for your thoughtful guidance and encouragement.

To all my **family** and **friends** — Each of you are in my heart throughout this performance and always. Thank you for your unending love and support.

*Vannia Ibarguen would like to extend sincere thanks...*

To **Eduardo**, for his love and support in every single aspect of my life.

To **Maya**, my beautiful 11-month-old daughter, whose smile is all I needed in times of despair! To her, for being the light Eduardo and I needed in our life.

To **Mom** and **Dad**, for making me the person who I am.



To **Karen**, for her bright academic advice and extraordinary coaching during these three years. She has been extremely supportive as mentor and friend. For being always online and available “through the distance.” ☺

To **Paul**, for sharing his great knowledge and for making my crazy ideas real.

To **Nejla**, who is an inspiration of artistry and dedication. She taught me with her amazing dance the art of the solo performance. Thanks for trusting me to assist her performing in the United States, Mexico and Turkey.

To **Mim**, who always believed in me as choreographer, and who gave me the right advice putting me always back on the right track to continue creating.

To **Sharon, Anne, Dawn**, for their prompt and always right-on choreographic advice.

To **Betty, Lauren, Diedre, April**, my fellow graduate students, without them life at school would have been incomplete and boring. I have learned from all of you and I consider your friendship the most valuable thing I have gotten through the MFA program.

To my amazing **dancers** who were able to get through the whole preparation and rehearsal process without getting insane because of me. I strongly respect your art and performance.

To all my **friends** and **family** for listening to me, giving me advice, love and support.

### ABOUT THE ARTISTS - *BIRDS OF A FEATHER*



**APRIL GRUBER**

Born and raised in Pittsburgh, **APRIL GRUBER** (Co-Director/Performer) is currently pursuing her MFA in Dance Performance at the University of Maryland. Coupled with her graduate studies, she is a University of Maryland Graduate Teaching Assistant and formerly the Take Five Coordinator for the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center. For the past two summers, Gruber has also served as the Program Assistant for Exploring Ballet with Suzanne Farrell at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Prior to graduate school, April Gruber served as the Education Director for Dance Alloy Theater. Here, she developed, managed and coordinated the Dance Alloy Theater School, community outreach and residency programs, and the annual summer intensive workshop. She taught for the company's school and extensive outreach programs, providing instruction to children and adults throughout the Pittsburgh region and its public schools. Gruber has also served as adjunct faculty at Penn State University New Kensington campus and been a guest master teacher at the University of Pittsburgh, Penn State University Altoona campus, Duquesne University, James Madison University and Performática in Puebla, Mexico.

Throughout her career, Gruber has performed the work of Monica Bill Barnes, Beth Corning, Maurice Fraga, Gesel Mason, Shane O'Hara, Colleen Thomas and many others. She is currently a company member of UpRooted Dance for whom she has performed regionally and in Mexico. Her own work has been presented by the University of Pittsburgh, Squonk Opera and Joy of Motion.

April Gruber is a Summa Cum Laude graduate of James Madison University where she received her Bachelor of Arts in Dance and was named Outstanding Dance Graduate.

**ALEXANDRA DANIELLO** comes to the University of Maryland from the Fine and Performing Arts Center located within Howell High School, in New Jersey. As a sophomore in the College Park Arts Scholars Program, she is currently seeking degrees



in both Dance and Journalism here at the University of Maryland. Alexandra made her debut at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center as a community cast member in David Dorfman Dance's production of *Underground* and since then she has appeared in *Where Colors Blend into Sounds* and in numerous performances with Ballet Company M. Alexandra would like to thank April for taking her under her wing and giving her this opportunity to perform.

**JESSICA GOLDBERG** has been dancing since she was three years old with the Tappan Zee Dance Group. Within this small studio, she joined the Teen Repertory Company, working with numerous guest artists. During her senior year of high school, she joined Evolve Dance Company for its first year ever. Since her senior year, Jessica has interned and taken classes at Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. Jessica joined Ballet Company M her first semester at Maryland. She is excited about the idea of being more involved in the dance department and wants to thank April for allowing her to "spread her wings!"

**SAKI KAWAKITA** was born and raised in Hyogo, Japan. In her native country, she intensively studied dance and traditional Japanese dances. She came to the United States to study Dance and Performing Arts at Southern Utah University where she was in more than 20 performances, including *Cabaret*, *Lyric Kings* and *Oliver*, among others. Kawakita has worked at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts where she assisted in the programming, development, implementation and marketing of special events, educational publications, performance discussions and the Exploring Ballet with Suzanne Farrell summer intensive program. She currently works at The Washington Ballet @ THEARC as an instructor, school coordinator, DanceDC assistant and administrative assistant.

**LAUREN KNUDSEN** has been dancing since she was three years old with Mid-Atlantic Center for the Performing Arts. At the age of 11 she joined their Pre-Professional Ballet Program. She began competing in the Youth American Grand Prix at the age of 12, performing classical variations as well as contemporary modern pieces choreographed by Ashley Canterna and Deborah Engerman. Lauren joined Ballet Company M her first semester here at Maryland. She looks forward to becoming more involved in the dance department and would like to thank April for this opportunity to perform.

**DAWN SPRINGER** (choreographer/*Dreams of Flight*) is a visiting artist in the Department of Dance at the University of Maryland. Her creative work has been presented in various venues in New York City and throughout the United States, including Danspace Project's Out of Space, Movement Research at the Judson Church, Body Blend at Dixon Place, Progressive Arts Network, Aunts, University Settlement, Ur's former dance palace in Brooklyn, Mt. Tremper Arts and the 2006 MFA Show at the Reynolds Industries Theater at the American Dance Festival. She was an artist in residence in 2008 at Hollins University, and in 2007 at M.I.T. Other teaching includes The Ailey School, Dance New Amsterdam, the North Carolina School of the Arts, American Dance Festival Four Week School and for the 2007 and 2008 ADF Young Artist Tuition Scholarship audition tours. In addition to her own choreography, Dawn has performed in works by Karinne Keithley, Regina Rocke and Aynsley Vandenbroucke Movement Group. She has been a performing member with Theater et al, resident theater company of The Chocolate Factory in Long Island City. Dawn holds an MFA from Hollins University/The American Dance Festival. She is from Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. [www.dawnspringer.com](http://www.dawnspringer.com).

This is **RACHEL JORDAN WOLFE**'s second time on the UMD stage; she debuted as a dancer in The Maryland Opera Studio's *Eugene Onegin* in the spring of 2009. She trained in dance and musical theatre at the Mid Maryland Performing Arts Center starting at age five and plans to continue to pursue dance, theatre and music as she earns a degree in Dance and Theatre here at the University. Rachel is thrilled to be a part of this beautiful work and wants to thank April for this wonderful opportunity to dance on the UMD stage.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS - THROUGH THE DISTANCE



**VANNIA IBARGUEN**

**VANNIA IBARGUEN** (Co-Director/Performer) started doing ballet when she was ten. She has danced since then but she started doing it on a full-time basis after finishing her undergraduate program in Engineering. As dancer, she has performed in Peru, Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, Hong Kong and the United States. She was a Soloist at the Ballet Municipal de Lima, the largest ballet company in Peru, and she was a finalist at the XIII International Ballet Competition in Peru. In 2003, Vannia was appointed as an instructor for the Dance Department at the University of Lima, Peru, and later was awarded a scholarship by UNESCO to study Contemporary





Dance and Composition at the Instituto Superior de Arte of Havana, Cuba. In 2005, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Vannia received the Best Dancer and Choreography Award at Danza Al Mar Festival. In 2006, Vannia moved to the Washington DC area, where she has performed with Nejla Yarkin's NY2Dance, and DC's Teatro de Danza Contemporanea. Vannia, who holds a Bachelor's Degree in Systems Engineering, has also been an e-Business Consultant, Communication Manager at the National Dance Council of Peru and a journalist for DanzaHoy e-Magazine.

While doing her MFA in Dance at the University of Maryland, she studied under Karen Bradley, Alcine Wiltz, Meriam Rosen, Alvin Mayers and Nejla Yarkin. She also participated in several residencies and visiting artists' series. Among these artists are John Jasperse, Tere O'Connor, Donna Uchizono and Victoria Marks.

Vannia also dedicated the last two years to teach ballet to students at the University of Maryland and she was recently awarded by the National Dance Education Organization (NDEO) with the Anne Zirulnik Student Scholarship for exceptional promise in Dance Education.

**DANILO RIVERA** (Guest Dancer) was born in El Salvador. Dancer, teacher, choreographer and painter. Graduated from the National University of El Salvador (UES) with a BA in Fine and Visual Arts. Began his training in contemporary dance at UES under the direction of Alfredo Perez, and continued his studies at the National School of Dance under the direction of Francisco Castillo and Yasmin Hernandez, among others. Has participated in dance festivals in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and the United States. In addition to his work as a dancer, he has exhibited his paintings, scenic designs, body painting and costumes at the Embassy of Brazil in Salvador, San Francisco and Washington DC. Rivera has been on faculty at the National School of Dance, and currently at Joy of Motion Dance Center and The Dance Institute. Danilo has been with DC's Teatro de Danza Contemporanea Company since 1998 as a dancer, choreographer, set designer and teacher.

**ADRIANA ARRUNATEGUI** (Lima, Peru) is a ballet and contemporary dance performer and choreographer. Adriana holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and is a ballet teacher in Lima, Peru. She has received ballet, dance therapy and choreography education in Peru, Argentina, Mexico and the United States. Adriana is experienced in dance improvisation, psycho-corporal dance therapy and somatic techniques in dance and movement. She also belongs to the Volunteer Artists Network of Peru dedicated to providing children with a space for artistic expression within the most humble neighborhoods and cities of the country. Adriana has performed with renowned ballet and contemporary dance choreographers and directors like Mikhail Koukahrev (Russia), Fernando Bujones (Cuba), Renato Zanella (Italy), Patricia Alzuarena (Argentina) and Jorge Rizardi (Argentina).

**ANTONIO AYESTA** (Magdeburg, Germany) was born in Trujillo, Peru. Antonio started his ballet studies with the Cuban master Daniel Santos in 2001. Later, he was part of the Ballet Municipal de Trujillo Company, dancing there during almost three years as Soloist. At the same time, he obtained his degree in Systems Engineering at the Northern Private University in Trujillo. In 2003 Antonio was part of the SoloDanza Festival organized in Lima as Soloist. In 2004 he started working as principal dancer at the Ballet Municipal of Lima. In 2006 he traveled to New York City to take dance classes in modern jazz and ballet. In 2007 he moved to Estonia to dance with the Vanemuine Theater and in 2008 he was selected to be part of Magdeburg Ballet in Germany, where he is currently working.

**LAUREN COSENTINO** (Long Beach, CA) is a Dance Major at California State University, Long Beach. She is pursuing a BA in Dance, and hopes to one day receive an MA in Dance/Movement Therapy. Lauren danced for most of her life, until taking a break in high school for two years. After two years, her eyes were opened to the wonderful opportunity dance provided to reach and help others and decided to commit the rest of her education to growing as a dancer. She has found her niche in the dance



department at CSULB, is enjoying the journey so far and cannot wait to see what else is in store! She is so thankful for the support her family and friends have provided, and the continual blessings the Lord has poured out along the way.

**CHRISTINA JACKSON** has won awards, titles and scholarships from New York City Dance Alliance, West Coast Dance Explosion, LA Dance Force and many more. She was also the recipient of the NAACP ACTSO regional Gold Medal Award. Still at a young age, Christina has graced many stages with her presence at venues such as The Radio One Music Awards, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's Holiday Spectacular, Expressions 25th Anniversary at the Hippodrome Theatre, The Capitol Movement Project, Congressional Black Caucus Gala, Alvin Ailey's summer intensive "Summer Sizzler" show, Peabody's Spring Dance Concert, Disney World's "Stars of Tomorrow," The Best of D.C. and many more. She has worked with astounding artists such as Tony Powell, Joey Dowling, Barry Hughson, Rodger Cunningham, Cornelius Carter, Adrain Bolton, Helanius Wilkins, Tim Roberts, Jenny Hyde, Dan Karaty and many more. She is currently a full-time student at the University of Maryland College Park on a dance scholarship as a Public Relations and Dance major.

**MOLLY KIRKUP** is a junior dance major at the University of Maryland. She has had the privilege to perform in many shows during her time in the Department. She would like to thank her mother and brother for their inspiring strength and love. She would also like to thank her friends for their support and putting up with the smelly dance kid. Finally, she would like to thank Vannia for including her in many of her projects throughout the past two years; it has been a blessing. Paz y amor.

**KATHRYN LERNER** has been a dedicated dancer at the Hampton Bays School of Dance, on Long Island, from a very young age. She somehow managed to find time to graduate Valedictorian of her high school class. She is pursuing a dual degree in Dance and English, minoring in Middle East Studies. Her University of Maryland credits include *Women's Work and Other Stories*, and with the theatre department, Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*. You can check out her new blog at <http://claricesmithcenter.umd.edu/2009/c/engage09/student-blogs>. Thanks, Vannia!

**SARA LODER** (Long Beach, CA) stumbled into dance when she was five years old studying tap, jazz, ballet, tumbling and everything she could get her feet into. The seed of modern dance was planted in her studies at Riverside City College in Southern California where her studies included student and faculty performances, American College Dance Festivals and every dance opportunity made available to her. She is presently studying at California State University Long Beach in her last year for her BA in Dance and continues to stumble joyfully every day that she can.

**ELIZABETH MUNOZ** (Lima, Peru) Dancer, choreographer and founder of Evidencia — Cultural Association in Peru, where she teaches modern dance, acrobacy, ballet and aerial dance. She danced for many years with the Ballet Municipal de Lima in Peru, and later she travels to explore the different expressions of dance in Cuba, Argentina, Mexico and the United States.

**MEGAN SCHAFFER** (Long Beach, CA) dabbled in dance while growing up in Riverside, California. She began formal training at the tender age of 18 while at Riverside Community College and ultimately transferred and received her BFA in dance from California State University, Long Beach. She currently resides in Tucson, Arizona, investigating her creative endeavors in the beautiful desert.

**NOELLE RIBSAM** is from Ocean Township, New Jersey. She is a junior at the University of Maryland after transferring from Towson University. She is working toward a double degree in dance and kinesiology (pre-physical therapy). She has been dancing since the age of five and has participated in many summer dance programs including American Ballet Theatre, Paul Taylor, Washington Ballet and Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet. She has worked with choreographers and instructors such as Victoria Hall, Peter Anastos, Septime Webre, Vincent Thomas and Linda Denise Fischer-Hall. She plans to continue dancing and pursue a career in physical therapy.

**EMILY SCHWARZ** is a senior majoring in Dance and Dietetics. She was born and raised in Ecuador where she completed her secondary education. Emily became an active member of the nationally recognized dance company, Ceibadanza, at the age of ten and has performed throughout Ecuador and neighboring countries. While a student



## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

at UMD, Emily has performed in Maryland Dance Ensemble concerts and at the American College Dance Festival. She has also been awarded the Creative and Performing Arts Scholarship, the Smith Award and the Meriam Rosen Scholarship.

**KRISTEN VLACANCICH** is a junior at the University of Maryland majoring in dance and psychology. She is a CAPA scholarship recipient in the Dance Department at the university. She was involved in the Capital Movement Project last fall, and has performed in the Maryland Dance Ensemble. Kristen has worked with choreographers such as Alvin Mayes and Cynthia Muller. She has an extensive dance training background in all styles from her dance studio on Long Island. She is looking forward to her future in the dance department, and possibly pursuing a career in Dance Therapy.

### DEPARTMENT OF DANCE FACULTY

Karen Bradley  
Diane DeFries  
Barbara Gaskill  
Paul Jackson  
Isiah Johnson  
Sharon Mansur  
Gesel Mason  
Alvin Mayes

Robert Novak  
Sara Pearson  
Miriam Philips  
Mary Slater  
Julia Smith  
Dawn Springer  
Anne Warren  
Patrik Widrig