



**MOSS
ARTS
CENTER**

Thursday, October 29, 7:30 PM EDT

**BEHIND THE SCENES WITH
CHOREOGRAPHER
EPHRAT ASHERIE**

Moss Arts Center
HomeStage Series



**VIRGINIA
TECH**TM

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH CHOREOGRAPHER EPHRAT ASHERIE

Moderated by Margaret Lawrence,
director of programming, Moss Arts Center

About *Odeon*

Odeon, an original dance work for seven dancers and four musicians, is the second collaboration between sister and brother team Ephrat and Ehud Asherie (choreographer and musical director, respectively). Set to the music of Brazilian composer Ernesto Nazareth, known for mixing early 20th-century romantic music with samba and other popular Afro-Brazilian rhythms, this work takes a hybrid approach to movement. *Odeon* delves into what happens when you bring together the extended family of street and club dances—including breaking, hip-hop, house, and vogue—remix them, pick them apart, and challenge them to inhabit unfamiliar spatial and choreographic contexts.

Biographies

EPHRAT ASHERIE DANCE

Ephrat Asherie Dance (EAD) is a dance company rooted in African American and Latinx vernacular dance. Dedicated to exploring the inherent complexities of these forms, EAD dives into the expansive narrative qualities of various street and club styles, including breaking, hip-hop, house, and vogue, as a means to tell stories, develop innovative imagery, and find new modes of expression. EAD's first evening-length work, *A Single Ride*, earned two Bessie nominations in 2013 for Outstanding Emerging Choreographer and Outstanding Sound Design by Marty Beller. EAD's newest work, *UnderScored*, was awarded a 2019 Creation and Development Award from the National Performance Network and a MAP Fund Award. *UnderScored* is being commissioned by Works & Process at the Guggenheim and will premiere in 2021. The company has also recently begun working on a new project in collaboration with critically acclaimed illustrator Mo Willems and commissioned by the Kennedy Center's Family Theater. EAD has presented work at the Apollo Theater, the Joyce Theater, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, ArtPower!, and the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, among others. For more information, please visit ephratasheriedance.com or follow EAD on Instagram @ephratasheriedance.

Biographies (continued)



EPHRAT ASHERIE, *artistic director, choreographer, and dancer*

Ephrat “Bounce” Asherie is a New York City-based b-girl, dancer, and choreographer and a 2016 Bessie Award winner for Innovative Achievement in Dance. Asherie has received numerous awards to support her work, including *Dance Magazine’s* Inaugural Harkness Promise Award, a Jacob’s Pillow Fellowship at the Tilles Center, and a

National Dance Project Award. Asherie is a 2019 NYFA Fellow and a 2018-2019 City Center Choreography Fellow. She is honored to have been mentored by Richard Santiago (a.k.a. Break Easy) and to have worked and collaborated with Dorrance Dance, Doug Elkins, Rennie Harris, Bill Irwin, Gus Solomons Jr., and Buddha Stretch, among others. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Barnard College, Columbia University in Italian and a master of fine arts from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where she researched the vernacular jazz dance roots of contemporary street and club dances. Asherie is a co-founding member of the all-female house dance collective MAWU and is forever grateful to NYC’s underground dance community for inspiring her to pursue a life as an artist.



MANON BAL, *dancer*

Manon Bal was born in Marseille, France. Bal trained at the IFPRO Rick Odums in Paris. She performed as a soloist in Les Jeunes Ballet Jazz de Rick Odums before moving to New York to train at the Ailey School. Bal has worked with choreographers including Ronald K Brown, Tweet Boogie, and Miki Tuesday, in addition to co-founding Mozaik Dance with Sun Kim and Janine “J9” Micheletti.

Biographies (continued)



TEENA MARIE CUSTER, *dancer*

Teena Marie Custer is an artist/educator based in Pittsburgh. Custer's choreographic work has been presented at Sadler's Wells and 30 universities across the U.S. She taught at Slippery Rock University for 14 years, and has a master of fine arts from Ohio State. Custer has been touring her critically acclaimed solo work, *My Good Side*, since 2015 and regularly reps her crews, Venus Fly and Get Down Gang.



VAL "MS. VEE" HO, *dancer*

Val Ho was born in Vancouver, Canada, and moved to New York in 2003. Ho has had the pleasure of working with Buddha Stretch, Rennie Harris, Luam, Maria Torres, Bradley Rapier, and Ephrat Asherie. She has appeared on various award shows, TV, and film, and co-choreographed and was featured in Kiesza's viral video sensation *Hideaway*. Ho is the first ever hip-hop faculty member at the Juilliard School and also

teaches at Pace University's commercial dance bachelor of fine arts program and Broadway Dance Center.



MATTHEW "MEGAWATT" WEST,
dancer

Matthew West started dancing at the age of 16 in Queens. West is an active part of New York City's underground dance community and teaches youth classes throughout the five boroughs. West is a regular guest artist with Dorrance Dance and can be seen in Baz Lurhman's Netflix series *The Get Down* and battling with his crew, the Mellow Animals.

Biographies (continued)



OMARI WILES, *dancer*

Omari Wiles was born in Senegal, West Africa, and trained and performed with his family's dance company, the Maimouna Keita School of African Dance, from a young age. Raised in Brooklyn, New York, Wiles is also a legendary member of the ballroom scene and founder and artistic director of Les Ballet Afrik and the House of Oricci. Wiles has worked with many artists, including Janet Jackson, Jidenna, Raashad Newsome, and Wunmi, and is

on faculty at Broadway Dance Center, Peridance Capezio Dance Center, and EXPG.

Engagement Events

INTERVIEW WITH EPHRAT ASHERIE

The founder and artistic director of Ephrat Asherie Dance participated in a conversation with Scotty Hardwig, assistant professor of Movement, Performance, and Integrated Media at Virginia Tech. The interview was later shared with students in Hardwig's Introduction to Dance History class in the context of a unit on dance and race in the United States.

Special thanks to Scotty Hardwig

Go Deeper

In [this 2019 New York Times profile of Ephrat Asherie](#), the choreographer and performer unequivocally argues that when the same dance style is performed in a club and a concert hall, the two experiences are inherently different. Do you agree? How would you describe the experience of viewing Asherie's ensemble perform house, hip-hop, breaking, and vogue in the live, virtual context of this behind the scenes presentation?

In the Galleries

We're so pleased to welcome you back for another season of exciting and evocative exhibitions in the Moss Arts Center galleries!

JASON MIDDLEBROOK: *ANOTHER WORLD*

Through Sat., Nov. 21

Ruth C. Horton Gallery

American visual artist Jason Middlebrook envisions, creates, and then digitally renders a new 15-by-28-foot site-specific commissioned work of art inspired by the soaring architecture of the Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre. This panoramic work invites viewers into another place—a place of inspiration, visual complexity, and delight.

ART AND SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

Calling attention to sociopolitical issues and the need for change

FOUR FREEDOMS: HANK WILLIS THOMAS AND EMILY SHUR IN COLLABORATION WITH ERIC GOTTESMAN AND WYATT GALLERY OF FOR FREEDOM

Through Sat., Nov. 21

Francis T. Eck Exhibition Corridor

In this photographic installation, Hank Willis Thomas and Emily Shur redress the absence of multiple peoples and cultural narratives in Norman Rockwell's iconic paintings representing Franklin D. Roosevelt's *Four Freedoms* speech, while opening up, exploring, and encouraging deeper discussion of what freedom in the 21st century is and can be.

22 STEPS

Through Sat., Nov. 21

Grand Lobby Staircase

Rendered in text on the Moss Arts Center's stairs is a pertinent statement by Congressman and civil rights leader John Lewis (1940-2020) paying attention to and reflecting our country's ongoing struggle for social justice.

For the most up to date gallery hours, please [visit our website](#).

Online Resources

Join us for a special series of events featuring notable artists live from their homes and studios. Not another livestream or pre-recorded performance that's widely available to everyone, our *HomeStage* series is exclusive to the Moss Arts Center and designed specifically to be presented online. [For a full list of our online events and resources, please click here.](#)

Reopening Updates

The health and wellness of our community is our top priority, and you can be assured that we are doing everything we can to keep you and our staff safe and healthy. [Find more information about our re-opening plans here.](#)

Box Office Hours

Wednesday-Friday, 10 AM-5 PM

Saturday 10 AM-4 PM

For more information, please call the box office at 540-231-5300 during these hours, or email us anytime at mossartscenter@vt.edu.

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The Moss Center acknowledges the Tutelo and Monacan people, who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognizes their continuing connection to the land, water, and air that Virginia Tech consumes. We pay respect to the Tutelo and Monacan Nations, and to their elders past, present, and emerging.

We also acknowledge the university's historical ties to the indentured and enslaved whose labors built this institution. We pay respect to these people for their contributions to Virginia Tech.

As you engage with one another and the arts we present, we invite you to reflect on the history of this space and its possibilities for reconciliation, truth, and humanity. In the spirit of *Ut Prosim*, let this acknowledgment be but a single step in the Moss Arts Center's commitment to these values.

The Moss Arts Center presents
HOMESTAGE

An exclusive series of online performances and conversations—live in the comfort of your own home.



Fri., Nov. 6, 7 PM EST

Javaad Alipoor

The Believers Are But Brothers



**MOSS
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CENTER**

Friday, Dec. 11 at 8 p.m. EST

Sunday, Dec. 13 at 4 p.m. EST

Exclusive free behind the scenes event: Thursday, Dec. 10 at noon EST

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\$15

free for VT Students

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