Choices
produced by
Sarah Gonzalez,
Kate Burritt 
& Leann Criswell

NOV. 25-29
STREAMING ONLINE
NOVEMBER 25-29, 2020
THEATRE.TAMUCC.EDU
**A Note From the Producer**

Welcome and thank you for joining us virtually for Texas A&M University Corpus Christi’s Fall 2020 Island Dance Demo!

My name is Sarah Gonzalez and I am the newest Assistant Professor of Dance here in the Theatre & Dance Department. For those of you joining us for the first time, you may be wondering, “What is dance demo?” It is a celebration performance and a demonstration of a semester of hard work in dance training and choreographing. Normally done in a live theater setting, our dance students prepare all semester long for a final showcase of their dedication and growth. For many students, this is their first time ever on a stage! The great thing about this dance program is that it is open to all majors and levels of experience, and each semester we aim to provide the opportunity for all students to be part of the performing arts and a live production.

It has been ONE year since we have graced the stage since our last demo in Fall of 2019 and a lot has happened since then. In Spring 2020, COVID-19 disrupted our in-person classes and our live performances, which disheartened our tight-knit dance community. Additionally, our beloved leader and Director of Dance, Jilissa Cotten, suffered an unfortunate accident and took a leave of absence this semester. Luckily, she is recovering in positive spirits and will return to us this January!

Jilissa, this demo is dedicated to you and your resilience!

For this semester’s demo, we are not only showcasing our technique classes and student organization, *The Stage*, but we are also including for you the work of our Choreography I and II students and a film project by graduate student, Gray Ryan. These students have put in an immense effort all semester long and it is showcased in this virtual format. Though we would love to have you in a live audience, both the faculty and students are grateful that you have taken the time to view what we have all been working on for the last few months.

Catch us again Spring 2021 for our second virtual season.
Thank you and enjoy!

- Sarah G

Photos by Edgar De La Garza
Choreographer’s Showcase

The following pieces are student-choreographed works filmed throughout the Corpus Christi, TX area, in partial fulfillment of the Choreography I and II courses under the instruction of Kate Burrill.

Choreography I

No Matter Where I Am Your Spirit Will Always Be With Me

Dedication piece for my father who has passed away. This piece is about going through the grieving process from the death of a loved one. Love You Dad.

Choreographer: Kaitlyn Walencey

Music: Thy Will (Hillary Scott and Scott Family Violin Cover) by Grace UnHae Kwon

Dancer: Kaitlyn Walencey

Purple Ocean

A dancer’s story, battling between insecurity within oneself.

Choreographer: Reyna Longoria

Music: I Need You (Piano Cover) by BTS

Dancer: Reyna Longoria

Free Me

A piece dedicated to the BLM movement and to anyone who struggles mental illness.

Choreographer: Marina Medellin

Music: Storms End by Break of Reality

Dancer: Marina Medellin
The Tethered

The inspiration comes from the horror film "Us." A little girl is replaced by her doppelgänger, called the tethered, to steal and live the life she has always dreamed of. Though a strong fight is had, it is too powerful to overcome.

Choreographer: Kearsten Ortiz
Music: This Place Was a Shelter by Olafur Arnalds
Dancer: Kearsten Ortiz

Near Light

Someone who is overwhelmed in the darkness of their mind searches desperately for a light and finds it when they least expect it.

Choreographer: Cameron Gelista
Music: Near Light by Olafur Arnalds
Dancer: Cameron Gelista

Choreography II

Conflicted Conscience

Every person has a choice and a mind of their own. There is a mental battle we all face within ourselves in choosing to be Good or Bad.

Choreographer: Kyrah Weathersby
Music: All For Us (Instrumental) by Labrinth
Dancers: Daniel Gonzales, Javonta Guyette, Alexis Martinez
Videographer: Brandon Hutto

Unity

Make the active choice to work together rather than fighting against one another. Once the tension is broken, we can have cohesion.

Choreographer: River Thompson
Music: Shiny Collarbone by The 1975 and Lavender Boogie by Rampa
Dancers: Jess Cantu, Madison Cruger, Kaitlyn Walencey, Katy Womack
Hollow
There is more to the naked eye.
The human mind is a nightmare to overcome.

Choreographer: Jewels Uherek
Music: Possible by Zoe Keating

Dancers: Julia Massey, Marina Medellin, Sydney Parisian, Olivia Stanton Moretzsohn

Video Editor: Brandon Bankston

Compass Winds
Before man came to blow it right
The wind once blew itself untaught
And did its loudest day and night
In any rough place where it caught.
-Robert Frost

Choreographer: Madison Cruger
Music: Torn by Nathan Lanier

Dancers: Rebecca Juarez, Tyler Lewis, Sydney Parisian, Katy Womack

Videographer: Mitchell Zillmer
Video Editor: Gerardo Hinojosa

Our Choreo students come from ALL over campus!

Madison Cruger
Choreo II
Senior
Major: Psychology
Minor: Dance

Cameron Gelista
Choreo I
Senior
Major: Comm Studies
Minor: Dance
Our Choreo students come from ALL over campus!

Reyna Longoria
Choreo I
Junior
Major: Psychology
Minor: Dance

Marina Medellin
Choreo I
Senior
Major: Theatre
Certificate: Dance

River Thompson
Choreo II
Junior
Major: Theatre
Minor: Dance

Jewels Uherek
Choreo II
Junior
Major: Theatre
Minor: Dance

Kaitlyn Walencey
Choreo I
Junior
Major: Comm Studies
Minor: Dance

Kyrah Weathersby
Choreo II
Senior
Major: Media Arts
Certificate: Dance
The Fourteenth Dancer

The following works are excerpts from a project conceptualized and produced by TAMUCC graduate student, Gray Ryan.

Title: The Fourteenth Dancer
Camerawork: Gray Ryan, Lauren Pack, Kim Vasquez, Heather Twardowski
Editing: Gray Ryan

 Intro
 Music: Intro by Nik Hofer, lyrics by Gray Ryan

 Movement Two: Infinite (WIP)
 Choreographer: Gray Ryan
 Music: Make Believe by The Faim
 Performers: Gray Ryan, Tammy Rodriguez-Acosta, Harper Lee, Heather Twardowski

 Movement Three: Ethereal
 Choreographer: Gray Ryan
 Music: Wildfire (Alternate) by SYML
 Performer: Jackie Horn

 Movement Six: Liberated
 Choreographers: Gray Ryan, Gabriella Colon, and Asia Thiem
 Music: What Would You Do? by Bastille
 Performers: Jay McAfee, Heather Twardowski, Chad Fontenot, Lissa Hoelscher, Serenity Soliz, Harper Lee

 Movement Seven: Invincible
 Choreographers: Gray Ryan and Harper Lee
 Music: bad_news by Bastille
 Performer: Harper Lee

 Movement Eight: Powerful (WIP)
 Music: Slow by Moby
Jilissa Cotten, Director and Associate Professor

Jilissa Cotten, M.F. A., Associate Professor and Director of Dance at Texas A&M University Corpus Christi, began her dance training under the direction of Nancy Sulik and Corpus Christi Concert Ballet. She received her Bachelor’s degree in Spanish with a minor in Russian from the University of Texas at Austin and holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Choreography and Performance from Sam Houston State University. She has choreographed over thirty musicals, most of which have been produced at the Harbor Playhouse Community Theatre, Oklahoma, Cats, and West Side Story, to name a few. She is producer of the Bailando International Dance Festival, which showcases the work of choreographers and professional companies. Ms. Cotten owned her own dance studio, InStep Dance Studios, for eight years, and has worked at TAMUCC for the past 14 years. Her choreography her nationally recognized with the American College Dance Festival in Washington D.C., and internationally through the Island Dance Company, which she started in order to serve her students and give them opportunities to perform throughout the community.

Sarah Gonzalez, Assistant Professor

Ballet 1 · Modern 1 · Jazz 2-4 · Dance Instruction

Sarah Gonzalez, M.F.A., is a dance educator, choreographer, mover, administrator, and arts enthusiast from Corpus Christi, Texas. Ms. Gonzalez received her Masters of Fine Arts in Dance at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and her Bachelors of Fine Arts in Dance from Sam Houston State University. She has been a dance educator throughout the Corpus Christi community for over a decade, gaining experience in teaching early childhood through the collegiate level. Gonzalez has performed and trained nationally and has been recognized for her creative dance-making. Her mission of ensuring growth and sustainability of the dance arts in South Texas continues to drive her forward as she pursues her major goals of creating low-cost and highly accessible visual performance art to increase dance appreciation, and to cultivate future, well-rounded artists and educators in the field. Gonzalez is currently in her fourth year with Texas A&M University Corpus Christi, having most recently been appointed at the new Assistant Professor of Dance. She is also a proud mommy to her wonderful son, Greyson.
Dance Faculty and Staff Cont.

Kate Burrill, Adjunct

**Jazz 1 · Modern 2-4 · Choreo 1 & 2**

Kate Burrill has been a dance performer, teacher, and choreographer for over twenty years mentoring students from youth to adult. She holds a BFA from the University of the Arts in Pennsylvania and an MAED from Trident University in California. Kate has traveled the world teaching dance and choreography - working with public, nonprofit, and private arts enterprises - to include the University of Idaho, Alaska Dance Theatre, University of Alaska, Anchorage Symphony Orchestra, Corpus Christi Concert Ballet, Southeast Alabama Dance Company, Ramstein Youth Dance Programs Germany, Young Tanzsommer Dance Festival Austria, and Corpus Christi Ballet Academy. Kate is currently an Adjunct Professor of Dance at Texas A&M University Corpus Christi, and serves as the Board Secretary and Educational Outreach Coordinator for the Bailando International Dance Festival. She is also Dance & Theater instructor for Seashore Charter Schools. Kate is a certified Yoga Instructor currently teaching in the Del Mar College Department of Kinesiology. In her spare time, she is the proud wife of an active duty Air Force pilot, and blessed mother of five rambunctious children.

Leann Criswell, Adjunct

**Ballet 2-4**

Leann Criswell is blessed with a loving husband and is the proud mom of two beautiful children. She has had the honor of being Adjunct Faculty this semester at TAMUCC teaching Ballet 2-4. Leann graduated with her Master of Fine Arts degree in Choreography & Performance from Sam Houston State University, where she taught ballet courses for the department as a Graduate Teaching Assistant and stepped into the Dance Secretary administrative role. Leann has also served as Adjunct Faculty at her alma mater Texas A&M University in College Station, where she graduated with an undergraduate degree in Dance. She taught ballet, creative movement and contemporary classes for the Ballet Academy of Corpus Christi and worked as the Rehearsal Mistress & Office Administrator for Corpus Christi Concert Ballet for many years. She performed with the company as a Resident Guest Artist dancing in The Little Mermaid, The Nutcracker and the title role in Randall Soileau's Beauty & The Beast. Recently, Mrs. Criswell has been teaching ballet and creative movement classes for the Calallen community.
Fall 2020 Island Dance Demo

The following pieces feature the Level 1-4 classes in Ballet, Jazz, and Modern. The pieces reflect learned content from over the course of the semester in a culmination final performance. Also featured is the student dance organization, The Stage.

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Ready for the New

Aristotle said, "Happiness depends on ourselves." We embrace this truth by choosing to live free of mental and physical limitations brought about by circumstances we cannot change. As Ari says, "Thank U, Next."

Ballet 1

Choreographer: Sarah Gonzalez
Music: Thank U, Next by Brooklyn Duo

Ode to Jazz

"Do it big, do it right, and do it with style!" - Fred Astaire

Jazz 1

Choreographer: Kate Burrill
Music: Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen by The Hot Sardines

Pushing Through

The Stage Dance Organization

Choreographer: Madison Cruger
Music: Keep Your Head Up by Ben Howard
Dancers: River Thompson, Isaiah Choice, Anastasia Cruz, Harper Lee, Tera Howell, Marina Medellin, Jewels Uherek
T-O-G-E-T-H-E-R

Disclaimer: All hands were sanitized in the performance of this dance piece...

Modern 2, 3, and 4

Choreographer: Kate Burrill
Music: Put It Back Together by Fatboy Slim
Dancers: Madison Cruger, Lauren Pack, River Thompson, Jewels Uherek, Katy Womack

Collectively Individual

Here we are, together, in this thing. I choose to acknowledge your presence despite our differences because we are human. We both breathe, we both bleed, we are both vulnerable to choices made by us and for us.

Modern 1

Choreographer: Sarah Gonzalez
Music: Underdog by Mayaeni
Dancers: Hannah Anderson, Isaiah Choice, Chad Fontenot, Javonta Guyette, Lissa Hoelscher, Kamryn Lewis, Jacob Martinez, Jacqueline Mercado, Clarissa Ramos, Tamara Rodriguez-Acosta, Gray Ryan

La Perspective

Choose to look from another perspective.
Empathy, compassion and respect follow, even if beliefs are unchanging.

Ballet 2, 3, and 4

Choreographer: Leann Criswell
Music: Sounds of Stars and Moving On by Paula Dreyer
Dancers: Ellyn Clay, Madison Cruger, Chad Fontenot, Cameron Gelista, Lissa Hoelscher, Jiahna McAfee, Kearsten Ortiz, Gray Ryan, River Thompson, Kaitlyn Walencey

We’re Gonna Dance

Expression is individual. In moving together, we express WHO we are with each other. May we always remember that.

Jazz 2, 3, and 4

Choreographer: Sarah Gonzalez
Music: Marina Gasolina by Bonde do Role
Dancers: Chad Fontenot, Javonta Guyette, Julia Massey, McKenzie Mclendon, Marina Medellin, Kyrah Weathersby, Mitchell Zillmer, River Thompson, Cameron Gelista, Kaitlyn Walencey, Katy Womack
Demo Production Crew

A special THANK YOU to our student crew members for their hard work in making the theatre magic happen for tech and filming. Another huge THANK YOU to Philip Johnson for his wonderful video editing skills!

Producer - Sarah Gonzalez
Video Editor - Philip Johnson
Stage Manager - Kimberly Garza
Assistant Stage Manager - Tyler Lewis
Master Electrician - Nestor Salamanca
Light Designer - Ruby Buitron
Light Board Operator - Christian Perez
Sound Board Operator - Dustin Merrell
Camera Operator - Andrew Pfeffer
Camera Operator - Paige Woelke

Philip Johnson, Professor of Theatre

Philip Johnson is a professor of Theatre with 35 years at TAMUCC. He has designed Lighting, Sound, Scenery, Costumes, Makeup, Projections, all things theatrical at the university, for Pbs, Harbor Playhouse, CC Ballet, and other places in Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Texas. Phil has been working with Dance at the university as its production manager, lighting designer, and sound designer. This year he added Video to this production and supervised the students who recorded the production in addition to the lighting and sound crews. Phil is grateful to have the opportunity to be creative at this institution and also for all the support.

Photos by Edgar De La Garza
Faculty & Staff
Alison Frost, Department Chair of Theatre & Dance
Kevin Loeffler, Director of Theatre
Jilissa Cotten, Director of Dance
Philip Johnson, Professor of Theatre
Rosa M. Lazaro, Professor of Theatre
Kelly Russell, Professor of Theatre
Sarah Gonzalez, Assistant Professor of Dance
Meredith Melville, Assistant Professor of Theatre
Marco Muñoz, Assistant Professor of Theatre
Thomas A. Oldham, Assistant Professor of Theatre
J. Don Luna, Theatre Education Instructor
Kate Burrill, Adjunct Professor of Dance
Leann Criswell, Adjunct Professor of Dance
Jordan Bohl, Technical Director
Kyle Everett, Costume Shop Supervisor
Clarissa Ramos, Student Office Assistant
Birdie Bird, Student Shop Assistant
Blake Cooper, Student Shop Assistant
Adam Nombrano, Student Shop Assistant
Carley Perez, Student Shop Assistant
April Salazar, Student Shop Assistant
Mason Urias, Student Shop Assistant

Acknowledgements
Dr. Kelly Miller, President and CEO of TAMUCC
Dr. Clarenda Phillips, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Mark Hartlaub, Director of SAMC & Dean of College of Liberal Arts
Dr. Diana Sipes, Associate Dean of SAMC
Susan Wolff Murphy, Associate Dean of College of Liberal Arts
Dr. Don Albrecht, Vice President for Student Engagement and Success
The Student Government Association
The Marketing and Communications Department of TAMUCC
Kim Newlin, Videographer
Edgar De La Garza, Photographer

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OUR VIRTUAL THEATRE & DANCE SEASON
SPRING 2021

A VIRTUAL BAILANDO
PRODUCED BY
JILLISSA COTTEN & SARAH GONZALEZ

BLOOD AT THE ROOT
BY DOMINIQUE MORRISSEAU
DIRECTED BY MARCO MUNOZ

THE 2021 SEED PROJECT
SMALL MOUTH SOUNDS
BY BESS WOHL
DIRECTED BY KAT WILLIAMS

A LOVE SONG FOR CORPUS CHRISTI
PRODUCED BY ALISON FROST

A 40-MINUTE PLAY FESTIVAL
PRODUCED BY KELLY RUSSELL