

2021 Silicon Valley Dance Festival Choreographers/Companies:

(in order of appearance)

Jacques Heim - DIAVOLO | Architecture in Motion

DIAVOLO | Architecture in Motion® is a creative movement production company that uses the medium of film in order to explore the intersection of innovation and education.

Its mission is to create socially relevant work that celebrates the diversity and complexities of the humankind.

By challenging an individual's capacities and limitations, DIAVOLO restores one's mental, physical and emotional strengths.

DIAVOLO | Architecture in Motion®, the renowned Los Angeles-based dance company, was founded in 1992 by Artistic Director Jacques Heim, an inquisitive guy who combined his academic background in theater, film, and dance with a passion for architecture. Thanks to Heim and his talented crew of dancers, designers and engineers, the Company, for more than 25 years, has been applauded internationally for its ability to display surprising movement against a backdrop of elaborately designed space, all while entertaining audiences with what is, in fact, a new art form.

His skill in creating work that entertains is central to Heim's artistic vision, one that combines elements of contemporary dance with martial arts, acrobatics, gymnastics, and hip-hop. Throughout the years, the Company has captivated audiences in 250 cities and 14 countries and has performed to sold out audiences throughout the U.S. International touring has included stops in Germany, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Holland, Austria, Italy, Spain, Australia, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Columbia and Chile. DIAVOLO has also appeared at select corporate events and for special advertising and promotional engagements.

In 2017, DIAVOLO enjoyed an especially extraordinary season, highlighted by Heim's creation of five new pieces for Season 12 of NBC's hit series "America's Got Talent." One of the Top 10 contestants to reach the show's finale at Hollywood's Dolby Theater, the Company was seen by over 90 million television viewers.

Through The DIAVOLO Institute, the Company also provides educational and outreach programs for people of all ages and abilities as it seeks to share the power of dance as a means of social impact. Two such programs are T.R.U.S.T., an initiative tailored for schools that explores the necessity of teamwork; and The Veteran's Project, a four-month workshop using movement as medicine, that DIAVOLO has replicated in cities across the U.S.

Anticipating an exciting future of continuing to impact audiences throughout the globe, DIAVOLO looks forward to touring new work; expanding its Board; undertaking more corporate and customized commercial assignments; and reaching out to even more adventurous souls who want to join DIAVOLO on this marvelous journey.

Guanglei Hui - Cross Move Lab

Guanglei Hui, originally from China, spent over 20 years to become an independent artist, choreographer, and dancer before establishing his own company, Cross Move Lab. He studied at The Bishkek of Arts, called B. Beishenalieva from 2001 to 2003 and earned a degree in Choreography/Russian Classical Ballet Performance with Education. During his studies, he competed in the Bishkek International Dance Competition and came second place. In 2005, he joined Guangdong Modern Dance Company, the first ever modern dance company in China. In 2008, as a GMDC member, he performed in an anniversary celebration of Pina Bausch Dance Company in Germany. In 2011, he worked as a guest choreographer in Yokohama Dance

Collection. In 2012, he was invited by the International Choreographers Residency Program (ICR) to participate in the American Dance Festival. In 2013, he joined White Wave Young Soon Kim Dance Company. In 2014, he began working with Shen Wei Dance Arts. In 2016, he was invited to Taipei Dance Round Table Project to work on a new original piece. In 2017, he began teaching in the Queens College. In 2018, he received an Artist Commissioning Program Grant from Queens Council on the Arts and started teaching at Peridance Center. He has toured in more than twenty countries, participating in international arts festivals. He is also a Co-Founder of Touch Contact Improvisation in China.

Robert Bondara - Poznan Opera Ballet

Robert Bondara is a Polish dancer, choreographer, director, teacher and was for many years a dancer with the Polish National Ballet. In 2018, Robert was appointed Ballet Director of the Poznan Opera Ballet in Poland.

Robert is a graduate of the Feliks Parnell State Ballet School in Lodz, the Warsaw School of Economics and the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music in Warsaw, where he worked as a teacher (2007-2018). He began his career performing with the Music Theatre in Lodz and later moved to the Poznan Opera Ballet. In 2005 he joined the Polish National Ballet where he performed in works by Jiří Kylián, John Cranko, Krzysztof Pastor, Emanuel Gat, William Forsythe, John Neumeier, Alexei Ratmansky, Frederick Ashton to mention a few.

He received the 2nd prize (no 1st prize was awarded) and the special prize of the Witold Lutoslawski Society at the Bronislava Nijinska National Choreography Competition in Warsaw (2008) and Jan Kiepura Award in the category “The Best Choreographer in 2011” in Poland. He also participated in the International Competition for Choreographers in Hannover in 2013 and 2015. More recently, he won “Le Prix de Biarritz award” in Emergent Choreographers Contest in Bordeaux in 2018. That same year, he received the Jan Kiepura Award in three categories: “The Best Choreographer” for Świtezianka with Polish National Ballet and “The Best Director” and ‘The Best Performance in Poland’ for his first opera The Baltic Legend with Poznan Opera House. He has also been awarded The Brown Medal for ‘Merit to Culture – Gloria Artis’.

Robert began to choreograph for the Polish National Ballet’s Choreographic Workshops, many of which went on to be presented in the chamber repertoire of the company. As a guest choreographer he has staged works in Poland and abroad, including Lithuanian National Opera and Ballet Theatre in Vilnius, Czech National Ballet, Chemnitz Ballet (Germany), Company E in Washington (USA), Moscow Stanislavsky Ballet Theatre (Russia), Kielce Dance Theater (Poland), Opera Nova Ballet in Bydgoszcz (Poland), Wrocław Opera Ballet (Poland), Poznan Opera Ballet (Poland), Silesian Opera House in Bytom (Poland), Moving Arts in Kansas City (USA) and for Polish National Ballet.

His choreography has been presented around the globe, including the 43rd International Dance Festival in Kuopio, Finland, the Polish Dance Competition in Gdansk, Didura Festival in Sanok, at Moscow’s Bolshoi Theatre, Dance Salad Festival in Houston, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, Dancing Poznan - XIII International Dance Theatres Festival, Roberto Bolle and Friends Galas throughout Italy, the Xinjiang International Dance Festival in China, STS Festival in Warsaw, in the programmes of the II – VI Days of Dance Festival in the Polish National Opera, and at galas and festivals in Poland, Latvia, Slovakia, Hungary, Norway, China, Czech Republic, and Japan.

Babaturji Johnson

Babaturji was born in Portland, Oregon but raised on the Big Island of Hawaii. He received his formal dance training from Center Stage Dance Studio and the University of Hawaii in Hilo before moving to San Francisco to train at the LINES Ballet Training Program on full scholarship. Babaturji has performed works by diverse choreographers such as Sidra Bell, Amanda Miller, Gregory Dawson, and Maurya Kerr. He has performed overseas in Japan and China and danced with ZiRu Dance, Maurya Kerr’s tinypistol, and Dawson | Wallace Dance Project. Babaturji joined LINES Ballet in 2013 and danced with the

company for six years. Currently, he is a dancer with Post:Ballet and SFDanceworks in San Francisco. He rejoined LINES Ballet in 2021 as a guest artist. He has been a resident choreographer of ZiRu since 2021 and will be working with ZiRu Dance as a collaborating choreographer in 2022 for “*VANTAGE*.”

Christian Burns - burnsWORK

Since 1993 Christian Burns has been performing, teaching, directing and speculating about the numerous ways we can experience, observe and communicate through the body.

In the San Francisco Bay Area his work has been seen at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, ODC Theater, Counter Pulse, The Garage, Headlands Center for the Arts, Z Space Theater, Dancers Group Studio Theater, Shotwell Studio Theater, Howard Street Studio Theater. Nationally and abroad his work has also been presented at The Walker Art Center, Canal Danse in Paris FR, Taipei Artist Village in Taiwan, Nightingale Theater in Brighton UK, WINLAB Independent Festival in London, Escapade Festival at MovingArtsBase in London, The Dada House in Zurich Switzerland, OT301 in Amsterdam NL, Impakt Festival in Utrecht, NL, The State Theater, The Southern Theater in Minneapolis, MN, East Street Studio Theater in Hadley, MA and Parsons Hall Project Space in Holyoke, MA.

Between 2003 - 2008 Christian collaborated extensively with Improvisational master Kirstie Simson (“A Force of Nature” TimeOut London), together they gave over one hundred improvised performances for intimate audiences in Brussels (BE), Oslo (NO), Arhus, Copenhagen (DK), Findhorn, Scotland (UK), Wales (UK), London, Brighton (UK), Rome, Bari (IT), Zurich, Geneva (CH), Gothenburg (SW), Berlin, Freiberg (DE), Paris, Montpellier (FR), Taipei, TW), New York City, San Francisco Bay Area and Massachusetts.

His dance-video work has been screened at the Impakt Festival (NL), Dutch National Television (NL), Moving Pictures Festival for Dance on Film and Video in Canada, Roberta Beck Cinema (NY), Santa Fe Art Institute and Stuttgart FilmWinter Festival in Germany.

His choreography has been commissioned by Liss Fain Dance, Alonzo King LINES Ballet, James Sewell Ballet, Stanford University, University of San Francisco, Mt. Holyoke College, University of Michigan Ann Arbor, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music & Dance, Interlochen Center for the Arts, San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, LINES Ballet BFA at Dominican University and LINES Ballet Training Program.

Burns has been awarded a 2010 Choreographers in Mentorship Exchange (CHIME) grant - given by the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, a 2008 Massachusetts Cultural Council Artist Fellowship for Choreography, the 2004 National Choo-San Goh Award for Choreography, the 2001 Paula Citron Award for Choreography for Camera (from the Moving Pictures Festival in Toronto), 1997 McKnight Artist Fellowship and was an artist-in-residence at the Experimental Television Center (NY).

In 2007 Burns was invited as a guest artist by The Forsythe Company for the creation of William Forsythe’s installation piece *EQUIVALENCE* which premiered at the Hellerau European Center for the Arts Dresden, Germany. *EQUIVALENCE* was created and directed by William Forsythe, music by Thom Willems including an international cast of eight dancers and numerous sound and video technicians, presented ten performances within two weekends.

Christian was a company member of Alonzo Kings LINES Ballet (1999 - 2002) and James Sewell Ballet (1993 - 1998) as well as having performed for numerous independent choreographers nationally.

In 1998 The Foundry was established by Burns and collaborator Alex Ketley. The Foundry were Wattis Artists in Residence at YBCA and represented dance for San Francisco's biannual Bay Area Now3 all in 2002/03. That same year Dance Magazine named The Foundry as one of the ‘25 to Watch’ and the San Francisco Chronicle said, “The Foundry is at the

vanguard of American dance.“ After a decade of critical and popular success Burns relinquished directorial responsibilities to pursue new artistic opportunities.

Burns was trained at The School of American Ballet (1990 - 1993) and The Pioneer Valley Ballet (1981 - 1990). He began his Improvisation education in 1994 and since then has been researching various improvisational methods and has performed extensively with Improvisers; Kirstie Simson, Katie Duck, Michael Schumacher, Ave Karczag, and Chris Aiken among many others.

Burns is a contributing author for *When Men Dance, Choreographing Masculinities Across Borders*, Edited by Jennifer Fisher and Anthony Shay, Oxford University Press 2009 and has self published a book chronicling his choreographic process titled *Motion and Process: knowing not knowing, ideas on dance 2006-08*. In 2008 Burns and his partners co-founded the interdisciplinary art space Parsons Hall Project Space in Holyoke, MA.

Currently Burns is a Adjunct Professor for the Lines Ballet BFA Program at Dominican University and a Core Faculty member of the Lines Ballet Training Program. He is a founding faculty member of the San Francisco Conservatory of Dance where he dedicates much of his time teaching, mentoring and developing his choreographic body of work, as well as being on the faculty of Lines Ballet Training Program and Lines BFA at Dominican University.

Burns has been commissioned by ZiRu in 2016, 2017 and worked with ZiRu Dance in 2021. He will continue to work with ZiRu Dance as a collaborating choreographer during the 2022 season for “*VANTAGE*.”

Philein Wang - ZiRu Dance

An award-winning Chinese-American poet/choreographer and distinguished Artistic Director, Philein Wang leads ZiRu Dance.

Over the last half century, Philein herself has firsthand lived through racism as a native of Oakland, California. As a result, she has developed deep ties to African-American, Latino-American, and other Asian-American communities over several decades.

Philein’s exploration of her own Chinese-American heritage led her to create a new dance form for the Chinese body and identity. Her goal is to build cross-cultural bridges, uniting generations of immigrants through a unique blend of dance elements from Asia, Europe, Africa, and America, in tandem with original music. Using a distinct combination of influences – modern dance, ballet, martial arts, and hip hop – she hopes to create something unique to offer Asian Americans, so they have a way to feel at home in their bodies and minds

Philein leads ZiRu Dance with an intrinsic understanding of how one experiences racism in this country. ZiRu is a company committed to continually bringing to light how we can grow and evolve in positive ways. This process of growth and healing from difficult, shocking, and divisive events and environments in the U.S. and worldwide is at the core of ZiRu Dance’s mission and work

“When a young Chinese person is feeling confused as I was, and looking for answers to the question, ‘Who am I?’ maybe this dance can help them find their identity, their culture, and their strength. Help them know where they belong.”
– Philein Wang

She was a soloist with several companies, including Janice Garrett and Cloud Gate Dance Theatre. She also received choreography mentorships from the late Bella Lewitzky and Lin Hwai-Min, Artistic Director of Taiwan’s world-renowned Cloud Gate Dance and Margaret Jenkins.

In 2016, she was recognized as an honoree at the first-ever Asian and Pacific Islander Heroes of San Mateo County reception. She has received awards from many foundations and institutions including the Community Foundation of San Carlos, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, twice awarded grants from the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Embassy in Beijing, Apple, Microsoft, the Fleishhacker Foundation, The Zellerbach Family Foundation, the California Arts Council, the Creative Work Fund and San Mateo County Strong.

Nancy Pellegrini of Time Out Beijing said, “Wang herself is a force of nature, raising money, creating projects, and sharing the stage with artists of every stripe. And that alone is well worth a look.” Pellegrini added that the multidisciplinary artist has a “...staggering level of broad-based talent... whatever you do, don’t miss her show.”

When she’s not directing, choreographing, or raising her young family, Philein is dedicated to building new investment and community bridges to support the company. Philein is also a partner at SV2 (Silicon Valley Social Venture Philanthropy).