

ZOELLNER ARTS CENTER

LEHIGH UNIVERSITY



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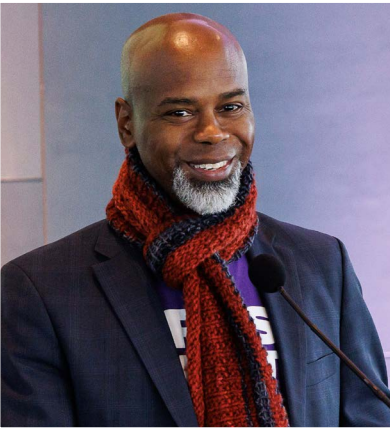


Photo By John Kish IV

DEAR FRIENDS,

We are at the beginning of a new arts Renaissance. There are moments when one can feel the shifting tides of change and that moment is now as people return to live performing arts. I have had many conversations about the role of the arts in bringing our diverse urban, suburban, and rural Lehigh Valley communities together through shared experiences. The 2024-2025 season will rejuvenate our spirits through world-class artists as we continue to gather.

Montreal-based Cirque Kikasse began our Presenting Series with a unique twist,

performing their production of *Santé* in front of Fritz Laboratory on our Lehigh University campus. This one-of-a-kind FREE performance, set on a food truck, connected our campus, surrounding community, and local students in a truly memorable way. Our dedication to inclusivity and diversity in the arts is exemplified by our partnership with the internationally acclaimed disability arts ensemble, Kinetic Light. Their residency, a testament to our shared values, intertwines with Touchstone Theatre's Festival Unbound, culminating in a breathtaking performance of *DESCENT*. This dance performance promises to be a powerful and moving experience, showcasing the transformative power of art and the positive impact of our partnerships.

In case you missed Marc Martel's sold-out tribute to Queen the last time, he is returning to perform his spectacular show, *One Vision of Queen*. I knew he had to come back. I could not go anywhere without people asking me to bring him back. He's back. And if you happen to be asking for a little R.E.S.P.E.C.T., join us for an electrifying tribute celebrating the music of the legendary Aretha Franklin.

With our commitment to nurturing the next generation of art enthusiasts and helping create a healthy community, we continue our Family Series partnership with Lehigh Valley Reilly Children's Hospital with events like Family Day Fest, a celebration of community partners, free activities, and music by Somos Amigos featuring Sonia de la Santos and the Grammy Award-winning band, The Okee Dokee Brothers.

Zoellner Arts Center embraces our role as a university-based presenter to transcend entertainment. Lehigh University student artists are integral to this construct as they present concerts and plays celebrating their creativity and that of the faculty that inspires them.

We strive to empower the youth of our community by curating and co-curating high-quality multidisciplinary arts programs with educators that integrate the arts into their classrooms and inspire students to create their own artwork. We remain steadfast in our commitment to foster meaningful dialogue by utilizing the arts as a lens through which we explore and celebrate our shared humanity.

Mark Fitzgerald Wilson

Executive Director

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Notations: **Lehigh University Creative Writing Program** and **Zoellner Arts Center**

Temple Grandin: **Lehigh University College of Education** and **Lehigh University Autism Services**

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KINETIC LIGHT

DESCENT



Photo Caption: Laurel Lawson and Alice Sheppard hold each others' forearms, chins lifted as they extend the other curved arm to the side, in a counterbalance turn. Alice is a Black multiracial woman with blonde curly hair and coffee colored skin; Laurel is a white person with cropped teal hair. They both wear gray leggings and leatherlike sleeveless tops that resemble armor or petals. Projected illustrated figures dance across the purpleish stage as a mountain range appears, silhouetted in the sunset, in the background. Photo Jaqlin Medlock / Rutgers University.

ZOELLNER
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LEHIGH UNIVERSITY



2024.2025
SEASON

Zoellner Arts Center receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.



Kinetic Light in *DESCENT*

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kineticlight.org

WELCOME

On behalf of Kinetic Light, it is my joy to welcome you to the world of *DESCENT*.

Tonight's show breaks ground on several fronts. Created specifically for this piece, the ramp we are dancing on is an artistic object and design experiment in kinetic potential and embodiment. It is also an active partner in the dance, generating new movements and new lines; it is not intended to be used functionally at all.

DESCENT is now seven years old. Can you believe it? The premiere seems so fresh in my mind. Our original ramp has gone into retirement, and as rehearsal is showing, time deepens our sense of the work. It is a pleasure to return to the challenging ramp peaks and valleys and learn how much we as dancers have changed. One thing is clear: *DESCENT* itself is still as urgent and necessary as the work ever was.

The story of *DESCENT* is, in part, the story of the interactions of dancers and ramp. *DESCENT* is also the story of Venus and Andromeda, the figures who lie intertwined in Auguste Rodin's *Toilette of Venus and Andromeda*. No one knows why Rodin placed these two figures together; they do not belong to the same mythological worlds. *DESCENT* dreams up a story for their love, using select Rodin sculptures as the basis of its movement vocabulary.

As Kinetic Light's artists embody the figures of Venus (traditionally interpreted as white) and Andromeda (described in classical texts as Ethiopian, but traditionally drawn as white), *DESCENT* counters the erasure of race in Western European histories of art. *DESCENT* invites architects and designers to innovate at the edge of disability for the maximum aesthetic and pleasurable expression of impairment instead of using technology to normalize, hide, or overcome.

Kinetic Light is committed to access as being an integral, central aspect of our works, not a secondary accommodation. We invite artists and cultural workers to think of access as an aesthetic. A performance like this is made possible by many hearts and hands. I would like to send a heartfelt thank you to the Kinetic Light team, to our friends and families who cheered us on, to our funders and supporters, and to you, our audience. We are thrilled to share *DESCENT* with you.

— Alice Sheppard

DESCENT (2017)

ACT 1

I

In a world of sky and water, Andromeda and Venus meet. Andromeda discovers herself at the peak, frantic and guarded. Her spirit guide observes. As she cautiously explores her environment, she is grabbed from below by Venus and drawn in. Venus reemerges in her world, inhabiting her environment unperturbed. Following her spirit guide, she is gradually intrigued.

II

We see the ramp become itself. The waters undulate across its surface; rocks form; the ramp is alive.

III

As the spirit guides slip into their bodies, Venus and Andromeda meet in a different world. Venus pushes her desire behind her; Andromeda pleads with Venus. Under and over the ramp and their chairs, the dancers wrap themselves around each other, accepting and rejecting their connection.

IV

Spirit guides and bodies intertwined, Venus chooses Andromeda; Andromeda accepts Venus. The ramp and spirit guides take them and turn them slowly, inevitably towards each other.

INTERMISSION

ACT 2

I

Andromeda and Venus yield to each other. Light and the ramp transport them to a dream space.

II

Upon their return, a separation rakes the lovers apart. Andromeda again retreats to the peak, pulling Venus up after her. The spirit guides separate from their bodies and observe. Each spying the other in their respective homelands, Andromeda and Venus seek to reconnect.

III

The spirit guides leave Andromeda's and Venus' bodies. Tossed and turned by the ramp, Venus and Andromeda have only each other.

ACCESS

Kinetic Light believes in equitable artistic access. We have crafted tonight's performance around this commitment to access, from the design of the show itself to the experience of gathering and hosting an audience. If you have any needs, questions or desires, find an usher. To get in touch after the performance, email info@kineticlight.org.

This performance includes audio description through Kinetic Light's Audimance app, ASL interpretation from a Deaf Interpreter/Hearing Interpreter team, haptic soundtrack interpretation, tactile exhibit in the lobby, sensory kits, and expanded accessible seating. Quiet spaces are available throughout the performance. If you need to leave the theater at any point in the performance, please do so. You are welcome to re-enter whenever you are ready.

CREDITS

Performers: Laurel Lawson & Alice Sheppard

Choreography: Alice Sheppard, in collaboration with Laurel Lawson

Original Scenographer: Michael Maag

Lighting Design Restoration: Annie Wiegand

Costume & Makeup Design: Laurel Lawson

Music: Joan Jeanrenaud, *Visual Music*, with performers PC Muñoz and William Winant. Deconet Records 2016. With the kind permission of the composer.

Song of Songs by Karen Tanaka is used by arrangement with G. Schirmer Inc. publisher and copyright owner.

"Empty Infinity" by Cornelius Dufallo, *Journaling*. Innova Recordings 2012, is used by kind permission of the composer.

"Waiting," by Joan Jeanrenaud, *Strange Toys*. Talking House Records 2008. With the kind permission of the composer.

Music Editing: Dan Wool

Original video design and projection images inspired by selected sculptures of Auguste Rodin and created by Michael Maag.

Original images provided by Stanford University's Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Center For Visual Arts.

Additional video courtesy of EMPAC / Eric Brucker and Ryan Jenkins.

Dramaturg: Melanie George
Creation Production Stage Manager: Tiffany Schrepferman
RAMP Design Team: Sara Hendren, Yevgeniya Zastavker, and
Katie Butler, Daniel Daugherty,
Duncan Hall, Andrew Holmes, Erica Lee, Scott Mackinlay, Apurva
Raman, March Saper, Alexander Scott, Kimberly Winter, Rachel
Yang, Jingyi Xu, with support from Olin College.

Ramp Engineering by Rooster Productions, LLC a small
employee-owned scene shop located in Martinez, CA. Ramp
Fabrication by Oregon Shakespeare Festival Scene Shop,
Ashland, OR.

AUDIMANCE AUDIO DESCRIPTION CONTRIBUTORS

Audimance Platform
Design: Laurel Lawson
Development: CyCore Systems
Advisor: Georgina Kleege

DESCENT Audimance Content:
Description: George McRae, Cheryl Green, David Linton
Poetry: Eli Clare
Movement & Soundscapes: Dylan Keefe, JM Creative Alchemy
(Producer Caitlin Robinson; Lead Audio Technologist: Javier
Molina; Sound Designer: TK Broderick; Sound Mixer: Aaron
Montoya-Moraga), Todd Vos
Scenic Titles: Alice Sheppard
Additional Voice Actors: Erin Deward; Mary Murphy; Ali Silva
Spatial Audimance environment & audio engineering: Laurel
Lawson

KINETIC LIGHT

Artistic Director: Alice Sheppard
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Collaborative Artist: Kayla Hamilton
Associate Artist: Devin Hill
Production Management: Brine Media

Production Manager: Conor McCarthy
Technical Director/Touring Supervisor: Derek Johnson
Production Stage Manager: Kasson Marroquin
Assistant Production Stage Manager: Katie Young
Lighting Supervisor: Gabe Hrin
Projection + Video Supervisor: Lorenzo Lagola
Research Fellow: Colin Clark
Fabrication Assistant: Carissa Dahlia
Consultants: Advance NYC, CyCore Systems
Booking Representation: Pentacle

KINETIC LIGHT ARTISTS

LAUREL LAWSON (flexible pronouns) is a choreographic collaborator, dancer, designer, and engineer with Kinetic Light. She is the primary costume and makeup designer, contributes technical and production design, and designs the wheelchairs that she and Alice Sheppard use in performance. She also leads access and technology initiatives, including [Audimance](#), the company's approach to audio description, and Access ALLways, a holistic approach to disabled-led equitable access. Lawson began her professional dance career with Atlanta's Full Radius Dance. In her independent and transdisciplinary practice, housed at Rose Tree Productions, her work includes both traditional choreography and novel ways of creating art through technology and design; in the creation of worlds and products experienced, installed, embodied, or virtual. Her work has been recognized with a Dance/USA Artist Fellowship, funded by the Doris Duke Foundation, and with a 2023 Creative Capital Award. Lawson is also CTO and co-founder of CyCore Systems, a boutique engineering consultancy. A noted public speaker and teacher, she speaks on a range of technical topics as well as on leadership practice, accessibility, culture and equity, cultivating creativity and driving innovation.

MICHAEL MAAG (he/him) is a founding member and scenographer for Kinetic Light. Maag is an award-winning designer of lighting, video, and projection for theatre, dance, musicals, opera, and planetariums. He sculpts with light and shadow to create lighting environments that tell a story, believing that lighting in support of the performance is the key to unlocking audiences' emotions. Maag has built custom optics for projections in theaters, museums and planetariums; he also designs and builds electronics and lighting for costumes and scenery. Maag is passionate about bringing the perspective of a disabled artist to technical theatre and design. He is currently

the Director of Production and the Resident Lighting Designer at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. His designs have been seen on the Festival's stages for the last 25 years, as well as at theatres across the country. He has spoken at several theatre and architecture conferences on the importance of access for the disabled artist in the technical theatre field.

ALICE SHEPPARD (she/her) is an internationally recognized dancer, choreographer, and founder of the disability arts ensemble Kinetic Light. She studied ballet and modern dance with Kitty Lunn and started her career performing with Infinity Dance Theater and AXIS Dance Company. In 2016, Alice founded [Kinetic Light](#), a disability arts ensemble featuring herself, Laurel Lawson and Michael Maag. Working in the disciplines of art, technology, design, and dance, Kinetic Light creates, performs, and teaches at the nexus of access, queerness, disability, dance, and race. In the company's work, intersectional disability is an aesthetic, a culture, and an essential element of artistry. In addition to performance and choreography, Sheppard is a consultant and speaker who has lectured on topics related to disability arts, race, design, and dance. Her writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, academic journals, and the anthology *Disability Visibility*, edited by Alice Wong. She is delighted to have been recognized with a Bessie Award and as a United States Artists Fellow, Creative Capital grantee, MacDowell Fellow, and Disability Futures Fellow.

COLLABORATING ARTIST

Annie Wiegand (she/her) is the first and only professional Deaf Lighting Designer in the US theatre industry. Regional: *Spring Awakening*, Skylight Theatre Company; *Cinderella*, Lyric Theatre of Oklahoma and Zach Theatre; *The Upstairs Department*, Signature Theatre; *Eclipsed*, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre; *Steel Magnolias*, *Under the Breeches*, Alabama Shakespeare Festival; *Steel Magnolias*, Dallas Theater Center; *The Who and The What*, Huntington Theatre; *Small Mouth Sounds*, *The Bridges of Madison County* (IRNE Nominee for Best Lighting Design) *Tribes*, Speakeasy Stage. Off-Broadway: *I Was Most Alive With You*, Playwrights Horizons. Dance: Kinetic Light; Anikaya Dance Theatre. Associate Professor, Theatre and Dance Program, Gallaudet University. www.anniewiegand.com.

FUNDERS

DESCENT was made possible, in part, by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Foundation and the Mellon Foundation; General Operating support was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project with funding from the Doris Duke Foundation; Production residency funded by New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with funding from the Mellon Foundation. The MAP Fund, supported by the Doris Duke Foundation and the Mellon Foundation; Dance/NYC's Disability. Dance. Artistry Fund, made possible by the Ford Foundation with additional support provided by the Mertz Gilmore Foundation; and the Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography at Florida State University. Kinetic Light researched, developed and honed *DESCENT* with financial, administrative and residency support from the Dance in Process program at Gibney Dance with funds provided by Foundation. *DESCENT* was also supported by Dancers' Group's CA\$H grant program, the Awesome Foundation, Puffin Foundation West, Ltd., and the Yip Harburg Foundation.



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Kinetic Light's DESCENT is presented in partnership with Touchstone Theatre and their community arts initiative Festival UnBound.

For more information on Festival events, its history, and the 2024 sponsors, visit touchstone.org.



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Dr. Grandin, who didn't speak until she was three and a half, was fortunate to receive early speech therapy, learn social skills like turn-taking in board games, and be mainstreamed into kindergarten at five. Her first book, *Emergence: Labeled Autistic*, offered a unique first-person view of autism. In his best-selling *Anthropologist on Mars*, Oliver Sacks wrote that Grandin's book was unprecedented because there had never been an inside narrative of autism.

Now a professor at Colorado State University, she's renowned for her work in animal behavior and welfare, consulting globally, and appearances on television (NPR, BBC and other prominent media). In 2010, **Time** named her one of **"The 100 Most Influential People in the World."** She was honored with an Emmy-winning HBO movie and induction into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2016. The award-winning autism self-advocate shares her message about the disorder and "differently-abled" brains.

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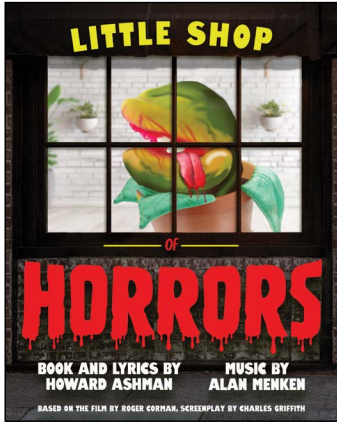
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To leave theatres during performances, use the rear doors, if you are able, to minimize disruption of performance.

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Lost & Found: Contact Ticket Services. Not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Families with Children:

We welcome children of all ages to our Family Series shows. For performances not listed as Family Series in our brochure, we recommend that attendees be ages four and over. Everyone entering the theatre must have a ticket, and sit quietly in a seat throughout the performance. There are closed-circuit monitors in the lobby which supervised children may use to watch performances if they need a break.

Accessible seating can be requested when purchasing tickets. Accessible parking is on levels 1 and 3 in the parking garage.

Free assistive-listening devices are available through Ticket Services for amplified performances.

Free Sensory Kits are available to checkout, please inquire at the box office or with an usher.

Questions about your tickets?

Contact Ticket Services:
Phone: 610-758-2787 ext. 0
Email: inzactix@lehigh.edu

Box Office Hours:
TUE 12-6; WED-FRI 12-5
For ticketed events: SAT 2 hours prior to curtain, 90 mins. all other days.



All programs and artists are subject to change. In the event of a cancellation or material change, we will make every effort to contact all ticket holders. We must reserve the right to make any changes whatsoever in the event owing to any unforeseen or unavoidable cause or to cancel the event for any reason beyond our control without being liable to pay any ticket holder compensation for damages other than a ticket of comparable value to an event (based on availability).

Video recording or photography may occur for this performance that might include images of audience members. Your attendance at today’s performance grants permission for further usage of such images.

ZOELLNER ARTS CENTER

2024 FALL SEASON AT A GLANCE



THE TRIO SALLESE	FRI AUG 30
LUVME	SAT SEP 7
CIRQUE KIKASSE FREE	WED SEP 18
NOTATIONS: LUIS MIRANDA, JR. FREE	THU SEP 19
HELL'S KITCHEN FUNK ORCHESTRA	SAT SEP 21
FACULTY STRING QUARTET	SUN SEP 22
LEHIGH'S MARCHING BAND '97	FRI SEP 27
FAMILY DAY  FAMILY SERIES	SAT SEP 28
<i>TROUBLE IN MIND</i>	OCT 4 - 12
KINETIC LIGHT	SAT OCT 5
TEMPLE GRANDIN	SUN OCT 13
123 ANDRÉS  FAMILY SERIES	THU OCT 17
BÉLA FLECK & ABIGAIL WASHBURN	FRI OCT 18
GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA	SUN OCT 20
CHORAL ARTS	FRI OCT 25, SAT OCT 26
NOTATIONS: CLINT SMITH FREE	THU OCT 29
PLENA LIBRE	SAT NOV 2
THE PRINCETON SINGERS	SUN NOV 3
RUMPELSTILTSKIN  FAMILY SERIES	SAT NOV 9
JAZZ REPERTORY ORCHESTRA	SAT NOV 9
WOLF PLAY	NOV 15 - 22
NEIL BERG'S 101 YEARS OF BROADWAY	SAT NOV 16
STUDENT JAZZ CONCERT	SUN NOV 17
WIND ENSEMBLE	SUN NOV 24
THE IRISH TENORS	SUN DEC 1
PHILHARMONIC	FRI DEC 6, SAT DEC 7
CHORAL ARTS FREE	SUN DEC 8
THE NUTCRACKER	SAT DEC 14, SUN DEC 15
THE KING'S SINGERS	FRI DEC 20
CHERISH THE LADIES	SUN DEC 22

KEY: PRESENTING SERIES | MUSIC DEPARTMENT | DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE

