New York, NY, September 11, 2017 — The CUNY Dance Initiative (CDI), an unprecedented model for collaboration between the City University of New York (CUNY) and the New York City dance field, announces its Fall 2017 calendar of events.

Between now to June 2018, 13 CUNY colleges in all five boroughs are hosting 24 residencies, offering studio and stage time to New York City-based choreographers and companies working in all dance genres. While CDI’s primary focus is providing space for artists to create and rehearse their work, residencies include master classes for students and faculty, along with work-in-progress showings and performances open to the public.

CDI performances this fall include the world premiere of tap virtuoso Andrew Nemr’s autobiographical *Rising to the Tap*; Kinesis Project dance theatre’s site-specific *TimePiece, or: Another imperfect measurement of us* on the rooftop terrace of John Jay College; Al Blackstone’s *American Dance Spectacular*, and Sekou McMiller Dance Company. Johnnie Cruise Mercer/TheREDprojectNYC and Odylle Beder will also share open rehearsals with the community as part of their residencies. Details on each performance and open rehearsal are below.

From October 3 - November 1, CDI is holding an open call for applications for 2018-2019 residencies. Established and emerging New York City choreographers and companies working in a variety of styles, from contemporary to traditional forms, are encouraged to apply.

CDI is holding an application information session on Monday, October 9 at 7:00pm at Baruch Performing Arts Center in Manhattan.

More information about CDI, the application and guidelines are available online: [www.cuny.edu/danceinitiative](http://www.cuny.edu/danceinitiative)

**Fall 2017 Events**

**Kinesis Project dance theatre**

*TimePiece, or: Another imperfect measurement of us* (world premiere)
John Jay College Rooftop Terrace
September 16 & 17 at 5:30pm
$15 - $25 / FREE for CUNY students
[www.kinesisproject.com](http://www.kinesisproject.com)

Kinesis Project dance theatre, led by choreographer Melissa Riker, creates a magical world on the spectacular rooftop terrace of John Jay College. *TimePiece, or: Another imperfect measurement of us* is a site-specific dance about time, perspective and connection, and created in collaboration with costume designer Asa Thornton (known for projects with Lady Gaga, Madonna, and Broadway shows) and visual artist Celeste Cooning, who has created large-scale, hand-cut pieces for public spaces and private collections across the
country. With dances on escalators, steps, and grassy lawns, plus a live band and costumes that strew brightly colored sand, the entire rooftop plaza is transformed into a shimmering playground at sunset.

**American Dance Spectacular**
On Stage at Kingsborough
October 28 at 8:00pm
$30 - $37
www.onstageatkingsborough.org / 718-368-5596

From The Charleston and Lindy Hop to The Jitterbug and Twist to Disco and Vogue, leading Broadway dancers — backed by a live band — take the audience on a sweeping journey through the last century of American social dance. **American Dance Spectacular** is directed by Daniel C. Levine, and choreographed by Al Blackstone, best known for his work on *So You Think You Can Dance* and the Off-Broadway shows *Freddie Falls In Love* and *The View Upstairs*.

**Sekou McMiller Dance Company**
Hostos Center for the Arts & Culture
November 3 at 7:30pm
$10 general / FREE for students
www.hostoscenter.org / 718-518-4455

Sekou McMiller Dance Company fuses Afro Latin dance and music with contemporary, urban, classical and abstract theater dance to create provocative narratives. This performance features the premiere of "I am Pulse: Afro Latin Jazz and Soul Experience."

**Johnnie Cruise Mercer/The RED Project**
Milton G. Bassin Performing Arts Center at York College
Open Rehearsal: November 16 at 6:00pm (FREE)
www.yorkpac.com / 718-262-3650

Johnnie Cruise Mercer/TheREDprojectNYC is a collective of artistic daredevils who concentrate on excavating the human subconscious through movement. The company will show excerpts of work developed during their CDI residency, followed by a hands-on community sharing of current processes/exploration (no dance experience necessary).

**Odylle Beder**
Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts at Brooklyn College
Open rehearsal & artist talk: December 5 at 12:00pm (FREE)
www.brooklyncenter.org / 718-951-4600

Odylle Beder, a longtime member of Full Circle Souljahs, combines breakdancing and other hip hop forms with ballet and more traditional styles of dance. The community is invited to an open rehearsal and talk with Odylle about the new pieces of choreography she is creating during her CDI residency.

**Flying Carpet Theatre**
*Andrew Nemr: Rising to the Tap* (world premiere)
Tribeca Performing Arts Center at BMCC
December 15 & 16 at 7:30pm
$30 / $20 students & seniors
www.tribecapac.org / 212-220-1460

In *Rising to the Tap*, tap virtuoso Andrew Nemr shares episodes from his immigrant history -- his family’s departure from Lebanon in 1976, adapting to life in New Jersey, his eventual mentorship under legends Savion.
Glover and Gregory Hines -- and his struggles with loneliness, bullying, and cultural identity. Mixing musically explosive footwork with autobiographical solo storytelling, Nemr candidly reveals a unique American journey through a uniquely American dance form. Directed by Adam Koplan and performed and choreographed by Andrew Nemr, with music by Or Matias.

ABOUT THE CUNY DANCE INITIATIVE

The CUNY Dance Initiative was developed in response to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's 2010 report, "We Make Do," which cited how destabilizing the shortage of affordable rehearsal space in New York City is to the dance community. A successful pilot project underwritten by the New York Community Trust, supporting residencies and performances on four CUNY campuses in 2013, prompted CDI to expand its scope. Since its official launch in 2014, CDI has subsidized and facilitated a total of 82 residencies—from emerging choreographers to established dance companies—at 13 CUNY colleges in all five boroughs.

The CUNY Dance Initiative receives major support from the Mertz Gilmore Foundation, the Howard Gilman Foundation, and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. Additional support is provided by the Jerome Robbins Foundation, the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, and the Harkness Foundation for Dance. CDI is spearheaded and administered by the Kupferberg Center for the Arts at Queens College.

For more information about the CUNY Dance Initiative, visit www.cuny.edu/danceinitiative or follow CDI on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

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