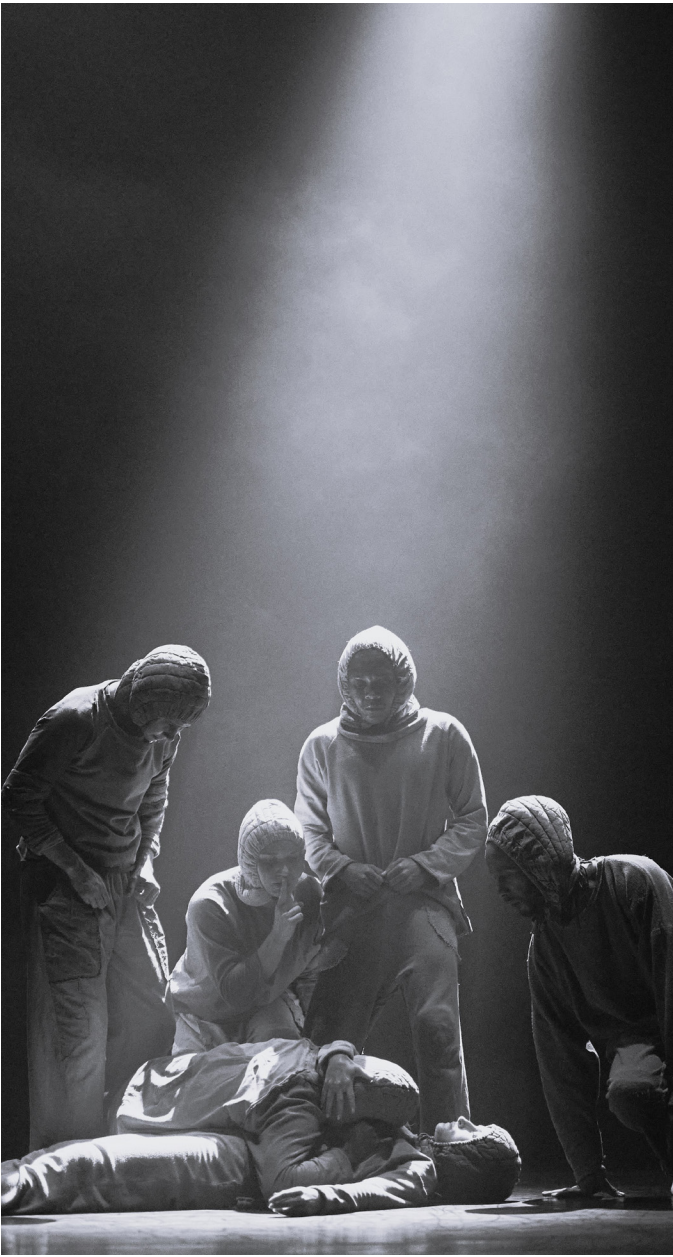


Clarice Presents

**FAR FROM THE NORM: BLKDOG**



Monday, October 28, 2024 • 7:30PM

KAY THEATRE

AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF  
MARYLAND

Clarice Presents

## FAR FROM THE NORM: *BLKDOG*

Director & Choreographer.....Botis Seva  
 Music Composer ..... Torben Sylvest  
 Lighting Designer..... Tom Visser  
 Costume Designer ..... Ryan Dawson-Laight

Performed by Far From The Norm Dance Artists..... Jordan Douglas, Joshua Shanny Wynters,  
 Shangomola Edunjobi, Naima Souhai, Penelope Klamert,  
 Margaux Pourpoint, Victoria Shulungu

Rehearsal Director..... Victoria Shulungu & Hayleigh Sellers

Executive Producer.....Lee Griffiths  
 Senior Production Manager.....Andy Downie  
 Production Manager & Relighters..... Andrej Gubanov, Chris Burr, Seth Rook Williams  
 Tour Manager .....Gabija Cepelyte

Costume Makers ..... Jordan Goertz, Julie Sayers,  
 Kelsey Vickery, Kingsley Hall, Lou Petty, Rosie Whiting

Mix Engineer.....Pär Carlsson

Research & Development Rehearsal Director ..... Ekin Bernay

Contribution Artists.....Charlotte Clark, Clarissa Shulungu, Ezra Owen, Isaac Ouro-Gnao,  
 Savannah Anais Rowe, Shiloh Seva, Tyrone Isaac-Stuart

***Content Warning: BLKDOG features loud music, gunshot sounds,  
 haze and abstract depictions of rape, violence and depression.***

**JOIN US FOR A POST-SHOW CONVERSATION  
 IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE PERFORMANCE**

*Co-produced by Far From The Norm, Norrlandsoperan and Sadler's Wells. Supported by Arts Council England, Kingston University, Laban Theatre, Siobhan Davies Dance and UEL Dance: Urban Practice Department. This performance is supported in part by the Maryland State Arts Council and The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation.*



THE MORRIS AND GWENDOLYN  
 CAFRITZ FOUNDATION

**BLKDOG** is Botis Seva's beautifully brutal commentary on how the youth of today are coping in a world not built for them. In an emotionally charged hip hop dance performance, *BLKDOG* reveals the vicious connection of how self-discovery leads to self-destruction.

Through haunting childhood memories and adult life traumas, *BLKDOG* questions how we fight through our vices to find a sense of peace and reveals a vicious connection of how self-discovery can lead to self-destruction. The music has grown from a long-standing collaboration with Torben Sylvest and includes a mixture of original music and words that adds layers of meaning, highlighting the inner workings of the characters on stage. Tom Visser's lighting brings a dark smog of disillusion as the choreography delves into the underbelly of life, while the hooded caps and padded costumes by Ryan Laight echo the protection and comfort of childhood.

"*BLKDOG* is for everyone who has dealt with trauma and grief. For anyone who has had to watch family members go through depression or loss. We live in a society where speaking about our emotions may never be understood; I spent my childhood never speaking about my emotions and now at the age of 30 I can finally speak up."

—Botis Seva

## FAR FROM THE NORM



**FAR FROM THE NORM** is a Hip Hop Dance Theatre company, led by Artistic Director Botis Seva. Their performers bring to the studio a range of dance styles from Popping to Breaking, Krump to House, and it is with their informed knowledge of different dance styles that Botis is able to question, learn and translate what else is possible.

They challenge perceptions of Hip Hop and create work that empowers marginalised people. All our work is original, vital and fearless and invites debate on social political issues and the contemporary world.

Their work includes live theatre performances, outdoor shows, immersive experiences and film. They tour nationally and internationally and we are continuing to develop strong partnerships around the world to nurture a new generation of hip hop dance theatre.

## BOTIS SEVA

“Seva is a choreographer on the cusp of a new direction in the shifting sands of British contemporary dance and one likely to have a big following in its future”

–Graham Watts



**BOTIS SEVA** is a unique and seminal choreographic voice rooted in Hip Hop dance theatre but inspired by a freeform approach to choreography. His work is grounded in real life and captures his own stories, as well as those around him, whilst borrowing techniques from film, text, art and other dance languages to continuously reinvent his approach to creativity and the stage.

Botis’ passion from a young age was music, he’d spend time at his local youth club making beats and MC’ing. When he was 15 years old he was introduced to dance at secondary school and it was here Botis decided to pursue a choreographic career outside of mainstream educational pathways. He founded his Hip Hop dance theatre company Far From The Norm aged 19 in Dagenham, London, with friends that shared his passion for experimenting with the Hip Hop form.

In his early choreographic years, Botis honed his craft and skills through mentorship and artistic development opportunities with Breakin’ Convention at Sadler’s Wells, which gave him the confidence to apply for various platforms and slowly build up his language and portfolio.

From here, Botis’ work started to take flight across the stage, outdoor and dance film circuits. Since, he has been the recipient of numerous awards including Bonnie Bird Choreography Fund, Marion North Mentoring Award (2015), Copenhagen International Choreography Competition (2016), Choreography 30 Hannover (2016), Olivier Award for Best New Dance Production for *BLKDOG* (2019), nominations for Black British Theatre Award and Dance Critics National Dance Awards (2022), CHANEL Next Prize (2022) and Carmen Mateux Best Choreographer Award (2023).

Botis has also worked on numerous film commissions including *Inside The Blind Iris* with director Douglas Bernadt (2023), a collaboration with Director Freddie Leydon and Christies on *Santo* (2022), BBC Arts x Space *CAN’T KILL US ALL* (2020) and Channel 4 *Random Acts REACH* (2018). His film work has won Vimeo Best of the Year Awards (2023), Kinsale Sharks (2023), San Francisco Dance Film Festival (2018) and nominations include Cannes Lion Award (2023) and Young British Arrows (2023).

His other stage commissions include Scottish Dance Theatre, Rupert Goold, National Youth Dance Company, Wayne McGregor and Robin Friend, Battersea Arts Centre/Suri Krishnamma and upcoming commissions include *Acosta Dance* (2024-25) and *NDT* (2024-25).

## ENGAGEMENT ON CAMPUS AND IN THE COMMUNITY

We are thrilled to be presenting *Far From The Norm*, originally rescheduled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout our virtual season, Botis Seva and other company members participated in several virtual activities, including dance technique classes for students in the School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies (TDPS); a panel discussion about “Hip-Hop in the White Space;” and a film screening of Botis’ film, *Can’t Kill Us All*, followed by another panel discussion moderated by University of Maryland faculty member La Marr Jurelle Bruce. Following that, The Clarice hosted another virtual Artist Talk with Botis, which was a conversation and showing of short clips of the work we’re seeing tonight, *BLKDG*.

After tonight’s performance, join us for a Q&A moderated by Tariq O’Meally. Members of *Far From The Norm* will also visit dance classes in-person in TDPS and Botis will visit an Arts & Activism class in the Department of Art History. Company members will also teach during the BlackLight Intensive on Saturday, November 2. The generosity of these artists is exceptional and unique, and we are honored to be hosting them here at The Clarice.

## BLACKLIGHT DANCE INTENSIVE

Clarice Presents in partnership with BlackLight and Dance Place  
Saturday, November 2, 2024 • 9AM–5PM at The Clarice

***DON'T MISS!***



Presented in partnership with BlackLight, the BlackLight Intensive offers a day of free workshops led by an incredible roster of practitioners at the intersection of creative reverence, subversion and stunning bravery. Join for all, some or one workshop, including a Chat and Chew conversational lunch in the company of your fellow dancers.

This year's Teaching Artists include Mx Oops, Jason A. Rodriguez, Ronya-Lee Anderson, Project ChArma, chitra.MOVES, The Haus of Glitter, Jamison Curcio & Shanice Mason and London-based hip hop theater company Far From the Norm.

Participation is free, but registration is required.



**SCAN  
TO LEARN MORE  
& REGISTER**

## CLARICE PRESENTS FALL 2024 EVENTS

MUSIC | Fri, Oct 18 • 8PM

### **RUDE RUTH: JULIAN LAGE, MARGARET GLASPY, JORGE ROEDER, DAVE KING**

If there could ever be such a thing as an avant-garde supergroup, Rude Ruth is it. Acclaimed singer-songwriter Margaret Glaspy, outrageously talented guitarist Julian Lage, bassist Jorge Roeder and drummer Dave King unite for incisive and romantic folk-rock compositions.

COMEDY | Sun, Oct 20 • 8PM

### **MONÉT X CHANGE**

Known for delivering energetic and show-stopping performances, “RuPaul’s Drag Race” sensation Monét X Change wows with her immaculate lip-syncing skills and comedic chops.

**Accessibility:** This event will include ASL interpretation.

DANCE | Mon, Oct 28 • 7:30PM

### **FAR FROM THE NORM: BLKDOG**

*BLKDOG* pairs the hyper-energetic ideas of hip-hop with the fluidity of contemporary dance. It is as electrifying to witness as it is compelling to ponder. *BLKDOG* is a staggeringly physical reflection of our modern mental turmoil.

MUSIC | Sun, Nov 10 • 3PM

### **CASTALIAN STRING QUARTET**

The Castalian String Quartet are a much-respected and much-awarded multinational string ensemble whose clever interpretations and robust sound have made them the talk of the classical world. Presenting works by Joseph Haydn, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and Franz Schubert.

THEATER | Thu, Nov 14 & Fri, Nov 15 • 8PM

### **THE JAVAAD ALIPOOR COMPANY: THINGS HIDDEN SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD**

This work “gleefully mashes up genres, smashing together the quiet authority of the murder mystery podcast, the intimacy of autobiographical storytelling and the visual spectacle of multimedia performance while simultaneously deconstructing each of these forms” (The Guardian)

MUSIC | Fri, Nov 15 • 8PM

### **BALTIMORE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: BARTÓK’S CONCERTO FOR ORCHESTRA**

In the second year of our partnership with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, BSO Music Director Jonathon Heyward leads the orchestra in Béla Bartók’s *Concerto for Orchestra* and Igor Stravinsky’s *Renard*.

MUSIC | Sat, Dec 7 • 7:30PM

### **STORM LARGE: HOLIDAY ORDEAL**

Sultry dynamic vocalist Storm Large, singer with Pink Martini and The Balls, brings all the power and glory of her name for a breathtaking holiday performance.

MUSIC | Thu, Dec 12 • 7:30PM

### **TIME FOR THREE: HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS**

Defying convention and boundaries, Time For Three stands at the intersection of Americana, pop and classical. The trio featuring Charles Yang (violin, vocals), Nicolas “Nick” Kendall (violin, vocals) and Ranaan Meyer (double bass, vocals) will present special arrangements of holiday favorites.

UNIVERSITY OF  
MARYLAND



24  
25  
SEASON

*at The Clarice Smith  
Performing Arts Center*

