

# WHERE WE FELL

2025 Senior Capstone Dance Concert



APRIL 24-26  
7:30PM  
@COHEN HALL PERFORMANCE  
STUDIO



University  
of Vermont

College of Arts and Sciences  
School of the Arts  
*Program in Theatre and Dance*

**UVM**  
**College of Arts and Sciences, School of the Arts**  
**Program in Theatre and Dance**

**Faculty & Staff**

Julian Barnett.....Assistant Professor & Resident Choreographer  
Paul Besaw.....Professor  
Millie Heckler.....Lecturer  
Paula Higa.....Assistant Professor & Resident Choreographer  
Chong Ho Kim.....Lecturer  
Kyra Miller.....Lecturer  
Sara Nelson.....Full Time Lecturer & Production Manager  
Julie Peoples-Clark.....Full Time Lecturer  
Zeina Salame.....Assistant Professor & Resident Director  
Lynn Ellen Schimoler.....Lecturer  
Robert Shimko.....Program Head, Theatre and Dance  
Leila Teitelman.....Full Time Lecturer  
Avi Waring.....Lecturer

Sarah Bush.....Costume Shop Supervisor  
Nate Venet.....Department Administrative Coordinator  
Thomas Lindley.....Scene Shop Supervisor  
Wayne Tetrick.....Marketing and Outreach Coordinator  
Craig Zemsky.....Sound & Lights Technician – School of the Arts

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**Production Credits**

*Faculty Instructor/Supervisor:* Paul Besaw

*Lighting Designer & Technical Coordinator:* Craig Zemsky

*Stage Manager & Sound Board Operator:* Taylor Brock '25

*Light Board Operator:* Hugh Boyle '27

# WHERE WE FELL

## 2025 UVM Senior Dance Capstone Concert

### PROGRAM

#### Where We Fell

*Choreography:* Natalie Bett '24 and the Capstone Choreographers

*Performance:* Sophia Bright '25, Emma Dunaske '25, Madeline Grant '25, Amelia Hallin '25, Malena Lomanno '25, Ellett Merriman '25, Olivia Newman '25, Dani Sowards '25, Delia Stiles '25

*Sound Design:* Natalie Bett '24

*Music:* "The Beginning" by Flawed Mangoes; "Good Times" by Jungle

#### in a comforting sense

*Choreography:* Ellett Merriman '25

*Performance:* Julia Bair '25, Kayli Carlson '25, Veronica Lindstrom '28, Hope Nichols '25, Robbie Simpson '26, Angelina Woychosky '27

*Original Music Composition & Performance:* Ellett Merriman '25

*NOTE:* Please visit the Supplement Information website to find a link to view an alternate, dance-for-camera version of this project.

#### Terms & Conditions

*Choreography:* Madeline Grant '25

*Performance:* Georgi Andrade '27, Chloe Cashman '26, Gabriella Detres '27, Lexie Divers '26, Amelia Hallin '25, Melanie Labrecque '28, Maggie Maury '25, Dani Sowards '25, Amanda Smith '26

*Music:* "Someday My Prince Will Come" by Emile Pandolfi; "Fitter Happier" by Radiohead; "Riders on the Storm" by The Doors; "The Chain" by Fleetwood Mac; "Nude" by Radiohead; "Holocene" by Bon Iver

#### nobody's looking?

*Choreography:* Ameila Hallin '25

*Performance:* Olivia Deschenes '25, Ellen Gray '26, Lily Horowitz '27, Sadie Martin '26, Mia Reischer '26

*Music:* "Eloise" by Rattlesnake Milk; "212 North 12<sup>th</sup>" (Tom Moulton Album Mix) by The Salsoul Orchestra

#### Tearing at the Seams

*Choreography & Sound Design:* Sophia Bright '25

*Performance:* Julia Bair '25, Natalie Bett '24, Gabriella Detres '27, Ava Devost '25, Millie Gardner '28, Erin Mullenex '26, Hope Nichols '25, Laura O'Brien '25, Madeline Sherwood-McGrath '26, Rhianon Staples '26, Delia Stiles '25

*Music:* "That's Life" by Frank Sinatra; "The Good Life" by Tony Bennett; "Breathe" by Son Lux; "Lung" by Vancouver Sleep Clinic

# INTERMISSION

## In Our Nature

*Choreography:* Olivia Newman '25

*Performance:* Natalie Bett '24, Julianna Blanding '26, Kat Coyne '25, Ava Devost '25, Lily Horowitz '27, Mia Kalish '26, Melanie Labrecque '28, Andy Maxwell Logan '25, Malena Lomanno '25, Viviana Mejia '28, Erin Mullenex '26, Rhianon Staples '26, Kat Terrell '26, Anique Vachon '26

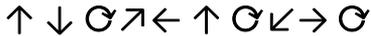
*Music:* "A Quick One Before the Eternal Worm Devours Connecticut" and "Hunter" by Have a Nice Life; "Libet's Delay" by The Caretakers; "Little's Theme" by Nichola Britell

## dreamscapes

*Choreography:* Delia Stiles '25

*Performance:* Heike Blum '28, Sophia Bright '25, Chloe Cashman '26, Sophia Morvay '27, Madeline Sherwood-McGrath '26

*Music:* "Dream a Little Dream of Me" by The Mamas & the Papas; "It's Been a Long, Long Time" by Kitty Kallen



*Choreography:* Malena Lomanno '25

*Performance:* Georgi Andrade '27, Lily Horowitz '27, Malena Lomanno '25, Maggie Maury '25, Rhianon Staples '26, Kat Terrell '26, Anique Vachon '26, Abbey Vranjes '26

*Music:* "On the Sunny Side of the Street" by Tommy Dorsey; "It's Late" by A Beacon School

## The Last Broadcast

*Choreography:* Emma Dunaske '25

*Performance:* Natalie Bett '24, Olivia Deschenes '25, Carter Matheny '27, Hope Nichols '25

*Music:* "Bodysnatchers" by Radiohead; "City Cook" by Caravan Palace; "Creepy Radio Static Sound Effect (with breathing)" by Amads (YOUTUBE); "No Surprises" by Radiohead

## Subjects of Yearning

*Choreography:* Daniela Sowards '25

*Performance:* Georgi Andrade '27, Chloe Cashman '26, Kat Coyne '25, Ava Devost '25, Lexie Divers '26, Madeline Grant '25, Ben Harris '25, Mia Kalish '26, Melanie Labrecque '28, Andy Maxwell Logan '25, Sadie Martin '26, Maggie Maury '25, Viviana Mejia '28, Theresa Montalbano '25, Mia Reischer '26, Noah Saltzman '26, Kat Terrell '26, Abbey Vranjes '26, Sydney Webster '25

*Music:* "Blue Jay Way" by The Beatles; "Flying" by the Beatles; "Elevation" by Pharaoh Sanders; "Never Catch Me" by Flying Lotus

# UVM DANCE

## 2025 SENIOR DANCE CAPSTONE CHOREOGRAPHERS

### SOPHIA BRIGHT



#### **ARTIST BIOGRAPHY:**

**Sophia Bright** is a dancer, choreographer, visual artist, and performer. Sophia grew up on Long Island and trained at Body Language Dance and Theatre Arts Studio for fifteen years. She is currently earning a B.A. in Dance at the University of Vermont School of the Arts. Sophia has trained in numerous genres of dance including ballet, jazz, improvisation, contemporary, tap, lyrical, hip hop, and musical theater. She has trained with professional companies including, The American Ballet Theatre, The Rockettes, and The Joffrey Ballet School. These companies have influenced her value towards technique and precision. As a performer, Sophia places value on movement quality and the connection between body and environment. Sophia has ample experience performing in a range of styles and shows. Some of her recent performances include: UVM Dancing Uphill (2022-2025), UVM Senior Capstone Showcases (2022-2024), NCAA March Madness (2023-2025), and Liz Longley Torture Music Video (2020). As a choreographer, she draws from contemporary techniques, narrative inclusion, musical connection, and collaboration. Overall, her work is a metaphor for her overwhelming passion and love for dance and creative

exploration. After graduating, Sophia plans to continue developing her artistic image with aspirations for a successful career in the Arts.

### **ARTIST STATEMENT:**

I am an emerging artist that focuses on movement, choreography, music, visuals, and dance. I am interested in how these concepts work with and against each other. Most of my work is contemporary based with influences from jazz and lyrical techniques. Storytelling and music are main inspirations for my work. The ideas of heightened emotions as well as embodiment of intangible concepts drive my creation of abstracted narratives. In terms of music, I am drawn to the complexity of sound and how it can be generated and manipulated. I like to focus on the different relationships that sound and the human body can exist in. I value the different possibilities each dancer has to offer to help to produce a more natural, grounded, and comfortable connection between everyone in the process. My creative journey is fueled by the pure joy that I experience while moving. Dance has positively shaped my life, and it is something that I hold very close to my heart. Through my choreography I aim to impart these feelings onto my dancers and audience. In the future I aim to grow my work as I continue to study, perform, and learn about the artistic world of dance.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION: *Tearing at the Seams***

This piece explores the delicate balance between what we project and what we conceal, testing how far we can push our emotional boundaries before succumbing to the weight of vulnerability and the pain that lies beneath. What happens when we move on too quickly, without giving ourselves the space to fully process our emotions? Is the act of “holding it together” ultimately what causes us to fall apart?

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

I'd like to thank my amazing dancers for trusting my process and for helping to bring my piece to life. A big thanks to Paul and my fellow capstone seniors for making my time with the UVM dance department so special. And finally, to my family, thank you for always supporting and caring for me.

# EMMA DUNASKE



## **ARTIST BIOGRAPHY:**

**Emma Dunaske** is a senior majoring in Communication Sciences & Disorders and Dance. She has always loved dancing, starting in ballet and expanding to take classes in any style she is given the opportunity to learn. During her time at the University of Vermont, Emma has had the opportunity to join faculty pieces as well as student and guest artist pieces performed in Dancing Uphill. Additionally, she worked at the local YMCA teaching ballet and tap classes to children ranging from 3 to 11 years old. In the future, Emma hopes to pursue a career in social work or teaching.

## **ARTIST STATEMENT:**

I am motivated as an artist by what is on my mind during the creation process. Whatever emotion I am processing, question I am pondering, or situation I am experiencing is what I use to fuel my exploration. My approach to creating is by starting with movement patterns that match emotions; finding ways that dancers can weave between and around each other to create the foundations of an idea before even dancing. I also find it interesting to discover music that matches the intention of the piece, not based on what lyrics are, but instead on what emotions the melody and instruments evoke. I tend to convey experiences I have had in my life through my pieces to try to connect with others through emotion and understanding.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION: *The Last Broadcast***

Through repetition, dramatic movement quality, and sound, this piece invites the audience to witness the emotional and physical toll of burnout. What happens when our productivity goes away and our hard work slips through our fingers? And is it a conscious choice to stop caring about it?

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

I want to thank my parents for driving me to every dance rehearsal growing up and for always encouraging me to pursue dance!

## **MADELINE GRANT**



### **ARTIST BIOGRAPHY:**

**Madeline (Maddy) Grant** is a graduating senior, double majoring in Psychology and Dance. Originally from Wallingford, CT, she began dancing at age two and grew up training in the styles of jazz, tap, hip-hop, ballet, and musical theater—both recreationally and competitively. In high school, she also found a creative outlet in theater, performing as a featured dancer in school productions. It wasn't until arriving at UVM that she discovered how expansive and freeing dance could be. A compelling contemporary class, a conversation with Julian Barnett, and watching the 2023 senior capstones inspired her to declare Dance as her second major. Maddy's choreography blends emotion, structure, and spontaneity, often drawing from personal experience and her background in Psychology. She

hopes to continue creating work that is both meaningful and physically engaging wherever her next chapter takes her.

### **ARTIST STATEMENT:**

As a choreographer, I explore self-discovery through movement with each project uncovering new layers of who I am and how my body wants to move. I'm especially curious about the overlap between psychology and performance and how emotion, memory, and internal mindsets can be expressed physically. My work often begins with improvisation, letting my body guide me before refining the movement into structured choreography. While I'm drawn to the power of hip-hop and jazz, my choreographic vision leans contemporary, rooted in dynamic spatial patterns and emotional depth. My own challenges with anxiety and personal experiences inspire my movement choices, making dance a more authentic language for me than words ever could be. At UVM, I found freedom to take risks and let go of the dance competition mindset I grew up in. Dance has become not only a tool of creativity, but also a way to invite others in. I want my work to feel satisfying to dance and compelling to watch. I want to create an experience that resonates, even if just for a moment.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION: *Terms & Conditions***

This piece centers around the complexities of conformity, internal conflict of giving into social ideals, and losing your personal identity in the process. How have you altered yourself to feel accepted? Why do we feel the need to change ourselves to be liked? How do we separate ourselves from the conformity we have been swallowed by? Why do we make compromises that only erode our own identities? This piece was inspired by a journal entry I wrote reflecting on my own experience in my freshman year of college. I hope this piece is thought provoking, encouraging reflection for the audience and embracing self-love as a way of healing and resistance.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

I'd like to extend a huge thank you to UVM Dance faculty for giving me a great experience and welcoming space to continue to do something I love. Additionally, I would like to thank my cast for working with me and being beautiful dancers and friends. Finally, a big thank you to my family and friends for attending shows and giving me company during endless hours in Cohen studio.

# AMELIA HALLIN



## ARTIST BIOGRAPHY:

**Amelia Hallin** is a dynamic mover, creator, and lifelong learner, eager to explore diverse styles, songs, people, and places. Her journey began with ballet, where the discipline and rigor of her early training shaped her strong work ethic and creative drive. Stepping beyond her classical roots, Amelia now embraces a more expansive approach to movement\*\* — \*\*relishing the beauty of slowing down, leaning into awkwardness, incorporating sound, and fostering community throughout her work. Emotion is the driving force behind Amelia’s choreography, reflected in three independent pieces that deeply explore the complexities of feeling. Intimately inspired by dancing alone in her room or in unconventional spaces, she finds solitude a powerful catalyst for creativity. She is inspired by movers and teachers such as Kelly King, Donia Salem, Eva Farrel, Julie Frazier, Millie Heckler, and Misty Copeland. Amelia’s work as a postpartum doula actively informs her movement practice, offering insight into care, intuition, and embodiment. She explores how to teach and create from a supportive role—harnessing the beauty of nurturing those around her. Through her work, Amelia seeks to connect, uplift, and expand the boundaries of traditional movement, inviting others to discover new ways of experiencing and expressing the world.

## **ARTIST STATEMENT:**

I have, and always will, strive for purposeful imperfection in my dances and movement. I intentionally and critically explore what it's like to live and grow through dance, and how I can make choices of healing, exposure, rage, and hilarity. Exploring both the dark and light aspects of my reality helps me process the world, and in turn, I hope to inspire others' movement. I am drawn to the five senses—sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. Taking one or two away and feeling how the others heighten to protect my body excites me. I continue to explore how to incorporate this into my dances. I obsess over micromovements and small flares, and what they might mean to a prospective audience. Emotions like loneliness, desire, guilt, and innocence are often present in my creative process. Finding ways to move these feelings from consciousness into the present body is how I show up for myself in dance—they are integral to my work. I remember where and when I learned that dance is not straight lines and pointed feet. I carry the movements and voices of those who taught me. I am ever-growing, grounded in presence, and committed to the imperfect.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION: *nobody's looking?***

I created a piece based on organic movement formed in solitude. The main question I asked myself when creating this was “how does one dance when no one's looking?” Creating this final dance piece whilst at college was very important, I dove into what I was unfamiliar with and what embraced the messiness, playfulness, and weirdness of dance. The work is about finding what feels good to the body and what the body is drawn to when taking away the pressures of people watching. The audience is free and encouraged to experience this however they like.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

I would like to thank my wonderful parents, Dan and Ruth for their continued support of my passion for dance and for the encouragement they always bring. I would also like to thank my partner Charlie for his love and commitment and for always coming to my shows.

# MALENA LOMANNO



## **ARTIST BIOGRAPHY:**

**Malena Lomanno** is a dancer and choreographer from Wenonah, New Jersey whose passion for dance has been a constant throughout her life. Malena is a senior graduating with a B.A. in Music Technology/Business and a B.A. in Dance. Malena began studying dance at the age of three and later attended a performing arts high school, where she studied dance and dance history, building a strong foundation and a deep connection to the art. As a dancer, she alternates between exploring what feels good and what can interrupt what feels good? As a choreographer, she loves to wonder about who the art is truly for. Malena's training spans all classic styles with a focus on modern and improvisational dance.

## **ARTIST STATEMENT:**

As a choreographer, my work is fueled by curiosity and a commitment to continuous exploration. I am drawn to investigating the human body and its capabilities—I explore the question: How can I create something that differs from things we see in dance typically? Is it possible to create a work that is viewed as its own work or does a work almost always remind viewers of another work? Whenever I am pleased within something, how can I question it and continue to develop it? How can I make the piece continuously visually interesting? I often wonder: what does the absence

of a specific story or emotion bring to a work? What does it evoke in both the dancers and the audience?

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** ↑ ↓ ↻ ↶ ↷ ↸ ↹ ↺

My work was not built on a particular concept but was meant to be more of an exploration of movement and space; as the work has developed, I have discovered patterns of release, touch, and connection. As an artist I prefer to create a work and explore the themes that emerge and develop, rather than create something based on a specific concept. I encourage the audience to view the work with an open mind. The purpose of the work is to analyze the work for oneself.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

THANK YOU TO:

- My parents, for everything!
- My BEAUTIFUL dancers!! This piece would never be what it is if not for you!
- Paul, Julian, Julie, Paula, and Millie for inspiring me to explore dance in ways I never have before.
- Lastly, one more for Paul for making all of my senior dance dreams come true.

## ELLETT MERRIMAN



**ARTIST BIOGRAPHY:**

Born in China and raised in a small Vermont town, **Ellett Merriman** is a multidisciplinary artist whose work bridges emotional vulnerability,

cultural identity, and human experience. With a foundation in contemporary dance, she has expanded her repertoire to include diverse Western styles and East Asian forms such as Bollywood, Bhangra, and Chinese fan dancing. Her choreography intertwines these influences, crafting emotionally charged performances that challenge conventional boundaries of expression. Ellett's work has been featured at notable showcases, including a solo at the American College Dance Association in Rochester (2024) and a quartet in Dancing Uphill (2024), the dance program's annual showing at the University of Vermont. As lead choreographer for Jazbaa, the Bollywood dance team, she developed an inclusive and innovative choreographic voice. Beyond campus, Ellett performs with Green Mountain Performing Arts and accepts freelance choreography opportunities by invitation. In addition to pursuing a B.A. in Dance and a B.S. in Psychological Science on a pre-dental track, Ellett serves as student advisor for the Asian Student Union and a trip leader for POCO (People of Color Outdoors). Her work reflects a deep commitment to emotional storytelling, exploring beauty in adversity and inviting audiences to connect through shared vulnerability.

#### **ARTIST STATEMENT:**

As a choreographer and performer, I am committed to creating work that evokes deep emotional connection which challenges the conventional perceptions of movement and meaning. Rooted in storytelling and raw, emotion driven physicality, my choreography is often fast paced and intense, demanding full bodied commitment from my dancers. I explore themes such as anxiety, worthlessness, belonging, loss, and stress which reflect my personal journey. I embrace innovative tools and techniques, integrating elements such as projections, lighting, costumes, props, videography, elaborate makeup, and layered music scores to enrich my choreography. These multimedia elements allow me to create immersive experiences that push the boundaries of dance as a medium. My inspiration often stems from conversations, shared experiences, and imagery sparked by music or film. As an adoptee, my work reflects a lifelong exploration of identity and belonging. Dance has always been where I find purpose and worth, and through it, I offer audiences a glimpse into the layered realities of the unseen challenges we all face. By blending emotional vulnerability with technical innovation, I aim to foster connections, deepen empathy, and change how you view the world.

#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION: *in a comforting sense***

[CLICK HERE](#) to see a dance for camera version of my project.

This piece explores the adoptee experience through the lens of satisfaction—who gives it, how we find it, and where it’s missing. Guided by responses from adoptees, it reflects the cyclical realization of adoption: forgetting, remembering, and forgetting again. I began overwhelmed, but inspiration grew as I assembled each element. This work fuses all my artistic voices—dance, choreography, film, music, and poetry. To avoid crowding the stage, I created an “extended cut” through a supplemental film, offering a different take on the piece.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

I take so much inspiration and pride from the adoptees who shared their voices with me for my project. Plus, I have so much love for my dancers and support systems to make large projects fun!

**OLIVIA NEWMAN**



**ARTIST BIOGRAPHY:**

Dance has been a central part of **Olivia Newman’s** life for as long as she can remember. She started dancing at the age of three with her preschool best friend whose mom happened to own a dance studio. Dance has guided her through life ever since, now bringing her within months of graduating as a Dance major, Political Science major and Spanish minor.

Liv's favorite thing about dancing here at UVM is the community which inspires constant learning, observation, collaboration and support for one another. She is at the start of her journey as a choreographer, developing her own voice and process and hoping to continue following avenues of creation and connection with other dancers after college. Olivia wants to explore the world, meet people, observe cultures and experience the world through dance and other means.

### **ARTIST STATEMENT:**

To me dance is about connection and communication — bringing people together to blend and share their lives, hearts and minds. My work belongs not to me, but to all those who interact with it. Moving together, conversing for hours locked within a world of dance, the work comes to belong to the performers. They layer in it their own unique perspective, experience and voice. The audience alter the work from a distance. In discussing it, analyzing it and remembering it, they carry on fragments of it with them and weave into it their distinct view. My studies in Dance, Political Science and Spanish, constantly intertwine in themes and topics. In Spanish I study cultures: their art, music and history. Political Science analyzes the world around us, contemplating the current issues we face, the history that led us here, searching for hope and strategies to advance the future. In Dance, I can connect to these otherwise large and distant concepts, in a way that doesn't require complexity or total understanding. I can analyze them through art, using it to share my own understanding of the world and to be a voice for the changes I hope to see in it.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION: *In Our Nature***

An exploration of human connection, conflict and the paradox they create. How is it that we rely on such closeness, love and support, but are simultaneously driven towards competition, violence and hatred? How do these opposites exist together and how do they intertwine? What lies at the center of our true human nature? Are we meant to connect and love or to fight and harm? Is it possible to have one without the other, or are we endlessly bound to the tension between the two?

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

I would like to thank Natalie Bett and Paul Besaw for their constant support and guidance. I would also like to thank my dancers for all their hard work and talent. Lastly, I want to thank my family for being my number one supporters in everything.

# DANIELA SEWARDS



## **ARTIST BIOGRAPHY:**

**Daniela Swards** is a senior double major in Psychology and Dance from New York. She is an interdisciplinary artist, exploring pathways of authenticity in movement through the mind-body connection. Dani plans to continue her studies after graduation, hoping to examine and teach the importance of creative work as a tool for enhancing wellbeing and self-exploration/discovery. Her work is greatly inspired by visual art and improvisational scores learned from many of her soulful mentors in Dance. Dani has both presented choreography and performed in works at the American College Dance Association Conferences and has continued creating work within the UVM Dance Program. Dani has spent many summers teaching Street Dance at Belvoir Terrace, a girl's fine arts camp in Lenox, Massachusetts, where she instructs a range of ages and choreographs street dance pieces for the program's final performances. Dani hopes to keep expanding her practices and guide others to keep creating and moving their bodies as a form of raw expression and discovery of the inner self to promote self-esteem and connection to others.

## **ARTIST STATEMENT:**

Both as a performer and choreographer, my creative motives have grown from a desire to embark upon self-discovery, uncovering the pieces of my

mind, body and soul that need nurturing through movement. Improvisational movement practices and choreographic works have allowed me to begin to answer the many uncertainties of my identity, my perception of self, self-esteem, as dance makes me who I want to be. My role as an artist in the world has only grown in importance. As artists we must aim to preserve our purest forms of expression! The hope is for the arts to be used as a device to facilitate growth within our understanding of ourselves, our connections with others, and engagement in important conversations. As a choreographer and improviser, music is often what moves my body and soul to dance. What duet does music offer? I feel I have been offered the opportunity to probe my fullest self through exploring the ways in which my brain and body respond to rhythm and musicality. I engage with the creative arts to explore potential responses to a slew of both personal and holistic questions. These are questions with sometimes mouthfuls of answers, as they are intending to invite individual experience and personal sensation which then opens up novel pathways of processing and personal understanding. I hope to apply what I've learned through this to discover more about the providential relationship of Psychology and Dance.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION: *Subjects of Yearning***

*Subjects of Yearning* is an exploration of individual experience, specifically regarding feelings of personal longings within multiple facets of the human condition. What forms do our yearnings take? This piece highlights the intersectional, absurd nature of existence, embodying the anti-uniform and radical queer aesthetic. What is the spiral of seeking our inner selves alongside others?

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

I'd like to start by thanking the amazing faculty and students of the UVM Dance Department. Being a part of this community has been all the most fruitful; I am incredibly grateful to you all for making me the artist and person I am now. Thank you to my beautiful cast, I am so lucky to explore with you and observe you all as individuals while sharing your spirits with one another. Thank you and congratulations to my fellow Capstoners, I am so fortunate to receive your brilliance and be inspired by your artistry. And of course, Paul Besaw, I cannot thank enough. You have provided the most fulfilling, heartening, supportive learning experience I could have ever asked for, it has been an honor to know you. I wish I could learn from this group of artists forever, I heart UVM Dance <3 :)

# DELIA STILES



## **ARTIST BIOGRAPHY:**

**Delia Stiles** is a senior at the University of Vermont, graduating with a dual degree in Animal Science and Dance. In the future, she plans to attend veterinary school. She has been dancing since she was 2 years old and danced competitively for 7 years at her beloved hometown studio in northern New Jersey. At UVM, Delia has seen more personal growth as a dancer than she could have possibly imagined. She has grown to love the sense of perfect imperfection that is taught by the UVM Dance Department, and has learned to approach every artistic opportunity with no expectations and an open mind. She also dances with the UVM Dance Team, performing pom, jazz, and hip hop routines at men's and women's basketball games. She grew up primarily being trained in jazz, tap, and ballet, and always felt the strongest connection with the strength and musicality of tap dance. She is extremely grateful for the opportunity to continue exploring her favorite style through her dance major, creating two tap pieces in the last year. Delia finds inspiration in the works of her peers and is in awe of the constant support that her fellow dance majors give to each other.

## **ARTIST STATEMENT:**

As a performer, dance is a release. It is a nonverbal way to express, process, and understand feelings, and I have depended on this release for my whole life. As a choreographer, I place these emotions on a stage to be portrayed. It is extremely vulnerable to allow audiences to step into my mind and perceive my creative thinking. However, I find it important to challenge this comfortability with new and inviting artistic intentions. I have always been drawn to the musical aspect of dance. Dance can agree with and contrast the sound behind it, create music, disrupt music, or ignore music completely. This relationship has been the originating source of a majority of my choreography. Above all, I love dance that creates literal music through the rhythmic and dynamic style of tap. I hope my tap pieces will remind others that dance does not have to look or feel the same to be shared in the same space. With each new piece of choreography, I am striving to break as many of my own boundaries as possible. I am forcefully pushing away from what feels most comfortable and giving myself no restrictions. Dance is, inherently, an art that grows from itself, and I am excited to see how my art continues to grow.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION: *dreamscapes***

This piece is an exploration of musical and rhythmic work, driven primarily by the desire to further discover the vocality of tap dance. It is a study of the complex and imperative relationship between dance and sound, with the literal creation of music. With underlying themes of escapism through dreaming, this piece intends to remind audiences of the always expanding definition of dance with the acceptance of unique styles in all contexts.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

I want to express gratitude for all of my dance educators, past and present, for giving me a constant expressive outlet and source of inspiration. I also want to acknowledge my peers in this graduating class for all of their amazing creativity. Finally, I would like to thank my dancers for stepping out of their comfort zones and fully embracing this process.