



SCHEDULE

Day 1: Wednesday, 30 July 2025

Welcome + Introduction with Institute Director, Makeda Thomas

10am-11am Tambran House. 11 Alexandra St., St. Clair, Port-of-Spain

Keynote by Dr. Thomas DeFrantz: “Elaboration as Method: Black Dance as Quantum Portaling”

11am - 12pm - Tambran House. 11 Alexandra St., St. Clair, Port-of-Spain.

The advent of quantum computing predicts an increased understanding of particles and waves as complimentary aspects of matter. Black Dance has, in its entirety, wondered with the aspects of physicality within teeming streams of history, honoring the ancestors even while inventing new forms that signify the brash youthful reinvention of ritual. This talk explores elaboration as a method of portal, allowing Black Dance to move from the particles of individual practice through the waves of history and futurity. How does Black Dance model ways to conceive quantum computing as practices of portaling ideas from the individual to the collective; from now to then?

Thomas F. DeFrantz, Professor at Northwestern University, directs SLIPPAGE: Performance|Culture | Technology, a humanities and creative research lab. Believes in our shared capacity to do better and engage creative spirit for a collective good that is anti-racist, proto-feminist, and queer affirming. Convenes the Black Performance Theory working group and is founding director of the Collegium for African Diaspora Dance. Faculty and teaching at the University of the Arts Mobile MFA in Dance; ImPulsTanz; SNDO; Juilliard; New Waves! Institute; Bennington College; faculty at Hampshire College, Stanford, Yale, MIT, NYU, Duke, the University of Nice. DeFrantz contributed concept and a voice-over for a permanent installation on Black Social Dance that opened with the Smithsonian Museum of African American Life and Culture in 2016. slippage.org

“Contemporary Caribbean” w/Makeda Thomas

1:30pm - 3pm - UTT/APA at the National Academy for Performing Arts. 10 Keate Street

KAYAPA: dancing in the wake w/Dr. Yanique Hume + The New Orleans Original Buckshop w/Michelle Gibson

3pm - 5pm - UTT/APA at the National Academy for Performing Arts. 10 Keate Street

Building on Dr. Hume's *Kalunga Crossing: Dancing the Sacred Waters* (New Waves! BIM) and *Transcending the Spirit in Dances of the Wake* (New Waves! 2023), alongside Gibson's *The New Orleans Buckshop* (New Waves! 2023, New Waves! AYITI), this collaborative session moves through Caribbean diasporic funerary traditions as embodied archives of memory, resistance, and transcendence. Grounded in Afro-Caribbean and New Orleans cosmologies, the session is an embodied exploration of the wake—both as ritual space and as a choreographic response to loss, remembrance, and Black resilience. Participants will move between the sacred and the celebratory, tracing ancestral crossings through dance, drum, and brass.

Michelle Gibson is a choreographer, scholar, and cultural ambassador whose work centers the movement traditions of the African Diaspora. She holds a B.F.A. in Dance from Tulane University and an M.F.A. from Hollins University/ American Dance Festival at Duke. Currently Professor of Practice in Dance at Southern Methodist University, she has also taught at Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and served as resident artist at Ashé Cultural Arts Center in New Orleans. Gibson's practice includes Contemporary Afro-Modern, Afro Funk, Jazz, and her signature New Orleans Second Line Aesthetic. Through The New Orleans Original BuckShop LLC, she leads workshops that share her embodied knowledge and cultural heritage across communities. Her choreography includes *Takin' It to the Roots*, supported by the National Performance Network and presented at the Joyce Theater and Jacob's Pillow; *Displaced Yet Rebirth* (Dallas Black Dance Theatre); and *Voices of Congo Square*, honoring Black New Orleans Mardi Gras Indian traditions. She has led Second Line parades internationally, including as Grand Marshal of the Ascona Jazz Festival in Switzerland. As a scholar, Gibson has presented at IABD, Duke University, and Northwestern's "Dancing the Black Social" symposium. She also curates Culture, Brass, and Jazz in the Park, an annual community festival in Dallas. In 2025, Gibson will be a featured choreographer in the American Dance Festival's Footprints series at Duke University.

“Imagine Dat, Now Imagine Dis”. Performance by Nyugen Smith

6pm - Tambran House. 11 Alexandra St., St. Clair, Port-of-Spain

Imagine Dat, Now Imagine Dis is a live performance that channels the spirit of freedom, sovereignty, and resistance across the Caribbean region and within the hearts and minds of Caribbean people in the diaspora, in defiance of European colonial domination. Centering a flag designed by Nyugen E. Smith—*A Flag for the New Caribbean* / A

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New Flag for the Caribbean—the work draws direct inspiration from the powerful 2017 speech by Sir Hilary Beckles, Vice-Chancellor of the University of the West Indies, which calls for reparatory justice, the reclamation of Caribbean identity, and the dismantling of colonial entanglements. Through movement, ritual, and sonic interventions, the performance becomes a collective activation of this emblem—a call to reimagine Caribbean futures shaped not by imperial inheritance, but by self-determination, ancestral memory, and collective liberation.

Nyugen E. Smith is an artist primarily working in mixed media drawing, found object sculpture, and performance. He is interested in the ways ritual, memory, language, and history intersect with art-making processes that prioritizes previously used materials, the body, and play; through the lens of Blackness. Nyugen holds an MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His work has been presented at Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Museum of Latin American Art, Pérez Art Museum, Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, among others. Nyugen is the recipient of: Creative Capital Award and the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant among others.

Day 2: Thursday, 31 July 2025

“Wynter in the Caribbean” w/Makeda Thomas and Thomas DeFrantz

10:30am-12pm - Tambran House. 11 Alexandra St., St. Clair, Port-of-Spain
+Pre-screening of “Dingolay Somatics” by Adisa Stewart

“Wynter in the Caribbean: *Maskerade*” engages the performative dimensions of Sylvia Wynter’s 1973 play *Maskerade: A Jonkunnu Musical Play* to consider how *mas* operates as a spatial and embodied mode of resistance that reconfigures colonial geographies and activates Black diasporic ways of knowing. We will think about masquerade as a site of transformation, insurgent knowledge, and embodied critique that positions Blackness beyond the confines of colonial subjectivity, and of *mas* performance as not just representative but constitutive: a practice of world-making and a rehearsal for freedom.

Sylvia Wynter (b. 1928) is a Jamaican dancer, novelist, dramatist, philosopher, and critical theorist, and is Professor Emerita of Spanish and Portuguese at Stanford University. Wynter’s work traverses Black studies, literary criticism, philosophy, history, psychoanalysis, neuroscience, and the natural sciences to interrogate the epistemic foundations of Western modernity and its colonial order of knowledge. Her groundbreaking essay “*Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument*” offers a genealogy of the Western figure of “Man,” exposing its colonial underpinnings and calling for a redefinition of the human beyond liberal humanist constraints. In “*Towards the Sociogenic Principle: Fanon, Identity, the Puzzle of Conscious Experience, and What It Is Like to be ‘Black’*,” Wynter builds on Fanon’s concept of the *sociogenic principle*, contending that human identity and consciousness emerge not only from biological processes but also from the narrative and symbolic systems that structure cultural life. Wynter’s 1973 play *Maskerade: A Jonkunnu Musical Play*, staged within the Caribbean masquerade tradition, enacts a performative critique of colonial order and presents *mas* not merely as representation but as praxis that animates her broader philosophical project.

“Dingolay Somatics” Artist Statement: This video project offers a glimpse into the Dingolay Somatics experience through these guided meditations. I’ve woven together original music, spoken word, dance, applied theater, and improvisational performance, all brought to life through my cultural somatic archetypes. These archetypes are rooted in Trinidad and Tobago’s traditional *mas*, carnival, and folklore characters, embodying archetypal energies that honor African cosmologies and ancestral wisdom. Step into my vibrant world and discover the Leadership Archetypes that shape my journey, reflecting the liberatory roles I embody and the leadership I bring to my work. By engaging with these archetypes, you’ll gain a deeper understanding of the ancestral medicine, purpose, and vision that guide Dingolay Somatics Lab.

Imagine Dat, Now Imagine Dis Workshop with Nyugen Smith & Robert Young

12pm - 1:30pm - Tambran House. 11 Alexandra St., St. Clair, Port-of-Spain

“Gravity Bends Here” with Dr. Thomas Talawa Prestø

3pm - 4:30pm UTT/APA at the National Academy for Performing Art. 10 Keate Street

This class draws from the cosmology of Mawu-Lisa in Dahomey, where time, space, and matter form a unified field. That structure lives on in Caribbean movement systems like Yanvalou—through the sequencing of hips, spine, knees, and weight. Using the Talawa Technique, we engage water-balancing to train polycentric alignment, spinal organization, and proprioceptive clarity. We then move into Arriving on Action. The dancer initiates movement that generates rhythm. The drummer responds. Timing becomes shared. Rhythm is shaped in relation. Bring a cloth to wrap your hair.

Talawa Prestø is a pioneering dance artist and scholar, internationally recognized for developing the Talawa Technique, a movement methodology rooted in African, Caribbean, and Afropean dance traditions. Taught worldwide by over 40 certified instructors, this technique refines polycentric movement, drawing from the intelligence embedded in multigenerational ancestral dance practices. As the founder of Tabanka Dance Ensemble toured 44 countries, Prestø has dedicated decades to researching, embodying, and innovating within African and African Diaspora

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movement traditions. His work acknowledges the depth of ancestral knowledge in dance and performance, harnessing its principles to benefit both current and future generations of artists and audiences. Holding a Master's degree in Choreography and a Ph.D. in Artistic Research and Production, Prestø is regarded as one of the foremost technicians in polycentric movement, shaping new possibilities for diasporic dance education, research, and performance.

"Rhythms of Resistance: Kalinda Stickfighting for Dancers" with Keegan Taylor

4:30pm-6pm UTT/APA at the National Academy for Performing Arts. 10 Keate Street

This workshop explores the martial roots, rhythmic footwork, spatial awareness, and cultural expression of Kalinda, the traditional Afro-Trinidadian stickfighting art, and translates its movement vocabulary into a dance context. Dancers will engage in grounded footwork, call-and-response rhythms, and strategic use of space inspired by the gayelle (stickfighting ring), enhancing their timing, positioning, and physical storytelling skills. The program uses Kalinda's combative and ceremonial elements as tools for empowering dancers with new ways to approach choreography, improvisation, and embodiment.

Keegan Taylor is a stickfighter, martial artist, and cultural preservationist from Trinidad and Tobago, committed to reviving and sharing the powerful legacy of Kalinda—the traditional Afro-Trinidadian art of stickfighting. With over a decade of experience in combat arts and cultural education, Keegan integrates disciplined martial training with a deep understanding of Kalinda's historical, spiritual, and performative dimensions. He serves as a lead practitioner and educator with the Kalinda Kollektive, a movement devoted to reawakening Trinidad's warrior traditions through workshops, live demonstrations, digital content, and storytelling. For Keegan, Kalinda is more than a combat form; it is a living expression of rhythm, resistance, and identity. Drawing from a diverse background in capoeira, boxing, and tactical training, Keegan fuses martial precision with cultural sensitivity. His teaching style is known for breaking down complex footwork, rhythm-based movement, and strategic timing in ways that resonate with dancers, actors, athletes, and everyday learners alike. Keegan is also the founder of Ten Global Media, a platform supporting the documentation and digital storytelling of traditional arts through film and education.

"We In De Yard" with Kieron Sargeant

6:30pm - 8pm Tambran House Yard. 11 Alexandra St., St. Clair, Port-of-Spain

This class centers on the Bele Yard as a vital communal space rooted in the Bele dance traditions of Tobago and Martinique. As sites of ritual and ancestral continuity, Bele Yards bring together song, drum, and movement in both everyday and ceremonial life. Participants will experience the structure of a traditional Bele Feast, which includes libations, call-and-response songs, offerings, and signature movement vocabularies. The class features the song "Ayy Ayy Ayy La Rein Rive" ("The Queen Has Arrived"), explored through its historical and symbolic significance in this final year of New Waves. Through embodied practice, participants will engage Bele as a living form—honoring the space, the community, and the lineages that sustain it.

Kieron Dwayne Sargeant is a multifaceted artist, choreographer, performer, drummer, dance researcher, and educator hailing from Trinidad and Tobago. His extensive career is rooted in the exploration and promotion of African-Caribbean diasporic traditions. Currently, he holds the position of Assistant Professor of Dance at Skidmore College. Sargeant earned his MFA in Dance Performance and Choreography from Florida State University, an MA in Community Dance from Ohio University, and a BA in Dance Education from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine.

MAS CAMP: Emancipation Day Procession: New Waves! Institute + Nyugen Smith + Vulgar Fraction

Whole Night. Propaganda - 24 Erthig Road, Belmont

Day 3: Friday, 1 August 2025

Emancipation Day Procession: New Waves! Institute + Nyugen Smith + Vulgar Fraction

8am - 12pm - Port of Spain

1 August is Emancipation Day in Trinidad & Tobago, with dance, drumming and a street procession through downtown Port of Spain to the Emancipation Village in Queens Park Savannah. The entire New Waves! community is invited to participate in this joyous New Waves! closing tradition. This year, designer Robert Young and artist Nyugen E. Smith extend their ongoing dialogue through the integration of *Kongo Dey*, a mas by Young, and Smith's conceptual project *A Flag for the New Caribbean*. Their collaboration opens a shared diasporic imaginary that traces the persistent presence of Kongo in Trinbagonian and Caribbean cultural memory. Through the performative and material practices of mas-making, the work articulates embodied resistance and gestures toward reparatory justice.

Beach Class with Chris Walker & Sunset Ceremony

1pm - 6:30pm Las Cuevas Beach

Join us for a beloved New Waves! tradition that has been danced on beaches across the Caribbean - Maracas and Carenage in Trinidad, Ti Mouillage in Haiti, and Brown's Beach in BIM. This year's Beach Class, led by Chris Walker

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and accompanied by Master Drummers Everaldo "Redman" Watson and "Lion" Osuna, will take place at Las Cuevas Beach. Arrive at 2pm. Class begins at 3pm. Our Closing Ceremony will begin at 5:30pm until sunset at around 6:28pm. Join us. Let's Dance!