

Social DisDancing
Dance Conservatory Graduates Pivot During a Pandemic
By Gabrielle Bohrman

Submitted to the Journalism Board of Study School of Humanities
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of Bachelor of Arts

Purchase College – State University of New York
May 2021

First Reader: Professor Donna Cornachio
Second Reader: Professor Dawn Gibson-Brehon

March 20, 2020

Copenhagen, Denmark

- *The United States reports an average of 2,641 new COVID-19 cases per day and 43 deaths per day.*
- *New York City closes its public schools.*

By the spring of his senior year, Alexander Sargent is poised to enter the professional dance industry. After four years of intensive ballet training at the Boca Raton, Florida-based HARID Conservatory, performing principal roles at the iconic Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, and an impending degree from The Juilliard School, Sargent's resume is unrivaled among most 2020 dance graduates.

During his residency in Copenhagen that began a few weeks earlier, Sargent accepted an offer to join the Danish Dance Theatre, seemingly promising his lifelong goal of a professional contract with an esteemed company upon graduation. His fantasy was short lived.

On March 16, 2020 Denmark shut down all public places and schools and closed its borders to non-resident foreigners because of the impending coronavirus pandemic. By March 18, gatherings of 10 or more people were prohibited. Copenhagen's cobblestone streets, normally bustling with pedestrians and cyclists, with people flitting in and out of cafés and shops, are silent.

And yet, on this morning in late March 2020, Alexander Sargent, from Manassas, Va., stands at the barre in the Copenhagen Opera House and sinks into a *demi plié*, bending his knees in his usual warm-up exercise. It is a bizarre ritual of normalcy amid uncertainty. The massive Opera House, which sits on Holmen island in central Copenhagen since its construction in 2001,

can seat 1,703 audience members. Today, it is empty apart from Sargent, who turned 23 a few days earlier, and Lindberg.

A gray rain pelts the floor-to-ceiling window to Sargent's left, as he watches windmills turn across the Copenhagen harbor.

"I think we may be the only two dancers doing barre in a studio in the world right now," Lindberg says.

This is not far from the truth. From Russia's Bolshoi Theatre to Paris's Palais Garnier, major European dance venues cancelled all performances through April. Back in the United States, the Broadway League has shuttered all shows through April 12, and the American Ballet Theatre has cancelled its 80th anniversary season at the Metropolitan Opera House.

Sargent, who first traveled to Copenhagen to work with Lindberg for his senior Juilliard solo showcase in May 2020, decided he'd stay in Denmark to wait the virus out. Though the Danish Dance Theatre sent its company members home on March 12 to quarantine, Sargent and Lindberg continued working for a week at the Opera House, spending hours each day dancing and creating.

Even after Juilliard cancelled its in-person classes for the rest of the semester, Sargent's daily routine did not change; he took a warmup ballet class, rehearsed his solo, workshopped some choreographic motifs, and wrote scripts developing his role's character.

"It was this purgatory of pure artistic gestation, separate from any motive or product," Sargent recalls. "We knew that everything happening was clearly larger than we could comprehend, so we might as well just enjoy ourselves."

On March 19, the U.S Department of State announced a Global Level 4 Health Advisory in continental Europe, advising all U.S citizens abroad to return home. Sargent's parents, who

worked for Delta Airlines and World Bank respectively, called to warn him: “We’ve never seen anything like this. If you don’t leave Denmark now, we’re not sure you can get back.”

Before boarding a flight to his family’s farmhouse in Manassas on March 24, Sargent rides the bike the Danish Dance Theatre had lent him back to the opera house one last time to return it. John Denver’s “Take Me Home, Country Roads” blares from his headphones as he soars past a colorful row of houses, and he feels hopeful.

“In that moment I thought I’d go home for a few months, reconnect with my family, and get grounded before returning to Denmark in August,” he says.

But for Sargent and other dancers in the class of 2020, the pandemic’s long-term impact on their careers has only just begun.

In the past year, the nationwide shutdowns due to the coronavirus pandemic have upended the performing arts sector. According to a survey by Americans for the Arts on the impact of COVID-19, 99% of producing and presenting organizations have canceled events since the pandemic began in March 2020. The resulting loss has been an estimated \$16 billion. Job losses at nonprofit arts organizations, who employ most dancers in the U.S, are almost five times higher than other nonprofits, including education, civic engagement, and healthcare. Almost 50% of organizations had to lay off or furlough staff and 52% of those groups estimate

that it will take until 2022 or beyond to return to pre-pandemic employment levels. That creates a bleak picture for recent graduates hoping for a career in the arts.

After four years spent in rigorous college conservatory programs, dance majors faced the quarantine-mandated cancellation of senior concerts, choreographic showcases, and job auditions. Confronted with a world of financially strapped dance companies and limited opportunities, these recent graduates struggle to launch their careers in an industry dependent on live performance.

“It’s pretty disheartening,” says Sarah Takash, a 2020 Fordham/Ailey 2020 dance graduate. “No one is even talking about auditions or openings and I’m so scared that some companies are just going to close permanently.”

Pandemic aside, college dance graduates already pay a steep price for a competitive education. According to U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard data, the average annual cost of attending dance conservatories can range from \$18,104 at SUNY Purchase College to \$39,558 at Fordham University’s joint BFA program with Alvin Ailey Dance Company.

Most students end up carrying debt into their first jobs. Juilliard, which only accepts 24 dancers annually out of the 400 who apply, leaves grads with an average of \$26,750 in student loan debt after graduation, according to the same data. Even under normal conditions, the post-graduate market for dance majors can be grim. According to 2019 U.S. Census figures, dancers had the lowest annual earnings, worked the fewest weeks, and experienced higher unemployment rates than other professional artists.

The job prospects for dancers are even more limited during the pandemic. A National Endowment for the Arts analysis reported a 167% increase in unemployment for dancers and

choreographers between July-September of 2019 and that same three-month period in 2020. Compared to other artists including musicians, actors, and visual artists, dancers experienced the highest unemployment rate during that period in 2020, with 54% unemployed. A Dance/NYC study found that dance organizations, groups, and projects in the New York tristate area slashed their budgets by an average of 31% during the pandemic, with salaries and wages being the most critical needs.

Despite the lack of live performance opportunities, dancers cannot afford to take time off if they want to get hired post-pandemic. A senior ballet major at Indiana University dances an average of 35 hours a week in classes, rehearsals, and performances. Sarah Wroth, IU's dance program chair, says this rigorous schedule is necessary to prepare dancers for company life.

“As a ballet dancer, you are the musical instrument that you live inside,” says Wroth, who danced for the Boston Ballet before turning to teaching. “And you're about to take it on tour to play it for people who want to hire you. So, you have to train every day at the highest level, so that you can never regret a moment.”

In the spring of 2020, Wroth advised the graduating class to secure a place to dance for the following year, regardless of whether it was a full-time contract. Of the 14 students in the class, 90% accepted positions in a combination of post-graduate programs, unpaid traineeships, and apprenticeships with professional dance companies, according to Wroth.

“I told them we don't know what the industry is going to look like,” she says. “We don't even know if contracts will be offered anywhere, but you need a place to continue your work.”

What started as postponed performances quickly turned into cancelled seasons by May 2020, as presenters and directors realized there was going to be no immediate return to the theater. Even as nationwide COVID-19 cases subsided in July, a New York Times/Siena College

Research Institute poll found that most New Yorkers did not feel comfortable returning to live performances by September. The loss of summer festival programming took a financial toll on performing arts companies, which saw their July-September revenue decline 54% from an all-time high of \$1.9 billion in 2019 to \$900 million in 2020, according to an NEA analysis.

Once considered the mecca for dance opportunities pre-pandemic, New York City's strict shutdowns and high coronavirus rates halted the incoming wave of aspiring artists. A Brookings Institution report found that New York City's and Los Angeles's creative industries suffered the greatest economic impact of the pandemic, accounting for 18% of all arts jobs lost across the country.

Many 2020 dance graduates quickly pivoted from their carefully curated plans to adjust to this new performing-arts landscape. After graduating a semester early, in December 2019, with a BS in dance and arts administration from Butler University in Indianapolis, Emma Schilling moved to New York City during prime audition season in search of musical theater and Broadway jobs. A few weeks prior to the pandemic's outbreak in March, Schilling signed a contract with a summer show, which, like all other New York live shows, never opened. Now, her contract has been re-offered for summer 2021.

"The industry is gone. So now it's the choice of how you set yourself up for success financially when it returns," Schilling says.

Unable to afford rent after losing her second job at a fitness center, Schilling decided to move in with friends in St. Louis, Mo. By the fall, she hopes to find work at a smaller regional theater in St. Louis, where venues have started to open, but she still worries about the future.

"When are auditions coming back?" she wonders. "When are shows coming back? And what do you do with this weird gap year that you've been handed?"

June 10, 2020

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- *The U.S. reports an average of 21,432 new COVID-19 cases per day.*
- *Coronavirus deaths pass 100,000 in the United States on May 27, higher than any other nation globally.*
- *Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin is charged with third-degree murder and manslaughter after kneeling on George Floyd's neck for eight minutes 46 seconds on May 25.*
- *Nation-wide protests over Floyd's death and racial injustice proliferate, with major cities including New York City, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Atlanta calling for curfews or states of emergencies.*

Ashley Simpson is one to rise to a challenge. She spent the past year juggling company rehearsals with the Memphis-based Collage Dance Collective while finishing her dance degree at the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program in New York City. She had auditioned and landed a contract with the Philadelphia-based contemporary company Ballet X in February; four months later, she moved from her family's home in Florida to Philadelphia, in the middle of the pandemic.

Today, she clicks her iPhone onto a tripod in front of a bare wall in her new studio apartment. She is shooting a movement phrase as part of a new dance film, "...it's okay too. Feel," choreographed and with a voiceover by Alvin Ailey dancer Hope Boykin, which will mark Simpson's debut performance with the company.

Simpson clicks the red "Record" button and walks to the center of her "stage," a rectangular carpet wedged between her couch and bed. Boykin's voice intones over melancholic

piano notes, and Simpson begins to move and react to Boykin's words: "*You've touched me.' audiences have shared. 'Thank you for what you do,' they've also said.*"

Simpson violently wraps both arms across her torso and releases them, palms upward and head thrown back.

"But what about now? What about me?"

She dances through her own anxious feelings that have accumulated over the previous weeks. At her family's home in Florida, she felt disconnected from the new company she was joining, whose members all lived in Philadelphia. As a woman of color living on her own in a new city during mass protests following the death of George Floyd, she is scared to leave her apartment. Just last week, she and her father ran into a line of armed guards waiting outside Home Depot while trying to pick up supplies. She feels nervous when asked personal questions in company-wide meetings about diversity and inclusion, held to address racist practices in the dance industry, as spotlighted by the Black Lives Matter movement.

After jumping in a tight square, she spins up and spirals to the ground, curling into a fetal position on her carpet.

"During those intense few months of the summer, I was impassioned and filled with energy, fear, and a bit of anger," she says. "Social justice goes right alongside the arts and dance industry, because we are out there, performing for the people -- and in Ballet X's case, representing the diversity of our city, Philadelphia."

Working one-on-one with Boykin is helping Simpson acknowledge her own experience within the broader global pandemic and social justice movement. "Those rehearsals were therapeutic because I was able to get the emotions out of my body," Simpson says. "I felt so much better afterwards. That's the power of dance."

The summer of 2020 demonstrated dance's cathartic power as people across the country utilized it as a vehicle for change. In New York City, two dancers organized a Dance for George demonstration on June 7, resulting in hundreds of people, from professional dancers to dance-floor virgins performing a collective rendition of the Electric Slide in the streets of Harlem. A photo of two teenage Black ballerinas posing on pointe with fists raised in front of the Robert E. Lee statue became a viral symbol after Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam ordered the statue's removal on June 5.

Dance artists took to social media and digital platforms to address their industry's role in institutional racism, during a time when Black artists suffered disproportionate losses due to the pandemic. Compared to white artists, BIPOC artists had higher rates of unemployment and lost a larger percentage of their income, according to a 2021 American for the Arts COVID-19 impact study.

The Hudson Valley-based Kaatsbaan Cultural Park, previously a dance training center, responded to this issue by hosting its first festival in August 2020, with a portion of donations going to the NAACP. To honor Black dancers and choreographers, Kaatsbaan's leaders recruited an advisory committee of prominent Black dancers who chose artists and curated the festival's opening weekend performances.

"When developing the 2020 Summer Festival, it was important that we not only address the crisis dancers were facing, but to think more broadly about the issues with which our country was grappling," says Sonja Kostich, Kaatsbaan's chief executive and artistic officer, and Stella Abrera, its artistic director, in a joint email interview. "It is incumbent upon all of us to harness the power of the arts to generate change for the better."

The festival paves the way for a transformed dance world post-quarantine, where a new generation of dancers can take the reign in addressing issues such as more inclusive and equitable casting.

“As we look to those graduating dancers, choreographers, and administrators, we are seeing an increasing desire to tackle the flaws of our industry head on,” says Kaatsbaan’s artistic team. “We are inspired by their desire and dedication to create meaningful impact that goes far beyond the stage.”

Fresh out of college and ready to use their voices, Simpson and other 2020 dance graduates played an important role in the summer’s movement for social justice. Jakevis Thomason, who graduated from the University of Southern California with a BFA in dance, immediately choreographed a dance film to Childish Gambino’s “This is America,” in response to George Floyd’s killing.

“If you stay silent the cycle is going to continue,” says Thomason in an interview with USC’s student newspaper. “It’s going to be me or someone else next if you don’t stand up for it.”

Within three days of its release on social media channels on June 1, the video was viewed by over 40,000 people. Though his choreography is upbeat and energetic, Thomason interprets the harsh reality of being Black in America, ending in stark images of dancers lying dead on the ground.

“I think as an artist I wanted you to have that tug-of-war of not really being able to be so happy about the video,” he says in the same USC interview.

As the newest Ballet X company member, Simpson was surprised at the encouragement she received to speak about the bias and stereotypes she’s experienced in her ballet career. She

recalls a meeting where Ballet X's director broke down telling her company that she realized she had been unintentionally prioritizing white voices in choreography and programming choices.

“If the Black Lives Matter movement hadn't gained as much traction, I'm not sure I would have had that opportunity,” Simpson says. “People were really listening to what I had to say, and it made me feel that maybe, in the future, casting and auditioning will be less traumatic for the next generations of dancers of color.”

With a typical professional career lasting around 15 years, the loss of a year of training and performing to quarantine can be disastrous for a dancer. A 2004 study by Columbia University's Research Center for Arts and Culture found that while most retired dancers expected to continue performing into their 40s, they stopped dancing professionally in their early 30s. While one's talent deepens with age in some performing arts, such as opera or theater, a ballerina might hit the peak of her career at age 25. On average, dancers begin their professional careers around age 19, sometimes foregoing college.

“There's this pressure that the sooner you get out and audition, the better,” says 22-year-old Emma Schilling, a Butler University graduate. “Your body has an expiration date.”

For dancers who graduate around the age of 21 or 22, losing a season or taking time off is even more hazardous. Jennifer Milner, a certified Pilates trainer from Dallas, Texas who

specializes in training dancers recovering from injuries, says that the pandemic may create a hiring backlog and result in college graduate-aged dancers losing their place in line.

“Every year there's a new group of 16-, 17-, and 18-year olds who are moving up into trainee and apprentice positions,” says Milner, who previously danced with Boston Ballet and in Broadway productions. “They’re really interested in working and are willing to work for a lot cheaper than older dancers.” As in competitive sports, youth provides an edge in the dance world, creating a ticking clock for training and performing.

“A really great level of accomplishment for an 18-year-old is not going to be as impressive for a 21-year-old, so you very rapidly lose time,” Milner says.

Without intensive training, rehearsal, and performance schedules, dancers struggle to maintain their peak ability level. Dancers in Jacob’s Pillow’s six-week summer program take seven hours of rehearsals, classes, and workshops a day, culminating in several final performances. Though some companies offered scaled-back virtual summer programs with extra classes and conditioning, they could not replicate the studio’s intense environment.

“We need space, and we need to move,” says Sarah Wroth, who brought her Indiana University ballet students back to the studio for the fall 2020 semester. “We can fix as many things as possible over Zoom, but not being able to see dancers from all angles or walk around their frame is difficult.”

Milner found that while the dancers she coached during the pandemic continued taking daily classes from home, many developed bad technical habits from practicing alone. By September, when some studios started opening for private lessons, she noticed that some dancers had trouble balancing and performing a pirouette, a difficult but fundamental turn performed on one foot.

“They were losing their proprioception, which is your body’s awareness of where you are in space,” Milner says. “And they didn’t have the big dance mirrors to be able to see where they were in relationship to everything else.”

Many dancers created their own home-studios, installing portable barres and strips of Marley, a slip-resistant flooring used for studios and stages. Still, it is impossible to recreate a dance studio’s sprung floor, a below-the surface system designed to absorb shock and reduce impact on dancers’ joints. Many of Milner’s students developed shin splints and lower leg stress fractures after attempting to jump on concrete or wooden floors at home.

As COVID-19 infection rates subsided by the early fall, many dance companies opened their studios for the first time in six months. A quick return to the studio and competitive company life can be a dangerous combination for athletes who overestimate their fitness, endurance and strength. Milner has seen overuse and repetitive-motion injuries from students trying to make the most of the little studio time they get.

“We’re going to try and come back and do too much too fast because that’s kind of just who we are,” Milner says. “There’s no slow simmer for dancers.”

Though some dancers face burnout and loss of motivation, Dr. Linda Hamilton, a performance psychologist in New York, has mostly seen the opposite. The proliferation of free online classes led some of her clients to take up to seven classes a day from home.

“The ones who call me are the ones who are anxious about getting out of shape,” Hamilton says. “They do the same things they do in a regular class. They compare themselves to the people they see on Zoom and they’re self-conscious that everyone has been dancing more than them.”

Hamilton consults for the New York City Ballet and The Ailey School, in addition to working with private dance clients. The profession of dance invites perfectionism, she says, a trait needed to spend hours refining and perfecting a single step. Her four-month research study for New York City Ballet's wellness program found a relationship between injury and anxiety, heightened by the pandemic's isolation.

"Perfectionism is an inborn personality trait associated with anxiety," Hamilton says. "Dancers like structure, routine, and control. They sometimes have a hard time accepting change whether it's making a mistake or having a bad class."

Given the professional uncertainty caused by the pandemic, this "all-or-nothing" mentality can lend itself to destructive coping mechanisms such as substance abuse and eating disorders. Hamilton noticed that some dancers in her practice have developed eating disorders for the first time, noting that they may have been vulnerable to begin with.

For other dancers, the pandemic has offered an opportunity to end the toxic habits normally reinforced by a nonstop competitive industry. Though recent Ailey/Fordham graduate Sarah Takash felt a sharp pain in her knee in February 2020, she ignored it and continued auditioning for post-graduation jobs. But then an X-ray found a torn meniscus that resulted in surgery in May.

"As I know myself to always push through injuries, I am really fortunate because I never would have taken the time to heal and do psychological therapy properly, if it weren't for the pandemic," she says.

For the finale of her senior thesis, a photography series spotlighting both the maintenance and physical abuse dancers endure daily, Takash added post-operative photos of her own scarred

knee. Titled “The Body Never Lies,” the series examines a culture that rewards one’s commitment to the art at the sacrifice of self-care.

“As a dancer, you might hear the adage: ‘If you miss one day of class, you’ll notice; if you miss two days of classes, your teacher will notice; and if you miss three days of classes, the audience will notice,’” says Takash.

Though the pandemic is likely the longest break many dancers have ever taken from daily classes and rehearsals, Takash has found that taking time off does not necessarily impact a dancer’s ability.

“I am hoping that this time will usher in a new age of dancers pacing themselves and training hard when it’s performance time,” she says, “but being mindful that the body should not be going 100% all 365 days a year.”

September 1, 2020

Brooklyn, New York

- *After the U.S. set several single-day records for new cases in July, fueled by a wave of new infections in the South and West, COVID-19 cases fall nationwide by early September.*
- *New York’s new COVID-19 cases decline by 93% from an April high to an average of 670 new cases a day since early June.*

- *Senator Kamala Harris becomes the first Black woman and the first person of Indian descent to be nominated for national office by a major party after the Democrats choose her as the 2020 vice presidential ticket.*

After years of intense training and sacrifices, Kate Reyes' first day of dancing with a professional company finds her alone and perched over a computer screen.

With her legs stretched out in a middle split, Reyes sits in an empty studio in Brooklyn's Gravesend neighborhood. Giving her ankles a few rolls, she swings her legs together, adjusts her AirPods one more time and clicks Zoom's "Join Meeting" button. Reyes, a 2020 graduate of Marymount Manhattan with a BFA in modern dance in May 2020, landed a highly coveted contract for the 2020-21 season with the pre-professional modern dance company, Graham 2.

In a normal time, this 10-member group of dancers, handpicked from rigorous auditions at dance programs around the world, would take class and perform group roles with their parent company, the Martha Graham Dance Company. Seventy percent of the current company began as Graham 2 members.

But these are anything but normal times.

While Reyes was ecstatic to find any dance position following graduation, her contract is far from perfect. She scrambled to put together a GoFundMe campaign after the company informed her that they lacked funds typically used to cover Graham 2 members' tuitions. Due to significant losses in touring revenue, Martha Graham Dance Company saw its annual budget shrink from about \$6 million in 2020 to about \$3.5 million in 2021. During September and October, Reyes took classes on her own in her Brooklyn apartment or negotiated studio time with a community-based ballet academy.

“Graham is one of the only places I know of right now that’s active in the dance world,” she says in a Zoom interview. “It’s a step towards getting into a company, so I have to figure out a way to make it work.”

Since March 2020, concert dance companies across the country have been forced to curtail their 2020-21 live performance season, a key source of revenue for nonprofit performing organizations. Almost 90% of the top 50-grossing U.S dance companies cancelled their fall 2020 performance season. Companies that are proceeding with virtual performance programming are presenting abridged productions and utilizing fewer dancers. Many companies rehearse dancers in small pods to minimize infection, and newer, less-experienced company members are often left out.

Some directors even disbanded their junior companies, which normally supplement the main company with ensemble dancers. Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater placed their second company, Ailey II, which often employs recent graduates of dance programs, on hiatus until July 2021. Eduardo Vilaro, artistic director and CEO of Ballet Hispanico, says he must balance opportunities for his junior company, Ballet Hispanico Dos, with preserving resources for his main company.

“Mid-sized organizations don’t have the large endowments to fall back on like large organizations, and can’t be as nimble as small organizations, so every decision has to be looked at through a microscope,” Vilaro says. “When we get back into the studios, we probably won’t start up Ballet Hispanico Dos initially, to make sure our professional company has the support for what it needs.”

Ballet Hispanico Dos’s six-member troupe, half of whom are 2020 college graduates, stopped rehearsing in May 2020. Still, Vilaro has allowed troupe members to continue taking

daily virtual classes with the company for free, offering financial relief for young dancers who would otherwise have to pay \$15 an hour for virtual classes at studios like Steps on Broadway.

“I want to continue to create access to young artists, but I have to be careful,” Vilaro says, referring to his tight budget.

While far from ideal, Reyes is grateful for any opportunity to continue her professional training.

“This program put me back on track and gave me a purpose again,” says Reyes, who trained six hours a day while a student at Marymount Manhattan. “If not, I’d just be taking free classes on Instagram in my house or something.”

Reyes and the 10 Graham 2 members were allowed back into the company’s Manhattan studios in mid-October 2020 after quarantining for two weeks. It was her first time being in the same room as other dancers since before the pandemic began in March. The troupe is split into two pods, which alternate between taking classes virtually and in-person each week.

Two weeks from Reye’s first day on her own in Brooklyn, she is joined by five other dancers in their daily technique class. Each dancer is confined to their own six-foot perimeter marked off by gray cloth tape on the Marley slip-resistant dance floor. In addition to her usual attire of black tights and black leotard with red calf socks, Reyes wears a face mask. So do the other dancers, musicians, and Graham 2’s director Virginie Mécène.

Light spills in from the cathedral-shaped windows. They offer a glimpse of the Manhattan skyline and illuminate the bodies scattered on the floor taped off in squares, like a chess board. Sitting on their knees holding their ankles from behind, the dancers hinge backwards and arch forwards creating U-shapes with their torsos in time to the accompanying live drumbeat. Though not allowed to physically correct the dancers as she normally would,

Mécène leads the class through the “sitting fall” combination, an advanced exercise that requires a strong core and years of Graham technical training.

Since cancelling their live performance season, the main company has stopped meeting regularly, forcing Graham 2 dancers to take classes with the academy. This is a step backwards for Reyes, who would be interacting with the professional dancers and artistic leaders under normal circumstances.

“I was looking forward to dancing with the company, where you strive to be that principal dancer in front of you,” she says. “This still feels like college.”

Still, Reyes is grateful that, in December 2020, Graham 2 members will get to work with the company’s co-director Denise Vale on “Lamentations.” This iconic dance choreographed by Martha Graham is known for the soloist’s struggle within a purple jersey tube. The company will rehearse and film the piece for its page on Patreon, a fundraising platform that allows creators to earn revenue on virtual programming. Part of the proceeds will help to sponsor Reyes and other Graham 2 member’s scholarships for the spring 2021 season. Without it, Reyes says it is unlikely she will be able to continue the program.

“I’m kind of mentally preparing myself for that unknown,” says Reyes, who has calculated every career move since attending a performing arts middle school. To her, the idea of taking any sort of break is terrifying in an industry where her body has an expiration date.

“That uncertainty in a dance career was one of my biggest fears before COVID,” she says. “I didn’t even realize it at the time. But now just knowing what I’m doing until January is good enough.”

December 18, 2020

Orlando, Florida

- *After a grueling election that saw a record-breaking number of voters, the Electoral College confirms Joe Biden as the nation's next president.*
- *The FDA approves the use of Pfizer and Moderna's vaccines in the United States. The nationwide vaccine rollout begins Dec. 14, starting with front-line healthcare workers.*
- *The U.S. death toll surpassed 300,000 by Dec. 14 as the country sees a third wave of cases fueled by holiday travel.*
- *In Florida, cases are averaging 9,800 a day, a 293% increase from three months prior.*

If Francis Mihm closes his eyes, December 2020 doesn't sound all that different from previous years: the jittery pre-show buzz among other dancers, the audience's thunderous applause, all punctuated by Tchaikovsky's familiar "Nutcracker" score playing on loop. But this year, when he opens his eyes, he sees a masked face staring back at him in the dressing room mirror. It's a stark reminder that this year's "Nutcracker" season is anything but normal.

After performing lead roles and graduating from Butler University's dance program in May, Mihm auditioned and secured a company artist contract with California Ballet Company, starting in September 2020. A day before Mihm signed an apartment lease in San Diego, the company rescinded their offer and cancelled their 2020-21 performance season due to coronavirus restrictions. Turning to plan B, Mihm reached out to Orlando Ballet, for whom he had auditioned pre-pandemic in February. He accepted a spot in the top level of their academy program, with the promise of opportunities to perform with the main company.

“There was a lot of doubt for me because, I had had this idea in my mind that I was going to be a company dancer and, here I am, a trainee at 22 years old,” Mihm says. “But it was definitely a humbling experience and it reminded me that can’t let yourself get too comfortable with your dancing.”

Fortunately for him, Mihm ended up dancing with one of the only American companies to have a live performance season in 2020. It’s been no easy task; company members, second-company members, trainees, and faculty must coronavirus-test weekly, wear masks in all classes and rehearsals (which can be unbearable in Orlando’s humid 90-degree weather), social distance while dancing, and adhere to strict contact-tracing.

After a successful four-day performance test run of “Sleeping Beauty” in October, the company decided to move forward with a three-week season of “The Nutcracker.” Orlando Ballet was one of just four American ballet companies to stage a traditional “Nutcracker” performance for live audiences in an indoor venue in 2020, according to Dance Data Project.

“I’ve talked to my colleagues throughout the country who are directing other companies, and nobody is doing this,” said Robert Hill, artistic director for the Orlando Ballet in a television interview on Dec. 2.

Hill re-choreographed his “Nutcracker” to a pared-down 90-minute one-act performance. One notable change: he moved the famous “Waltz of the Snowflakes” scene from its usual end of Act I to the final dance of the performance, so that stagehands could clean the “snowflakes” off the stage after the show. Unlike companies such as New York City Ballet, whose annual “Nutcracker” performance includes over 275 dancers, musicians, and students, Orlando Ballet’s performance allowed for a scaled-down and spaced-out cast of 75 dancers and students, with

recorded accompaniment. Large ensemble scenes, such as the “Waltz of the Flowers” were cut and partnering was limited to the Sugar Plum pas de deux.

The final oboe notes and tambourine rattles fade into silence on the PA speaker in Mihm’s dressing room, signaling the end of the “Arabian” solo. He straightens his *ushanka*, a Russian black fur cap, and quickly heads to the stage. Because of capacity restrictions, dancers are only allowed backstage during the dance before their own role and are not allowed to watch their friends from the wings as they normally would.

He pushes open the heavy stage door and steps into the darkness that engulfs the wings. The floodlights across the stage crossfade from the “Arabian” hazy blue to a bright glow for the “Chinese Divertissement.” Two male dancers, dressed in porcelain-blue embroidered suits, sprint to center stage, alternating between split leaps and nimble spring jumps, to the light pizzicato plucks and flute theme of Tchaikovsky’s “Tea from China.” Behind them, Clara and her Nutcracker prince, the ballet’s two central characters, sit on their thrones, masked and spaced six feet away from each other. The audience, though restricted to a much smaller capacity than usual, is particularly spirited and cheers during and after each of the dances.

“I think for both dancers and Orlando audiences, the ‘Nutcracker’ tradition feels like a bit of normalcy and a break from the everyday reminder that we’re in a global pandemic,” says Mihm, who has performed various roles in the “Nutcracker” for the past eight years. “And just having a year where we’ve been able to dance and grow almost gives us a competitive edge compared to most companies, since we’ve already figured out how to do things safely.”

Performing in a live “Nutcracker” gives these dancers a leg up financially as well, since most ballet companies rely on this cash cow to fund more adventurous programming. A Dance/USA survey found that “Nutcracker” performances represented 48 percent

of surveyed companies' 2017-2018 season revenues. While Orlando Ballet had no problem selling out its house for “The Nutcracker,” it only was able to sell 35% of the theater’s 2,700 seats, so five extra performances were added to make up the difference.

Stacked performances and small casts can bring opportunities for entry-level dancers like Mihm. After several male company dancers suffered fatigue-related injuries, artistic director Hill asked Mihm to step in as one of the four male dancers in the “Russian Divertissement,” an advanced role rarely given to trainees. Now in the second week of performances, he is excited to not only perform a new part, but to show his face to the audience. It is his first opportunity during the season to dance onstage mask-free in this socially distanced choreography.

“I love performing, it's why I do ballet,” says Mihm, who grew up in Iowa and performed in plays in addition to dancing. “Having that mask on really restricts your ability to emote and connect with the audience.”

As the Chinese music speeds up to its finish, Mihm steps behind the leg, a vertical drape that blocks the audience from seeing backstage. He tightens the knot in the black sash tied across his red tunic, then tosses his surgical mask into the trash. Once the Russian dance is over, he'll immediately sanitize his hands and grab a new mask from the little wooden station in the wings. But for now, he's ready to smile.

The pandemic's devastating impact on the arts in general, and the performing arts in particular, has highlighted new ways state and federal agencies can step in to bolster the cultural sector. For the first time in history, self-employed and gig economy workers received unemployment benefits under the \$2.2 trillion Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Securities (CARES) Act. Beginning in March 2020, even those who did not file W-2s could apply for relief through the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program. This included legions of actors, dancers, artists, and musicians who lost potential contracted performance opportunities but may have not been on a payroll prior to the pandemic.

According to a NEA Statistical Portrait, artists such as Juilliard graduate Alexander Sargent are almost four times as likely as other workers to be self-employed. For Sargent, the assistance provided a financial lifeline, allowing him to continue his training. Prior to the pandemic, Sargent earned up to \$1,600 a month as a freelance photographer taking photos and videos of dancers at Juilliard. After several failed attempts applying for Virginia's unemployment insurance, he applied for New York State's PUA program in September 2020. One day he woke up to an additional \$14,000 in his bank account, including retroactive payments since March.

"I reinvested every single dollar of that into camera equipment, my rent, my savings, editing software, and just what I felt that I needed to survive," he says. "It's a testament to the fact that government aid works. If you give people the resources they need, they can build up their network and get back on their feet again."

The \$900 billion coronavirus relief package passed by Congress in December 2020 extended these benefits through mid-March 2021. But it will still be months before dancers and other artists expect to be able to work full-time again. As much as \$15 million of the package

will go directly to independent arts venues, including the dance companies and theaters who were forced to shut down because of the pandemic. The Save Our Stages Act, endorsed and lobbied by the National Independent Venue Association, is the first federal action passed during the pandemic that directly supports the culture sector. The package also revived the Paycheck Protection Program, which allowed nonprofits like Ballet Hispanico to receive another round of federal loans towards payroll, utilities, and healthcare benefits for their dancers.

“This has been life-saving for us and has absolutely enabled me to start planning for the future,” says Ballet Hispanico’s Vilaro. Even so, Vilaro had to apply seven times before getting accepted. “It’s complicated working with the government because there’s always something they don’t fully understand with nonprofits. Sometimes their line items and jargon don’t match up correctly.”

Though a learning process on both ends, the pandemic may strengthen a traditionally tenuous relationship between the United States government and the arts sector. A 2016 Dance/NYC report found government funding accounted for only 3.9% of New York City-based dance company’s total revenue, a drop of 25% from 2004 to 2014. Most nonprofit dance organizations, such as the Manhattan-based New York Live Arts, typically rely on individual donations and foundations, many of which have shifted their giving priorities during the pandemic.

“With all the issues happening right now from racial justice, climate justice, and gender equity, foundations are having to make some really difficult choices on who they fund,” says Kim Cullen, New York Live Arts’ executive director. “This kind of support from the government is a really good deal.”

In an oversaturated industry where only 33% of dance college alumni surveyed by Strategic National Arts Alumni Project in 2020 found work in their field, increased federal support would improve the employment outlook for graduates. Organizations like New York Live Arts, who commission emerging choreographers, could use this support to cultivate more artistic voices.

“This government funding that we've just received through the COVID pandemic relief is one way we can move forward with many of the initiatives young dancers are focusing on right now like diversity, equity, and inclusion,” Cullen says. “If we were able to expand that funding, I think the field would look quite different.”

March 28, 2021

New York, New York

- *On March 3 Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo announces that arts, entertainment, and events venues can reopen April 2 at 33 percent capacity for the first time since the pandemic began, with a limit of 100 people indoors or 200 people outdoors, and a requirement that all attendees wear masks and be socially distanced.*
- *On March 8, the CDC releases guidelines announcing that fully vaccinated individuals can gather in small groups without masks or social distancing.*
- *American vaccine providers are administering an average of 2.7 million doses per day.*

- *The nation is averaging 61,401 COVID-19 cases per day, down 75% from January when cases hit their all-time high since the pandemic began.*

Nearly a year after the coronavirus pandemic ravaged New York, claiming 23,616 lives in its first two months, Manhattan's arts and cultural ecosystem remains dormant. Once the epicenter of bohemia, the East Village's streets are empty on weekends aside from the occasional cluster of 20-somethings. One girl slips her mask down to take a drag from a cigarette. A graffiti'd building at a corner proclaims, "RIP ST MARKS," a dire reflection on the row of pubs and restaurants that have either closed or moved their business to the sidewalks, where customers dine encased in plastic tents. Down Astor Place, a one-block neighborhood known as Art Street in the 1800s, the iconic Astor Place and Public Theatres are in intermission, their lights dimmed indefinitely. But inside Arts on Site, a small studio sandwiched between a boarded-up karaoke bar and a head shop, past a temperature checkpoint and up three flights of narrow wooden stairs, something magical is happening.

For Pocket Fuel Groovers, a New York City-based contemporary and hip-hop dance company launched during the pandemic, this is the first time ever performing together as a company.

For many of the 16 audience members, masked and seated in chairs, it is also their first time watching a live performance since the pandemic began.

For Solange Rodrigues, a 2020 Purchase College dance graduate and a guest artist with the company, it is the first time performing and showcasing her choreography live since she left campus in March 2020.

Five minutes before showtime, Rodrigues sinks into a runner's lunge in the corner of the wide studio, offering a rare view of a dancer's pre-performance stretch. Unlike most New York theaters, which remained closed due to COVID-19 restrictions, Arts on Site seats its socially distanced audience directly on the wooden dance floor. Without a curtain, backstage, or orchestra pit, the performance feels more intimate than a show at Purchase College's 552-seat Recital Hall.

Following a short introduction by Solange's brother and Pocket Fuel Groover's artistic director Nick Rodrigues, the lights dim and Rodrigues walks centerstage, an exposed brick wall behind her. Clothed in a gray knit dress, gray socks, and black face mask, Rodrigues begins her first solo, peeling her arm across her chest while extending her leg behind her in an arabesque. Her dancing captures the changing dynamics of the acoustic Spanish guitar recording: from sharp arm movements to a sailing back-attitude turn, her leg bent and wrapped behind her. As she catches air, the audience lets out a collective gasp.

"I was not nervous about how the steps were going to go," says Rodrigues, recalling how she felt in that moment. "Just the fact that I was even doing this, the fact that people were here and watching--that's all that mattered."

In her second piece, Rodrigues and her partner Raechelle Mae perform a synchronized salsa to the downbeat of a steel guitar instrumental. At one point Mae, also a Purchase 2020 dance alumna, swings Rodrigues in a circle around her. The two abruptly break their hand-clasp; it is a jolting moment of brief touch during an era of isolation.

Other than two Manhattan in-person rehearsals, one in January and one the day before the March performance, Rodrigues choreographed and practiced the duet entirely over Zoom from her home in Rochester, New York. The process wasn't as inhibiting as she'd expected.

“Instead of thinking of being trapped in my house as a restriction, I used it to foster a new way of creating,” she says. “I’ve realized that you can get inspiration from anywhere.”

After a program of duets and solos, the evening concludes with a group piece featuring the six main company members. Grooving to the up-tempo techno beat, the dancers bounce on the dance floor, alternating between solos and partnered dancing. The intimate audience is right in the middle of the action, close enough to feel the vibrations on the floor from a jump and to hear the excited breaths from under a dancer’s mask.

Though the shared experience of performance is tentatively returning to New York City, it may be a while before audiences can pack Lincoln Center’s rows of red velvet seats. For many theatres that present dance, a 33% indoor occupancy is not financially feasible. Most Broadway producers say that plays and musicals will likely not open till after Labor Day, with the hopes that the state increases occupancy by that time. Virus aside, the logistics needed to put a season in place, such as booking artists and venues, may delay re-openings further.

Smaller grassroots companies, such as Pocket Fuel Groovers, often driven by a younger generation of artists connected by social media, are nimble enough to create their own performance opportunities. With a small responsive troupe and a roster of previously choreographed works to choose from, Nick Rodrigues was able to book several shows for his dancers since starting the company in June 2020. Pocket Fuel Groovers will perform at the Warmer Days Ahead Festival in early April, in a backyard show he found in Bushwick after messaging its organizer on Instagram.

“I think the fact that people are putting on these small shows now and creating opportunities for themselves is helping us realize that those options were always there,” says Nick Rodrigues, a 2015 graduate of University of North Carolina School of the Arts. “My

generation felt like there was only one way to do it, or that you had to go through certain people to make things happen.”

Rodrigues advises his sister Solange and Pocket Fuel Groover’s other 2020 Purchase graduate, Maddy Elliott, about the experiences he had after graduation, such as taking dance jobs without pay, or paying for six months of class with a choreographer to get hired. In a year when the industry finally slowed down, many of these practices were exposed, alongside calls for change.

“I think the way things are changing benefits people who are graduating now, if they're really paying attention,” Nick Rodrigues says. “There is a better way and a healthier way to pursue a career in the arts.”

May 23, 2020

Purchase, NY

From where I sit at a metal table in the courtyard, Purchase College appears empty, abandoned by its musicians who usually jam near the Great Lawn or its dancers who bask in the spring sunlight between rehearsals. But upon closer examination, there's evidence of the campus's creative student ecosystem at work: a distant tuba scale coming from the music building, "mask up" graphic-art installations plastered on academic building windows.

A few dancers filter out of the conservatory building, walk past the coronavirus testing site-turned Performing Arts Center -turned-coronavirus-testing-site, and towards the main plaza. Even masked, the dancers are easily identifiable: upright posture, hair pulled back into a bun, a min-van-sized bag swung over the shoulder, and metal water bottle in hand. I recognize two as members of the class of '21, a group with whom I audited ballet classes before the pandemic hit in March 2020.

Tonight is the seventh evening of senior project dance presentations: a series of performances featuring the students' original solo and group choreography. Though SUNY health protocols still prohibit outside audience members, the class of '21 is performing fully produced and livestreamed shows in the Dance Theatre Lab for their classmates and professors. Compared to the class of 2020, some of whom abandoned campus before their senior projects were even scheduled, the situation is an improvement.

As someone who danced professionally prior to attending college, I can attest to my colleagues' perseverance and commitment to their art form. Still, a year into a global pandemic

that shuttered the performing arts for the first time in history, I am in awe of the arts' innate ability to endure, adapt, and reflect the times. Catching up with many of 2020 graduates who were my subjects, one-year post-grad, was a hopeful reminder that, though things look different, the industry is recovering and growing.

After Juilliard graduate Alexander Sargent received news that he could not rejoin the Danish Dance Theatre as he had hoped last summer, he expanded his freelance dance photography and filmmaking work, a sought-after business during a time without live performances. In April 2021, he was selected for the project-based contemporary ballet company Chamber Dance Project and plans to move to Washington, D.C. this summer.

Fordham/Ailey graduate Ashley Simpson will perform a pop-up show at Fringe Arts in Philadelphia with Ballet X in May, her first live performance since the pandemic began. This summer she'll tour with the company to Colorado and perform in the acclaimed Vail Dance Festival, her first festival as a professional dancer.

Marymount Manhattan graduate Kate Reyes, who joined Graham 2 in the fall of 2020, raised enough funds to continue dancing with the company this past spring. For the first time, the full Graham 2 troupe are rehearsing in person and performing lecture demonstrations for New York City public schools over Zoom.

Shortly after Butler graduate Francis Mihm stepped in for an injured company member in Orlando Ballet's "The Nutcracker," he performed a pas de deux with the company's principal female dancer Kate-Lynn Robichaux in a March performance. He recently accepted a contract for the 2021-22 season as a full-time Orlando Ballet second company member.

As a fellow '21 graduate seeking a management career in the performing-arts sector, I've scanned Indeed and LinkedIn almost every day checking for job openings and season announcements, signs of my industry's future vitality in a world where the COVID-19 virus still exists. I asked Ballet Hispanico's Vilaro if the class of '21 could expect more company auditions and jobs in the upcoming year and he answered with a 'Yes, but': "They should be auditioning now! Don't just sit and wait for auditions, send your resume and your interest immediately."

Vilaro went on to tell me about a college graduate who sent him an unsolicited audition video, seeking a position with Ballet Hispanico this past year. Impressed by her technique, resume, and proactive approach, Vilaro hired her on a six-month contract without ever seeing her dance in person, a rarity in the dance world.

His words made me realize that there won't be a switch when things turn "normal" again, and I think that is for the better. The graduates of 2020 and the upcoming post-COVID-19 generations, though faced with an unknown, have an opportunity to create their own path, their own art, their own opportunities, devoid of the industry's inherent restrictions.

"Post-grad life is definitely not what I thought it would be, but it's challenged me in lots of ways," says Purchase alumna Maddy Elliott. "I've had a lot of 'fuck it' moments where I don't know what to do with my time, so I'm just going to make something happen."

Some of these moments led to the creation of Headlights Theater LLC, a pop-up performance company that Elliott created to serve audiences in her hometown of Sioux Falls, S.D. last summer. In a few months, she'll return and expand the programming with workshops and new artists from across the country.

“Honestly this time has made me more confident, because if you want something you have to build it yourself now,” she says. “If you want to dance, you got to find it and go for it.”

Bibliography

- “2020-2021 Season Status Updates.” *Www.dancedataproject.com/*, Dance Data Project, 21 Dec. 2n.d., www.dancedataproject.com/resources/2020-2021-season-updates/#top-50-ballet-company-seasons.
- Burke, Siobhan. “Dancing Bodies That Proclaim: Black Lives Matter.” *New York Times*, 9 June 2020, www.nytimes.com/2020/06/09/arts/dance/dancing-protests-george-floyd.html.
- Cohen, Randy. Americans for the Arts, 2021, *COVID-19’s Pandemic’s Impact on The Arts: Research Update March 8, 2021*, www.americansforthearts.org/node/103614.
- Cochrane, Emily. “Congress Passes Huge Coronavirus Relief Bill.” *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 22 Dec. 2020, www.nytimes.com/2020/12/21/us/politics/coronavirus-stimulus-deal.html.
- Crosson, Nicholas, et al. Dance/NYC, *State of NYC Dance & Workforce Demographics*, www.dance.nyc/uploads/State%20of%20NYC%20Dance%20and%20Workforce%20Demographics%20Online%20Version.pdf.
- Curran, Colleen. “How a Photo of Young Ballerinas at the Lee Statue Became an Iconic Image of Black Lives Matter.” *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, 19 June 2020, richmond.com/entertainment/how-a-photo-of-young-ballerinas-at-the-lee-statue-became-an-iconic-image-of/article_69ab8776-bae6-511f-b5e3-e57ac1bc1b8a.html.
- Durkee, Alison. “NYC May Be Reopening In May - But Broadway Shows Won't Be Back Until September.” *Forbes*, Forbes Magazine, 3 May 2021, www.forbes.com/sites/alisondurkee/2021/05/03/nyc-may-be-reopening-in-may-but-broadway-shows-wont-be-back-until-september/?sh=643b4b234c89.
- “The Economic Impact of Coronavirus on the Arts and Culture Sector.” *Americansforthearts.org*, Americans for the Arts, 23 Feb. 2021, www.americansforthearts.org/by-topic/disaster-preparedness/the-economic-impact-of-coronavirus-on-the-arts-and-culture-sector.
- Florida, Richard, and Michael Semen. 2020, *Lost Art: Measuring COVID-19’s Devastating Impact on America’s Creative Economy*, www.brookings.edu/research/lost-art-measuring-covid-19s-devastating-impact-on-americas-creative-economy/.
- Frenette, Alexandre and Timothy J. Dowd with Rachel Skaggs and Trent Ryan. 2020. *Careers in the Arts: Who Stays and Who Leaves? Strategic National Arts Alumni Project Special Report*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, Strategic National Arts Alumni Project.
- Guibert, Greg, and Iaian Hyde. “ANALYSIS: COVID-19’s Impacts on Arts and Culture.” *Arts.gov*, National Endowment for the Arts, Federal Emergency Management Agency

- (FEMA), and Argonne National Laboratory, Jan. 2021, www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/COVID-Outlook-Week-of-1.4.2021-revised.pdf.
- Harss, Marina. "In the Hudson Valley: Live Dancers, Real Sweat, Natural Beauty." *New York Times*, 29 July 2020, www.nytimes.com/2020/07/29/arts/dance/kaatsbaan-dance-festival-stella-abrera.html.
- Hill, Robert, and Nadeen Yanes. *WKMG News 6*, www.clickorlando.com/news/local/2020/12/03/after-trial-run-with-sleeping-beauty-orlando-ballet-sets-stage-for-the-nutcracker/. Accessed 2 Dec. 2020.
- Jacobs, Julia. "No 'Nutcracker' This Year, New York City Ballet Says." *New York Times*, 18 June 2020, www.nytimes.com/2020/06/18/arts/dance/nutcracker-canceled-new-york-city-ballet-virus.html?searchResultPosition=18.
- Jacobs, Julia. "Poll Shows One Hurdle to Reopening Broadway: Fear of Jerks." *New York Times*, 26 May 2020, www.nytimes.com/2020/05/26/theater/broadway-coronavirus-poll.html.
- Jahoda, Susan, et al. "Careers in the Arts: Who Stays and Who Leaves? Strategic National Arts Alumni Project Special Report. ." [Http://Bfamfaphd.com/](http://Bfamfaphd.com/), BFAMFAPhD, 2014, bfamfaphd.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/BFAMFAPhD_ArtistsReportBack2014-10.pdf.
- Kantis, Caroline, et al. "Timeline of the Coronavirus: Think Global Health." Thinkglobalhealth.org/, Council on Foreign Relations, 15 Jan. 2021, www.thinkglobalhealth.org/article/updated-timeline-coronavirus.
- Libbey, Peter. "American Ballet Theater Cancels Spring Season at Met Opera House." *Nytimes.com*, The New York Times, 8 Apr. 2020, www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/arts/dance/american-ballet-theater-coronavirus.html.
- Marin, Cécile. "Europe Versus Coronavirus - Putting the Danish Model to the Test." [Https://Www.institutmontaigne.org/](https://Www.institutmontaigne.org/), Institut Montaigne, 12 May 2020, www.institutmontaigne.org/en/blog/europe-versus-coronavirus-putting-danish-model-test.
- Marrone, James V., et al. "The Pandemic Is a Disaster for Artists." *Www.rand.org*, RAND Corporation, 4 Aug. 2020, www.rand.org/blog/2020/07/the-pandemic-is-a-disaster-for-artists.html.
- Nichols, Bonnie, et al. National Endowment for the Arts, 2019, *Artists and Other Cultural Workers A Statistical Portrait*, www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Artists_and_Other_Cultural_Workers.pdf.
- Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development (OPEPD). "College Scoreboard." *College Scorecard Data*, U.S Department of Education, 2 Apr. 2021, collegescorecard.ed.gov/.

- O’Sullivan, Natalie. “Copenhagen Opera House – Architecture and History.” *Ourwaytours.com*, OURWAY Tours, 18 Aug. 2020, www.ourwaytours.com/copenhagen-opera-house-architecture-and-history/.
- Paulson, Michael. “Broadway, Symbol of New York Resilience, Shuts Down Amid Virus Threat.” *Www.nytimes.com*, The New York Times, 12 Mar. 2020, www.nytimes.com/2020/03/12/theater/coronavirus-broadway-shutdown.html.
- Paulson, Michael. “New York to Allow Limited Live Performances to Resume in April.” *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 3 Mar. 2021, www.nytimes.com/2021/03/03/arts/new-york-arts-reopening.html?referrer=masthead.
- Paulson, Michael, et al. “The New York Times Reports on New York City's Cultural Industry Shutdown.” *PAMAC Performing Arts Managers and Agents Coalition*, PAMAC Performing Arts Managers and Agents Coalition, 1 Oct. 2020, www.artsrelief.org/news/new-york-citys-cultural-industry-shutdown.
- Ritzel, Rebecca J. “In Richmond, Black Dance Claims a Space Near Robert E. Lee.” *New York Times*, 6 Aug. 2020, www.nytimes.com/2020/08/06/arts/dance/richmond-virginia-lee-monument.html.
- Salazar, Francisco. “Updates on Opera House Closings in Europe Due to Coronavirus.” *Operawire.com*, Opera Wire , 22 May 2020, operawire.com/more-opera-houses-close-due-to-coroanvirus/.
- “Save Our Stages: Cornyn-Klobuchar Bill Providing Relief For Independent Entertainment Venues Expected to Pass Today.” *Www.klobuchar.senate.gov*, 21 Dec. 2020, www.klobuchar.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2020/12/save-our-stages-cornyn-klobuchar-bill-providing-relief-for-independent-entertainment-venues-expected-to-pass-today.
- Segundo, Shakira. “Nutcracker by the Numbers: Results from Dance/USA's Annual Survey.” *Dance/USA*, 7 Dec. 2018, www.danceusa.org/ejournal/2018/12/03/nutcracker-again.
- United States, Congress, Division of Occupational Employment Statistics. *Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2019 27-2031 Dancers*, U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020.

Source List

Sarah Takash, 2020 Fordham/Ailey grad, 07/28/20- Facetime interview
Subject : Intro to post-graduate life
Contact : 609-713-4683

Emma Schilling, 2020 Butler dance BS grad, 08/18-Phone interview
Subject : Intro to post-grad life
Contact : 845-549-2972

Kate Reyes, 2020 Marymount Manhattan grad, 08/24/20- Phone call
Subject : Intro to post-grad life
Contact : katelreyes1698@gmail.com
347-303-0533

Kate Reyes : 2020 Marymount Manhattan grad, 10/30/20- Zoom call
Subject : First day as Graham 2 member
Contact : katelreyes1698@gmail.com
347-303-0533

Dr. Linda Hamilton, Ph.D, Performance Psychology Specialist for NYCB and Alvin Ailey,
11/20- Phone interview
Subject : Dancer mental health
Contact : lindahamilton1@msn.com

Sarah Wroth, Dance Program Chair at Indiana University, 11/23- Phone interview
Subject : Dancer health and training during pandemic in and out of school
Contact : swroth@iu.edu

Jennifer Milner, certified Pilates trainer specializing in dancers, 12/07/20-Phone call
Subject : Dancer psychical health during quarantine
Contact : jennifermilner@gmail.com

Maddy Elliott, 2020 Purchase College dance BFA grad, 02/02- Zoom interview
Subject : Post-grad life
Contact : madjoelliott@gmail.com
605-988-4171

Alexander Sargent, 2020 Juilliard dance BFA grad, 02/03- Zoom interview
Subject : Post-grad life
Contact : sargentimages@gmail.com

Ashley Simpson, 2020 Fordham/Ailey BFA grad, 02/15- Zoom interview
Subject : Post-grad life, moving to Philly and joining Ballet X during Black Lives Matter movement
Contact : Ashley.simpson@me.com

Alexander Sargent, 2020 Juilliard dance BFA grad, 02/16- Zoom interview
Subject : Copenhagen residency during beginning of pandemic
Contact : sargentimages@gmail.com

Francis Mihm, 2020 Butler dance BS grad, 03/04 – Zoom interview
Subject : post-grad life, performing in Orlando Ballet's Nutcracker
Contact : mihmfrancis@gmail.com

Eduardo Vilaro, Ballet Hispanico Artistic Director and CEO 03/11- Zoom interview
Subject : Managing company and finances during Covid/graduate outlook
Contact : evilaro@ballethispanico.org

Solange Rodrigues, 2020 Purchase Dance BFA grad, 03/31- Zoom interview
Subject : post-grad life, Pocket Fuel Groovers performance
Contact : solangeemrod@gmail.com

Maddy Elliot, 2020 Purchase College dance BFA grad, 04/01- Phone interview
Subject : Pocket Fuel Groovers performance
Contact : madjoelliott@gmail.com

Sarah Takash, 2020 Fordham/Ailey grad, 04/19/21- Phone interview
Subject : catch up and The Body Never Lies photography project
Contact : 609-713-4683

Nick Rodrigues, Pocket Fuel Groovers Artistic Director, 04/21- Zoom interview
Subject : Pocket Fuel Groovers performance and graduate advice
Contact : pocketfuelgroovers@gmail.com

Kim Cullen, New York Live Arts Executive Director, 05/03- Zoom interview
Subject : NYLA funding
Contact : kcullen@newyorklivearts.org

Sonja Kaatsbaan Chief Executive & Artistic Officer (CEAO) and Stella Abrera Kaatsbaan
Artistic Director, 05/04- Zoom interview
Subject : Kaatsbaan summer 2020 festival and social justice movement
Contact: skostich@kaatsbaan.org