



LA CONVIVENCIA

@mancc

maggie allesee national center for choreography

April 25 - 29, 2024

The Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography (MANCC), at the Florida State University School of Dance, is a choreographic research and development center whose mission is to raise the value of the creative process in dance.

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la convivencia

la convivencia is an artist-fueled, intergenerational exchange of movement-based performing artists who self-identify as Puertorriqueñxs, having ancestry in the archipelago and living in Puerto Rico (Borikén) or in los Estados Unidos (Turtle Island). *la convivencia* in MANCC (convivencia: roughly translates to “living together”) will be exactly that, spending time together, something that doesn’t happen enough with institutional and creative support. Part of our colonial history and legacy is one of dispossession and separation, and sometimes alienation from one another. There are not many opportunities for us to be in communion—on the island, off the island, straddling the diaspora—and our intention is that this gathering will lead to more convivencias, seeding fresh ways of being, imagining, and activating together.

la convivencia is a call to congregate, to support one another, to share practices, and grapple with making work inside the U.S. and Puerto Rico. It is three days of exchange, of scoring, improvising, and dancing, intermixed with meals and conversations.

We chose MANCC for this initial conversation because of Florida’s relation to the Caribbean. It is part of the Caribbean and home to many in the diaspora and yet, MANCC, has not yet been a part of these necessary conversations. We welcome this start.

la convivencia Bios



Photo by Josefina Santos

Yanira Castro's work is rooted in communal construction as a rehearsal for radical democracy. She is an interdisciplinary artist born in Borikén (Puerto Rico), living in Lenapehoking (Brooklyn), and working at the intersection of communal practices, performance, installation, and interactive technology. Yanira forms iterative, multimodal projects that center the complexity of land, citizenship, and governance in works activated and performed by the public. Since 2009, she's created and performed with a team of collaborators as a canary torsi. Castro has recently been commissioned and presented by The Chocolate Factory Theater, New York Live Arts, MCA Chicago, The Invisible Dog Art Center, Abrons Arts Center, SPACE Gallery, PICA, and The Bates Dance Festival. Her work has recently been supported by Creative Capital, The Alpert Award, The MAP Fund, a NYFA Choreography Fellowship, Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography, Lower Manhattan Cultural Center, Gibney, MacDowell, Yaddo, and Marble House Project, and has received two Bessie Awards for Outstanding Production. Castro is a founding member of Creating New Futures (CNF), a group of arts workers who gathered at the start of the pandemic to address deep-rooted inequities in the performance field, with whom she co-authored two documents drafted as calls-to-action: "Working Guidelines for Ethics & Equity in Presenting Dance & Performance" and "Notes on Equitable Funding from Arts Workers".



Photo by Mara Corsino

nibia pastrana santiago, born in Caguas, Puerto Rico in 1987 and now based in San Juan and trained in dance and improvisation, develops site-specific "choreographic events" to experiment with time, fiction and notions of territory. She is co-editor, along with dance scholar Susan Homar of the book "Habitat lo imposible: Danza y experimentación en Puerto Rico" (2023) published by Editorial Beta-Local. The English edition *Inhabiting the Impossible: Dance and Experimentation in Puerto Rico* is set to come out this fall with the University of Michigan Press, under the series *Studies in Dance: Theories and Practices*. In 2022, the exhibition *Choreopolitics: Brendan Fernandes & nibia pastrana santiago* was presented at MASS MoCa. nibia's work has been commissioned by de Appel (2020) and the Whitney Biennial (2019), as well as supported by the Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña and the Puerto Rican Arts Initiative Fellowship (2020-2023). She is the author of the *lazy dancer manifesto* (2013). nibia holds an MFA in Dance with a Minor in Latina/o Studies from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and a Postmasters in Performance and Scenography Studies from a.pass, Belgium. She worked as codirector at Beta-Local and for a period of five years served as the Dance Program Academic Coordinator at Universidad del Sagrado Corazón, Sanjurjo. She has collaborated and performed in works by DD Dorvillier, Jennifer Monson/iLand and Miguel Gutiérrez.



Courtesy of Alejandra Martorell

Alejandra Martorell is a Puerto Rican dancer and educator. Her work is rooted in improvisational practices and interdisciplinary collaborations. She is currently a doctoral student at the University of Texas at Austin in the Performing as Public Practice program. Martorell's research, MAPA, focuses on the development of experimental dance in Puerto Rico and the web of practices, relationships, conditions, and people that constitute it. Through communal drawing workshops and public interviews, MAPA tracks Puerto Rican women dance artists' geographical migrations and the ways this mobility, and our motilities in dance performance, construct a particular feminist and Caribbean para-national project. MAPA is featured in the University of Michigan Press' forthcoming *Inhabiting the Impossible*, edited by Nibia Pastrana Santiago and Susan Homar. Martorell has collaborated extensively with Viveca Vázquez, Jennifer Monson, and Javier Cardona. She taught dance and the Alexander Technique at various higher education institutions in Puerto Rico before moving to Austin.



Photo by Jose López Serra

Pepe Álvarez is a Puerto Rican interdisciplinary artist and scholar working across the disciplines of dance, theatre, and performance art. His performance works have been presented in Chile, Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, Puerto Rico, and the United States. Both his artistic practice and academic work follow a practice-based research methodology to establish links between art practice, critical theory, and cultural history. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Performance Studies at Northwestern University and holds a BA in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University of Puerto Rico and an MA in Theatre and Live Arts from the National University of Colombia. His doctoral research project examines Puerto Rico's experimental dance history, particularly looking at the practices, aesthetics, and socio-political frameworks of dance improvisation in the context of Puerto Rico's four-decades-long economic crisis. Along with his ongoing examination and compilation of Puerto Rico's experimental performance history, he is actively working as one of the co-principal investigators in the Puerto Rican Arts Initiative PRAI (2018-2020) sponsored by Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Northwestern, the University of Austin in Texas and Northwestern University in Chicago.



Photo by Tania Fernandez

As a Puerto Rican contemporary dance artist in the diaspora **Alicia Díaz's** work speaks to issues of memory, colonialism, and the legacy of slavery. She is an award-winning artist-scholar and community-engaged associate professor of dance at The University of Richmond where she teaches courses centered on dance for social change. Her recent dance film *Entre Puerto Rico y Richmond: Women in Resistance Shall Not Be Moved*, weaves stories of anti-colonial and feminist activism through the history of tobacco in Puerto Rico and Virginia. Alicia serves on the Board of *Pepatián: Bronx Arts ColLABorative*, an organization that supports Latinx, Black, Afro-Latinx, Caribbean, Latin American, and indigenous artists. Alicia's work is featured in the recent publication *Inhabiting the Impossible: Dance and Experimentation in Puerto Rico*, the first book of its kind to survey the field of Puerto Rican experimental dance across four decades.

Trained in modern dance at The Ailey School and later in postmodern dance at Movement Research in NYC, Alicia has performed nationally and internationally with *Complexions Contemporary Ballet*, *Andanza: Puerto Rican Contemporary Dance Company*, *Donald Byrd/The Group*, *Joseph Holmes Chicago Dance Theatre*, *Maida Withers Dance Construction Company*, as well as numerous independent choreographers including *Marion Ramírez*, *Sally Silvers*, and *Alejandra Martorell*. She has co-directed *en la brega* dance company, with *Esther Ñequi González*, and *Agua Dulce Dance Theater*, with *Matthew Thornton*. Her work has been presented in the United States, Spain, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Argentina, and Mexico.



Courtesy of Edrimael Delgado Reyes

Edrimael Delgado Reyes (he/him) 1995. Artista interdisciplinario que explora maneras de reconciliación entre las identidades queer y afro-caribeñas. Posee un bachillerato en Estudios Urbanos y del Performance de la Universidad de Puerto Rico. Desde que se dedica a la danza ha bailado y entrenado con diferentes escuelas, proyectos y compañías; incluyendo *Ballets de San Juan*, *Danza Contemporánea de Cuba* y *PISO* proyecto, siendo esta última la que nutrió su visión política de la danza. Al momento es el director de *LaBoriVogue*, un colectivo fundado en 2020 dedicado al fomento y educación de la cultura Ballroom en Puerto Rico.



Photo by Raquel Vazquez

Awilda Rodríguez Lora is a remarkable queer woman artist and culture manager whose transdisciplinary performances challenge prevailing notions of gender, sexuality, and self-determination. Harnessing the mediums of movement, video, and sound to explore the intricate terrain of the “economy of the body”, Awilda daringly brings the private into the public sphere as a strategy to humanize the experience of art consumption.

Born in Mexico, raised in Puerto Rico, and working across North and South America and the Caribbean, Rodríguez Lora’s performances traverse a rich tapestry of geographic histories and realities. Her work fosters progressive dialogues concerning the enduring legacies of hemispheric colonialism and the fluid boundaries of race, gender, class, and sexuality.

Awilda has been welcomed in several Artist Talks and Residences at esteemed institutions such as the Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance (BAAD), the Art Institute of Chicago, Columbia College Dance Center, and the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor). Nominated for a US Artist Fellowship in New York, she possesses a vast academic experience and has issued several publications and catalogues.

Founding collaborator of La Rosario in Santurce, she dedicates herself to her life project; La Mujer Maravilla, while serving as the Academic Leader for the Dance Program at Universidad del Sagrado Corazón in San Juan, Puerto Rico. With over a decade of experience as an artist, curator, mentor, and academic leader, she remains committed to exploring how artistic economies can be harnessed to support alternative ways of life rooted in community, creativity, and social justice.



Courtesy of Javier Cardona Otero

Javier Cardona Otero is an interdisciplinary artist, critical educator, and facilitator of arts experiences as education. His artistic and pedagogical scholarship, presented throughout the Caribbean, Latin America, and the United States, seeks to investigate sociocultural capitals, particularly concerning matters of identity politics, race, gender, class, and the environment. As a teaching-artist specialist in using the arts as an aesthetic form and a dialogical medium, Javier inquires on art-making as research and an embodied pedagogy to rehearse. Javier is a Curriculum and Instruction PhD candidate in the Arts Education Program at Indiana University’s School of Education, Bloomington.



Photo by Miguel Anayas

Antonio Ramos was born and raised in Puerto Rico where he trained in jazz, salsa and African dance. He later received a B.F.A. in Dance from SUNY Purchase. Antonio began his career performing with Ballet Theatre of Puerto Rico, Ballet Hispanico of New York, Ballet Concierto and Ballet Municipal (PR). His choreography has been produced at Hostos College; The Kitchen; New York Live Arts; Dance Theater Workshop; SUNY Purchase; BAAD!; Dixon Place;; P.S. 122; Joe's Pub; Danspace Project; Lexington Center for the Arts NY; DanceNow Downtown; Princeton University; Movement Research; BAX; Galapagos Art and Performance Space; Williamsburg Art Nexus; Fringe Festival 2000 at Theatre La Chappelle; The Painted Bride; Cornell University; and CPR. Also has presented his work at the American Realness Festival / commissioned to present to presented Almodovar Dystopia at Dixon Place, and the High Line , and premiered Ceremonia and El pueblo de los Olvidados at both theaters The Chocolate Factory Theater. and Abrons Art center He is a 2023 Bessie-Award winning dancer, a recent LMCC Extended Life Artist in residence, and is the choreographer behind Antonio Ramos and The Gang-bangers, a dance company that he founded in 2004.



Photo by Abey Charrón

Viveca Vázquez is a main figure in the field of experimental dance and performance in Puerto Rico. She is also full professor at the University of Puerto Rico where she teaches movement courses at the theater department and the classics at the school of General Studies. She is a 2022 United States Artists Mellon Fellow. In the past she has also been awarded fellowships in dance from National Endowment for the Arts and Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña. In 2013 the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Puerto Rico MAC presented a retrospective of her work called CONDUCTA Coreografía del Error {CONDUCT Choreography of Error} being the first time a museum in Puerto Rico acknowledged the work of a movement artist on such a big scale. The bilingual catalogue printed for the occasion includes important critical essays by prominent writers and artists. And an array of more than forty outstanding photos by amazing photographers as well. Her work has also been presented in experimental venues in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Venezuela, Mexico, Argentina, Portugal, Ecuador and Brussels. During 2023-24 she has been presenting Fenomenal; Rompeforma 1989-1996 a documentary film she co-produced and co-directed with fellow dancer and colleague Merián Soto. Fenomenal won best documentary film at Dance Camera West 2024 in Los Angeles, CA and was also presented at The Dance Historian Is In Series in the Jerome Robbins Dance Division of the NYPL. She recently participated in the Rockaway Film Festival/Arverne Cinema with: Las Playas Son Nuestras (1989){The Beaches Are Ours} and Viernes Social (1994){Social Friday}.



Photo by Fortino Morales III

Crystal Sepúlveda (she/her/hers) is a movement-based performing artist respectfully living on Cahuilla, Luiseño, Serrano, and Tongva unceded land. Her movement research explores the intersections of site-responsive choreographic experimentation, diasporic/boricua identities, and decolonial embodied practices within durational performance. Sepúlveda continues to maintain an ongoing performance practice in improvisation and works collaboratively and across disciplines to compose sound, movement, and video projects for live performance and installation. Her choreographic work and collaborative projects have been presented at Whitney Museum of American Art (New York); Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Highways Performance Space, Human Resources LA, The Women's Center for Creative Work (Los Angeles); Center of Music and Audio Technologies (Berkeley); dança em foco Festival International (Rio de Janeiro, BR); Lake Studios Berlin (Berlin, Germany); Centre Dürrenmatt (Neuchâtel, Switzerland) and at Musée des beaux-arts (Le Locle, Switzerland). Sepúlveda has held faculty positions at various academic institutions where she taught interdisciplinary approaches to choreography and served as artistic director for undergraduate dance productions. Currently, she is a California Arts Council grant recipient and Arts Administrative Fellow at the Museum of Latin American Art in Long Beach, CA.

la convivencia Schedule

Thursday, April 25 (Arrival)

4:15pm	Arrival- Alejandra, Awilda, Alicia, Antonio (nibia and Yanira pick up)
5:50pm	Arrival - Javier (nibia pick up)
8:00pm	Arrival - Pepe, Edrimael, Viveca (nibia pick up)
10:00pm	Arrival - Crystal (uber/lyft)- Mariah (MANCC Staff) pick-up
9:30pm	Bienvenida! Group Dinner Casa Magnolia - Yanira in charge

Friday, April 26

8:30am - 9:30am	Café en las casas
9:40am	Cars leave
10:00am	Bienvenida! Breakfast at Carla's with MANCC's team
12:30pm	Introduction to spaces & protocols by MANCC team at FSU
2:00pm - 3:00 pm	Group Lunch
3:00pm - 6:00pm	STUDIO TIME: First Sharing with snack break (nibia and Yanira lead)
6:00pm - 7:00pm	Open/Free Time or Antonio lead improv
7:00pm	Cooking dinner with Awilda (whoever wants to join and help in cooking!!)
8:30pm	Group Dinner Casa Magnolia

Saturday, April 27 (studio, black box, outside)

8:30am - 9:30am	Desayuno en las casas
9:40am	Cars leave
10am - 10:30am	Group Check-In
10:30am - 12:30pm	STUDIO TIME: Second sharing
12:30pm - 1:30pm	Group Lunch
1:30pm - 3:30pm	STUDIO TIME: Third Sharing
3:30pm - 4:00pm	Snack Break & Drive to Wakulla or to houses
4:00pm - 6:00pm	Wakulla Springs State Park (optional)
6:00pm - 7:00pm	Open Time/Free Time
7:30pm	BBQ setup-cooking: Casa Hummingbird with Javier (burgers/hotdogs/veggies) Awilda Interview with Alejandra (at MANCC)
8:30pm/9pm	Group Dinner Casa Hummingbird and Celebrate Awilda & Crystal birthdays!

la convivencia Schedule Cont.

Sunday, April 28 (Alejandra designs pairs for interviews and questions)

- 9:00am - 10:00am Desayuno en las casas
- 10:00am Cars leave
- 10:45am Awilda Departs
- 10:30am - 12:30pm STUDIO TIME: Recorded - Long Table Conversation (whole group)
- 12:30pm - 1:30pm Group lunch
- 1:30pm-3:30pm MANCC interviews / conversations (in pairs). Optional to stay for other people's interviews
- 3:30pm - 4:00pm Snack Break
- 4:00pm - 7:00pm MANCC interviews / conversations (in pairs). Optional to stay for other people's interviews
- 7:30pm Cooking dinner with Antonio (whoever wants to join in cooking - MANCC staff invited)
- 8:30pm/9:00pm Casa Magnolia LAST Dinner

Monday, April 29

- Artists Depart Bye bye! Adiós
- 4:30am Leaving in car from Casa Magnolia (Yanira drives Crystal)
- 6:00am Departure- Crystal
- 9:00am Leaving in van from Casa Hummingbird - everyone on 10:44 am flights / drop off van
- 10:00am Leaving in car from Casa Magnolia - everyone on 12pm flight / Yanira drop off car
- 10:44am Departure - nibia, Alejandra, Javier, Pepe, Edrimael, viveca, Alicia
- 12:02pm Departure - Yanira and Antonio