

FEET  
KEEP  
THE  
BEAT



SHOWCASE PERFORMANCE

# LINEAGE



August 1, 2025 - 7:00 PM

The Center for Arts at the Armory  
Performance Hall • Somerville, MA

Dancing feet have kept the beat of the human experience across continents and cultures, a rhythmic expression of the human instinct to communicate and collaborate. The varied percussive dance traditions that span the globe are living embodiments of specific cultural legacies, each with its own distinct roots, rhythms, and geographic provenance. Long before these percussive art forms found homes in studios and schools, they developed on street corners and plantations, in cafés and community centers, inside places of worship, and in families. They have been passed down by word of foot, as it were, by individuals whose specialized teaching roles often earn them the titles of masters, mentors, and gurus.

Many percussive forms derive from West African cultures, where polyrhythmic music and dance emphasize community and spirituality. When enslaved Africans were forbidden from using drums to communicate, they put the beat in their bodies. The African Diaspora brought those beats to the Americas, where step dancing, jazz dancing, and other social dances flourished. Some historians pinpoint tap's development to the Five Points neighborhood in Lower Manhattan, and the art form became so embedded in American culture that National Tap Dance Day is celebrated each year on May 25th, the birthday of Bill "Bojangles" Robinson.

Similarly, flamenco dance, which emerged from gypsy culture in southern Spain, is considered an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). The story of its development in the country's Andalucía region is, like many forms of foot percussion, one of resistance and discrimination as well as joy and identity.

Flamenco is believed to have historical connections to classical Indian dance due to the migration of the Romani people from India to Europe, bringing elements of dance and music with them. Kathak – one of India's eight major classical dance styles – finds its roots in "katha," or stories. With roots in the storytelling and dance traditions of Northern India, Kathak evolved over centuries to incorporate influences from Persian and Mughal cultures, which helped define itself as a percussive style.

All of these art forms have been shaped by histories of oppression, racism, and bigotry. Yet they continue to spread joy and build community around the world because of the master artists who entrust their techniques and traditions to the next generation. More than teachers, these artists are cultural leaders, ambassadors, historians, and preservationists. They ensure the longevity and evolution of their art forms by guiding the development of their students as artists and as individuals. As celebrated classical Indian dance educator Pandit Chitresh Das shared with his disciples, "Guru se chela savai," which means "The disciple steps on the shoulders of the guru and must aim to be 1/4 over one times better than the guru."

Tonight, the artists of **FEET KEEP THE BEAT** are proud to honor their mentors and to celebrate their lineage in the vital, culturally rich traditions of percussive dance.

*–Ryan P. Casey with input from  
FEET KEEP THE BEAT artists and producers*



**Ariaki Dandawate** is a Kathak artist, teacher and performer based in the Greater Boston and New York Metropolitan Areas. Ariaki has been training for the last 17 years under legendary Kathak maestro Guru Archana Joglekar in New Jersey, gaining equal command over the technical and expressive aspects of the art form. In 2015, she earned her Visharad or Bachelor's degree in Kathak from the SAMVED Exam Board, and in 2016 she performed her Rangmanch Pradarshan, or debut solo performance. Since then, she has performed full-length, immersive Kathak solos throughout India and the USA. Some of her notable performances in the United States include the Brooklyn Academy of Music's SpringFest, The Rubin Museum in New York City, Geeva Arts Festival in Kentucky, Indian Fine Arts Academy San Diego, and Philadelphia Ganesh Festival, to name a few. In India, her performances include the Sanskriti Mahotsav at Ravindra Natya Mandir and Guru Wandana in Mumbai, and the Sundarashwara Temple in Kannur, Kerala. Holding a Bachelors in Biotechnology and Computer Science, Ariaki continues to teach, perform and study Kathak while working as an Associate Computational Biologist at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, MA.

Instagram: @ariaki.kathak

Facebook: Ariaki Dandawate

**Akili Jamal Haynes** A.K.A. Chibuzo Dunun (dba) is a composer, producer, drummer, dancer, actor, songwriter, and multi-instrumentalist. Akili held the role of The Drummer in the Huntington Theater production of the George C. Wolfe play, The Colored Museum, directed by Billy Porter. He also coached music for actors in the play Seven Guitars by August Wilson, an Actor's Shakespeare Project production directed by Maurice Emmanuel Parent which received seven Elliot Award nominations, and won four, along with being the first Critics' Pick in Boston history. Akili appears in the newly-released Whitney Houston film *I Wanna Dance With Somebody*.

Facebook: @PositiveAfricanages

Instagram: @becomingchibuzo

**Sory Diabate** originally from Bamako, Mali, comes from a long line of Djelis (griots) and began drumming in the early eighties, as an apprentice with Sidiki Camara. In Mali, Diabate was a member of Troupe Pionna, and a principal drummer with Troupe Doumba, Troupe Districte de Bamako, and Troupe Sewa. In 1997, he became Assistant Director of Troupe Sewa and traveled extensively throughout Mali, researching in depth the origins of traditional rhythms and dances whose authenticity is preserved in the smaller villages. In addition to the djembe and dun dun, Diabate plays the tama, or talking drum, the bara and the bondiala. Prior to coming to the U.S., he conducted percussion workshops for students visiting Mali from all corners of the world.

Diabate has performed nationally with Sambalolo, Group Badenya, Timinadi, Under the Sun Dance & Drum, Spirit of Africa, and Troupe Sewa directed by Joh Camara. He has taught workshops in North Carolina, at West Virginia University, Brown University, and SUNY Purchase and has performed at the Wang Center for Performing Arts, The Dance Complex, Harvard, MIT, Wellesley College, among others. Diabate is also the founder and Director of Benkadi Drum & Dance.

**Anthony "Tiriti" Tran** studied flamenco guitar all across Andalusia with various teachers in Granada, Jerez, Córdoba, and more. For the past decade, he has managed Boston-based group Flamenco Boston and has worked with local dancers and dance companies to bring the excitement of flamenco through performances and workshops all over New England, including to museums such as the Isabella Stewart Gardner and the Museum of Fine Arts and to universities including MIT, Harvard, Northeastern, and most recently at Boston University, where he composed music for and performed in their production of Federico Garcia Lorca's *Yerma*.

**Tiemoko Camara** A rising high school student living in Boston, Tiemoko Camara is learning and playing West African percussion under the tutelage of his father, Joh Camara. He was awarded a Traditional Arts Apprenticeship by MA Cultural Council in 2016.

**Ryan P. Casey** is a "whimsically inventive" (The Boston Globe) performer, choreographer, teaching artist, and writer in the greater Boston area specializing in joyful, rhythm-driven movement. His dancing has been featured on *So You Think You Can Dance*, in an episode of the Audible podcast *Authorized: Firsts*, in a museum exhibit about shoes, in a music video for a Spanish pop star, and numerous other platforms. A founding member of Dorrance Dance, he trained primarily with Thelma Goldberg and Kelly Kaleta in his hometown of Lexington, MA, and was formerly recognized as one of Dance Magazine's "25 to Watch" for his "freakishly clean footwork...reminiscent of Fred Astaire." As an educator, Ryan has worked with studios, universities, festivals, and youth companies both nationally and internationally, including: Summer Performing Arts with Juilliard, Brandeis, Hofstra, Boston Tap Party, Tri-Tone Youth Rhythm Ensemble, BoSoma School of Dance, Candy Apples Dance Center, and many others. He was formerly on faculty at Boston University and choreographer for the University of Connecticut Tap Team. Additionally, he is a frequent contributor to Dance Magazine and has also been published in Dance Teacher, Dance Spirit, and the Journal of Dance Education.

Website: [www.ryanpcasey.com](http://www.ryanpcasey.com)

**Sidi "Joh" Mohamed Camara** popularly known as "Joh," was born in Bamako, Mali in West Africa, and from the age of 5, trained in music and dance from his mother Fanta Kamissoko, a well-known *Jali* (*Jalis*, also known as *Griots*, are highly venerated in their traditional society as skilled oral historians who are not only singers, storytellers, and musicians, but also advisors and mediators). Camara has toured with companies Troupe Mande, Troupe Sewa, Troupe du District de Bamako, and Percussion Fabla throughout the Republic of Mali and West Africa, presenting hundreds of shows. He was chief choreographer for Troupe Mande and Troupe Sewa and led them to become among the most renowned and competitive companies in the world of West African dance and drumming.

Camara came to the U.S. in 1995 with the renowned guitarist Zani Diabate and Troupe Mande. He has taught and presented his work at universities across the country including Brown, Princeton, Brandeis, Harvard, University of Pennsylvania, Berklee School of Music, Boston University, Washington University, and Olympia (Washington State). He currently teaches at Boston Conservatory at Berklee, in numerous Boston Public Schools and other public and private schools and community centers, and collaborates with Boston Ballet, Boston Symphony Youth Orchestra and Choir, Upward Bound, Planet Aid, and others. Camara teaches traditional Mande culture, language, music, and dance as well as those of neighboring Guinea, Ivory Coast, and Senegal at various community centers and instructs a semester dance and drumming class at Boston University and Harvard University.

Website: [www.johonline.com](http://www.johonline.com)

**Lekisha Limage** began her journey into the rhythmic realm at the age of 12, within the vibrant halls of her church. Lekisha established the Step Team at City on a Hill Charter High School. Her leadership saw her team flourish. Lekisha left an indelible mark on the stepping scene at Bentley College, now University. As one of the founding members of the university's Step Team, she cultivated a community of rhythm and expression. She graced the runway of the 2014 Paris Fashion Week as a stepper for the iconic Rick Owens. Today, Lekisha Limage continues to mesmerize audiences with her electrifying performances, infusing every step with a soulful rhythm that speaks to the heart.

**Giri Subramaniam** is a Boston-based tabla player and percussionist known for his versatility, captivating tone, and ability to blend musical traditions. He has performed and recorded with internationally acclaimed artists like Ustad Zakir Hussain, Shankar Mahadevan, Shreya Ghoshal, Vijay Prakash, Indian Ocean, and others. Giri is also a member of the Berklee Indian ensemble, which received a GRAMMY nomination for its debut album, Shruvaat.

Website: [sites.google.com/view/giri-subramaniam/music](https://sites.google.com/view/giri-subramaniam/music)

**Xianix Barrera** is a renowned Flamenco dancer and educator based in New York City, celebrated for choreographic works that explore themes of female empowerment, sexual identity, and social justice. Her most recent work, QUEBRADA, is a multimedia Flamenco production inspired by the Japanese art of Kintsugi, symbolizing resilience, transformation, and healing.

A 2019 Bessie Award nominee for Outstanding Performer for her role in Latido, Xianix trained extensively in ballet, modern, jazz, and flamenco with masters in both New York and Spain. She has graced prestigious stages including The Joyce Theater, Lincoln Center, and Café Silverio in Sevilla, sharing the stage with flamenco legends such as Isabel Bayón, Rosario Toledo, and Soledad Barrio.

In 2012, she founded Xianix Barrera Flamenco Company (XBF), a vibrant NYC-based company that produces both theatrical flamenco productions and immersive cultural events. Blending tradition with innovation, XBF presents performances ranging from intimate tablaos to full-scale shows featuring international artists. The company also houses a thriving flamenco school, offering year-round training in technique and choreography for all levels while fostering an inclusive community dedicated to preserving and evolving the flamenco tradition.

Website: [www.xianix.com](http://www.xianix.com)  
Facebook: [Xianix Barrera](https://www.facebook.com/XianixBarrera)  
Instagram: [@xianixbarreraflamenco](https://www.instagram.com/xianixbarreraflamenco)

**Anjali Nath** is an accomplished performer and educator of Kathak, the classical dance tradition of northern India. Her dance journey began with ballet in early childhood, but it was at Tufts University—at age 20—that she discovered Kathak and found her artistic home. Since 1997, she has trained intensively under the late Pandit Chitresh Das and his senior disciple, Gretchen Hayden, founder of Chhandika Boston, developing a deep command of the form's intricate rhythms, movement, and expressive storytelling. She toured the U.S. and India with the Chitresh Das Dance Company for eight years and was a core member of Chhandam and Chhandika, two premier Kathak institutions where she performed and nurtured the next generation of kathak dancers and audiences. Now, as an established solo artist, she is dedicated to her lineage of high caliber performance and teaching as faculty of Harvard Dance Center and The Dance Complex.

In 2024, Anjali founded Kathak Khelna (to play!), a performance and study platform that celebrates the lineage of her training through authentic, collaborative presentations, bringing together local and international artists. Through the dynamic interplay of rhythm, narrative, and philosophy, her Kathak practice serves as a conduit for cultural preservation, personal empowerment, and collective healing. She creates spaces where students, communities, and audiences alike can connect with centuries-old wisdom, discover new dimensions of self-expression, and experience the transformative power of tradition in contemporary life.

Website: [www.anjali-nath.com](http://www.anjali-nath.com)  
Instagram: [@anjnath](https://www.instagram.com/@anjnath), [@khelna\\_kathak](https://www.instagram.com/@khelna_kathak)  
Facebook: [Anjali Nath Kathak Artist](https://www.facebook.com/AnjaliNathKathakArtist)

## Acknowledgements:

In addition to the artists performing tonight, and our generous sponsors and donors, we thank the following individuals who have helped make Feet Keep the Beat possible:

**CAA Board of Directors:** Hathalee Higgs, President, Neil Berman, Ruth Faris, Ivan Abarca, Amanda Klein

**CAA Staff:** Jess White, Co-Director/COO; Stephanie Scherpf, Co-Director/CEO; Kay Coughlin, Operations Manager; Virginia Preston, Finance Administrator; Elyse Brown, Contracts and Marketing Administrator; Sai Mokara, Lead Tech; Chloé Cunha, Booking Coordinator; Jana Edele, Lead Café Staff; Kim Campbell-Movitz, Production Coordinator; Flora Spivak, Bar Manager; CAA's Event and Café Staff, and A/V Techs; Isabelle Beaver, intern; Ron at Charles River Creative, design volunteer; all of our wonderful volunteers.

**Debra Mason Dudley**, Feet Keep the Beat Artistic Advisor

**Movement Arts Creation Studio Inc. (MACS)**, a Massachusetts non-profit 501(c)3 organization, was founded by Valentine Talland and Nagesh Mahanthappa to provide an affordable, state-of-the-art studio incubator and project support for dancers, movement artists, and circus artists in the Boston area. [www.movearts.org](http://www.movearts.org)

**Wooden Kiwi Productions** is a project management, design and construction firm located in Waltham, MA, specializing in production support for the dance and theater communities. Founded in 1991 to design, develop and build specialty dance floors, Wooden Kiwi has been serving the arts and entertainment industry ever since. [www.woodenkiwi.com](http://www.woodenkiwi.com)

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## **Fanta Kamissoko**

*Teacher of Joh Camara*

Joh's mother, Fanta Kamissoko, was a *Jali* (a traditional West African oral historian, dancer, musician, and storyteller) who played a key role in his early training in music and dance. She also taught in the Boston area for a period of time, alongside her son, Joh.

## **Dr. Thelma Goldberg**

*Teacher of Ryan Casey*

Dr. Thelma Goldberg founded The Dance Inn, a suburban private sector dance studio serving more than 400 students weekly, in 1983 in Lexington, MA. She received the 2015 Dr. Michael Shannon Dance Champion Award from the Boston Dance Alliance for "her sustained excellence in teaching and passionate advocacy for the art of tap dancing." In 2020, she completed her doctoral degree in Educational Studies with an individualized concentration in tap dance education from Lesley University. She is known locally, regionally, and nationally as an educator, choreographer, entrepreneur, author, producer, mentor, and arts advocate. Dr. Goldberg continues to teach each week at her studio and has written several books and articles on teaching tap and integrating tap history into the classroom. In 2021, she joined the faculty at Dean College, where she recently received the Dean College Teaching Excellence Award for her innovative and passionate approach to teaching tap dance.

## **Pandit Chitresh Das**

*Guru of Anjali Nath*

Pandit Das was first and foremost a master and virtuosic performer of the classical kathak tradition. Based on his concept of "innovation within tradition," Pandit Das explored the boundaries of kathak technique and performance, creating compelling, new works and techniques that are inventive, yet deeply rooted in the kathak tradition. In 1970 he was brought to the United States on a Whitney Fellowship to teach kathak at the University of Maryland and to learn modern dance. In 1971 the renowned Indian classical musician Ustad Ali Akbar Khan invited him to establish a dance program at the Ali Akbar College of Music in San Rafael, California. Pandit Das founded the Chitresh Das Dance Company & Chhandam School of Kathak (CDDC) in 1980. His collaboration with tap star Jason Samuels Smith, *India Jazz Suites (IJS)*, was named one of the top ten productions of the year in 2010 by the Boston Globe. IJS has toured India seven times (including 2013 U.S. State Department funded India tour), Australia and the U.S. Upaj: *Improvise*, a film documenting their collaboration has screened at numerous film festivals internationally in 2013. In 2009, the National Endowment for the Arts chose Pandit Das as a National Heritage Fellow, the highest award bestowed to a traditional artist by the U.S. government. Das' commitment to training and empowering the next generation has left a legacy of hundreds of students who have trained directly under him, and many more who are continuing to learn from his disciples.

## **Patricia Guerrero**

*Teacher of Xianix Barrera*

Patricia Guerrero is one of the most celebrated flamenco artists of her generation. Named Best New Artist at the Bienal de Flamenco de Sevilla, she has performed worldwide—from New York City Center to the Théâtre National de Chaillot in Paris—as a soloist, choreographer, and former principal dancer of the Ballet Flamenco de Andalucía. A multi-award-winning creator, including Spain's National Dance Prize, she is currently the Artistic Director of the Ballet Flamenco de Andalucía, where she continues to innovate and shape the future of flamenco.

## **Pandita Archana Joglekar**

*Guru of Ariaki Dandawate*

Archana Joglekar is an internationally acclaimed Kathak artist, choreographer, and cultural ambassador known for her masterful command of intricate footwork, expressive storytelling, and cross-disciplinary artistry. Trained from a young age by her guru and mother Asha Joglekar, she draws from the rich traditions of the Lucknow, Jaipur, and Banaras schools of Kathak. Her performances have captivated global audiences—from Lincoln Center in New York to the Reykjavik Arts Festival in Iceland—and she was invited to perform at Lincoln Center by The Juilliard School, marking a rare honor for an Indian classical dancer. A versatile creative, she has choreographed for film, television, and live stage, and has served as a visiting faculty member at institutions like Princeton and Duke University. Beyond the stage, she is a celebrated actress, director, and producer, and has been formally recognized by both U.S. and Indian cultural institutions for her artistic impact.

## **Saun Green**

*Mentor of Lekisha Limage*

Saun Green has been a Mentor, Teacher, Coach, Confidant and Friend. She is the person who let me join the Step Team at twelve and ignited the passion for the art form I hold so dear to my heart. She taught me freedom, not only in movement, but in thought, in action and in spirituality. She has helped mold me into the fearless person I am today. I owe a large part of my story to the guidance she has provided me over the years. She has been a director of a number of programs for girls and youth including Grlz Radio, Teen Voices, The Boys and Girls Club and the leader of the most dynamic step team in the City of Boston in our time: Alpha and Omega. She was extraordinary at all those roles, but the one that stands out the most from everyone that interacts with her is the mentorship, guidance, love and the way she validates one's experiences, makes people feel seen, heard, understood and important. She does this with such care and ease and it leaves a lasting impact on everyone she comes in contact with. She should be celebrated not only today, but everyday for the lives she has made better by her being present in them.



# PROGRAM

## Invocation Homage to our teachers, gurus and mentors

<b>I</b>	<b>Joh Camara</b> <i>(West African Dance)</i>	<b>Music by</b> Sory Diabate, Akili Jamal Haynes, Tiemoko Camara
<b>II</b>	<b>Joh Camara and Ariaki Dandawate</b>	<b>Music by</b> Sory Diabate, Akili Jamal Haynes, Tiemoko Camara and Giri Subramaniam
<b>III</b>	<b>Ariaki Dandawate</b> <i>(Kathak)</i>	<b>Music by</b> Giri Subramaniam Recorded music by Archana Joglekar, Mukundraj Deo, Zuber Shaikh, Atul Phadke
<b>IV</b>	<b>Ariaki Dandawate and Xianix Barrera</b>	<b>Music by</b> Antonio Tran and Giri Subramaniam
<b>V</b>	<b>Xianix Barrera</b> <i>(Flamenco)</i>	<b>Music by</b> Antonio Tran
<b>VI</b>	<b>Xianix Barrera and Anjali Nath</b>	<b>Music by</b> Antonio Tran and Akili Jamal Haynes
<b>VII</b>	<b>Anjali Nath</b> <i>(Kathak)</i>	<b>Music by</b> Akili Jamal Haynes (Tabla) Compositions by Pandit Chitresh Das and Satyaprakash Mishra
<b>VIII</b>	<b>Anjali Nath and Ryan Casey</b>	<b>Music by</b> Akili Jamal Haynes
<b>IX</b>	<b>Ryan Casey</b> <i>(Tap)</i>	<b>Music by</b> Akili Jamal Haynes
<b>X</b>	<b>Ryan Casey and Lekisha Limage</b>	<b>Music by</b> Akili Jamal Haynes
<b>XI</b>	<b>Lekisha Limage</b> <i>(Step)</i>	<b>Music:</b> "Find Your Way Back" by Beyonce
<b>XII</b>	<b>Ensemble</b>	<b>Music by</b> Akili Jamal Haynes, Giri Subramaniam, Sory Diabate, Antonio Tran, Tiemoko Camara

## FEET KEEP THE BEAT Community Workshops & Jam

Sunday, Aug. 3: 10am- 12:30pm

**Armory Performance Hall**

All are welcome to participate in these free workshops. Find more information and an RSVP form on our website:

[www.artsatthearmory.org/feetkeepthebeat](http://www.artsatthearmory.org/feetkeepthebeat)

**10:00 - 10:30:** Step with Najee Brown

**10:30 - 11:00:** Tap with Ryan Casey

**11:00 - 11:30:** Kathak with Anjali Nath

**11:30 - 12:00:** West African Dance with Joh Camara

**12:00 - 12:30:** Final Sharing and Jam