

## For Immediate Release

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RESILIENCE Dance Company presents *Entry Points*

### *Entry Points*

September 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm; September 26<sup>th</sup> at 2:30pm & 7:30pm

\$10 - \$15

The Link Auditorium: 4504 Westminster Place, St. Louis MO 63108

Tickets: [eventbrite.com/e/entry-points-tickets-167258940995](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/entry-points-tickets-167258940995)

St. Louis; September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021:

*Entry Points* is a dynamic repertory dance performance featuring five individual dance works, four of which are premieres. Each piece draws on its own unique blend of styles, so audience members can expect to see glimpses of ballet, modern, jazz, hip-hop, and improvisation throughout the show. Each dance is furthermore presented as an entry point for exploring a distinct idea: anxiety and overwork, distorted perceptions of reality, and identities in flux are a few of the topics investigated onstage. The movements range from soft to aggressive, from confined to traveling, and from solo to partnered. Audiences will feel entertained, mesmerized, and curious as they are pulled into each work in the intimate setting of the Link Auditorium's upstairs ballroom.

*Entry Points* was curated with diversity in mind – four of the seven choreographers identify as women of color: Maria Blanco and Yariana Baralt Torres of LOUD BODIES (Chicago, IL), Victoria Lynn Awkward of VLA Dance (Boston, MA), and Emilia Sandoval of Ballet Memphis (Memphis, TN). The remaining choreographers are local and include David Marchant of Washington University and Holly Marchant of St. Louis University (St. Louis, MO), and Emily Haussler of RESILIENCE Dance Company (St. Louis). All choreographers bring unique identities and perspectives to the stage and share RDC's passion for community engagement, social justice, and moving the dance world forward.

Quote:

Tickets can be purchased online via our website ([www.resiliencedancecompany.com](http://www.resiliencedancecompany.com)) or Eventbrite until one hour before showtime. Students, working artists, and seniors over 65 can access discounted tickets for \$10 each. The Link Auditorium is located in the Central West End on the corner of Taylor and Westminster. Please be aware that audience members will need to climb one flight of stairs to access the performance space. Masks are mandatory, and will be worn by the performers, crew, and volunteers in addition to the audience.

### **About RESILIENCE Dance Company:**

**RESILIENCE Dance Company (RDC)** is a non-profit, contemporary dance company committed to putting artists first. We create collaborative, insightful dance works while investing in local artists and establishing sustainable dance-making practices. We actively challenge traditional dance company models by putting our artists first, paying them first, and leaning into mutable production parameters to create innovative art. Whatever the conditions, there will be dance. RDC asserts that creating high-quality art and building healthy dance communities are necessarily intertwined. We honor the resilience of artists' minds, bodies, and spirits in how they pursue their passion, aiming to empower those let down by the systems of the larger dance world.

### **Choreographer Bios:**

#### **Victoria Lynn Awkward**

Boston-based Victoria Lynn Awkward is a professional artist, educator and the Director of VLA DANCE. VLA DANCE is a contemporary dance company that focuses on utilizing dance as a unique tool for empowerment and advocacy. She graduated with a degree in Visual and Performing Arts Education from Goucher College, where she danced for the Goucher Repertory Dance Ensemble and performed in works by artists including Sidra Bell, Christian Von Howard, Ronen Koresh, Helen Simoneau, Iyun Ashani Harrison, and Iquail Shaheed. As a professional artist, she has performed with Ashani Dances, Attn: Dance, The Davis Sisters, Heather Stewart, Jenna Pollack and Ruckus Dance.

Victoria was a 2019 - 2020 Boston Institute of Contemporary Art Dance Fellow. She has taught as a guest teacher at Salem State University and teaches regular professional-level courses for VLA DANCE and Midday Movement Series. She is currently the Head Dance Coach at Middlesex School in Concord. Most recently, Victoria was awarded the 2020 - 2021 Boston DanceMaker Residency with the Boston Center for the Arts and Boston Dance Alliance.

#### **Maria Blanco**

Maria Blanco (she/her) is a dancer, choreographer, educator, and sociologist from Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Maria received her B.A in Dance and Sociology from Loyola University Chicago May of 2018. In collaboration with Yariana Baralt Torres, she co-founded LOUD BODIES, a dance company that combines dance and activism to provoke change and bring a voice to oppressed topics or communities. LOUD BODIES presented their first show this past March to bring awareness to period poverty at the Preston Bradley Center in collaboration with the Chicago Period Project. Maria has presented her works at the American College Dance Association, Loyola University Chicago, the Greenhouse Theatre, Links Hall, the Athenaeum Theatre, the Hamlin Park Fieldhouse in collaboration with Synapse Arts, and Collaboraction's Peacebook festival. She has performed with Erin Kilmurray's cast of SEARCH PARTY at the 2019 Pivot Arts Festival, as Grafitti Pete in Visión Lation Theatre Company and

Jedlicka Performing Art's production of *In the Heights*, as well as the Prop Thtr's 2020 Rhinofest. Maria works as a teaching artist with Chicago Danztheatre Ensemble and Chicago Public schools, the Old Town School of Folk Music, and Free Mvmt Shop. This past fall, she was nominated for "Dancer of the Decade" by Broadway World for her role as Grafitti Pete in, *In the Heights*. She is currently co-producing LOUD BODIES' second show, LOUD VOICES, and she couldn't be more ecstatic!

### **Yariana Baralt Torres**

Yariana Baralt Torres (she/her/ella) is a Puerto Rican dancer, choreographer and activist who obtained her BA in dance and sociology from Loyola University Chicago. She has had the privilege of performing with Mandala Dance Company in Italy, Hedwig Dances in Chicago, as well as for several freelance choreographers in Chicago. In 2018, she co-founded LOUD BODIES, a dance company that uses dance as a platform for social activism. Her works have been presented at Collaboraction, Synapse Arts, NEWDances, Links Hall, New Trier High School, Momenta Dance Company. Yariana also choreographed "In the Heights" for Vision Latino Theater Company in 2019, co-produced LOUD BODIES' Legalize Menstruation show in 2020 and currently teaches at Free Mvmt Shop and The Brass Ring. She is currently co-producing LOUD BODIES Summer 2021 show: LOUD VOICES.

### **Emilia Sandoval**

Emilia Sandoval is a professional dancer and choreographer with Ballet Memphis. She is a native of Elk Grove, California and received her formal training at Deane Dance Center in Sacramento under Barbara Crockett and Allyson Deane. Emilia continued her studies with Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre in their Graduate Program and spent summers at San Francisco Ballet School, Alonzo King Lines Ballet, Gaga USA, Ballet Austin, and Nederlands Dans Theatre on full scholarship. She was a member of NB2, Nashville Ballet's official second company, for two seasons prior to joining Ballet Memphis as a professional company dancer in 2019. In Fall 2020, Emilia made her choreographic debut with her ballet 'Aura', created for Ballet Memphis' 'Say It' series. 'Aura' also had the honor of being featured in the company's documentary shown on WKNO PBS.

### **David Marchant**

David Marchant is Professor of the Practice, on the faculty of Washington University in St. Louis since 1994, specializing in aesthetic theory, technique, composition and improvisation in the concert art of contemporary dance. He is the coordinator of the University College Somatic Studies Certificate Program at Washington University, offering students a curriculum in integrative movement practices, complimented by theoretical knowledge from a wide variety of fields investigating the art, spirit, and science of human movement.

Marchant is a certified teacher of the Alexander Technique and a member of the American Society of Alexander Teachers (AmSAT). He maintains a professional private teaching practice,

instructing individuals in the methods of F.M. Alexander for re-patterning of fundamental movement coordination.

David was a company member with the Utah Repertory Dance Theatre from 1989 to 1991. David was a recipient of the Iowa Arts Fellowship for excellence in choreography from 1991 to 1993, while earning a Master of Fine Arts degree from University of Iowa.

He is Co-Artistic Director of ZoMotion Arts with his wife, Holly Seitz Marchant, performing site-specific installations in natural environments, including tree-climbing as dance art form. In addition to his work as a choreographic artist, David is a recognized professional improvisational composer and performer, including contact improvisation, and has performed with notable artists such as Andrew Harwood and Chris Aiken.

### **Emily Haussler**

Emily Haussler is the Artistic and Executive Director of RESILIENCE Dance Company (RDC). Since founding RDC in November 2019, Emily has choreographed two full-length works (*Making Room; Stanzas & Sculptures*), RDC's first dance film (*There Are No Rules*), and several smaller pieces for the company's repertoire. She has furthermore created multiple programs and opportunities to uplift dance artists in the St. Louis community and beyond (*Seen: STL; Resource Center for Artists; Dance 24*).

Overall, her work centers on building healthier, more sustainable dance communities by equipping dancers with resources for their mental health, physical wellbeing, and artistic success. She believes in the power of collaboration and in challenging the toxic norms of the dance world, seeking to create high quality, insightful dance works inside of healthy dance spaces.

Emily holds a B.A. in Dance and Biology from Washington University in St. Louis, and has trained primarily in ballet, modern, and improvisation. Prior to founding RDC, Emily danced professionally as a Trainee for Nashville Ballet (2018-19), as a Trainee for The Big Muddy Dance Company (2019-20), and as a freelance artist. Her choreographic repertoire consists of over a dozen works, including her first ever full-length concert, *fine lines between*, which debuted in Nashville, TN in April 2019. Emily continues to work as a freelance dancer and choreographer outside of RDC and teaches dance at Arts in Motion in St. Louis.