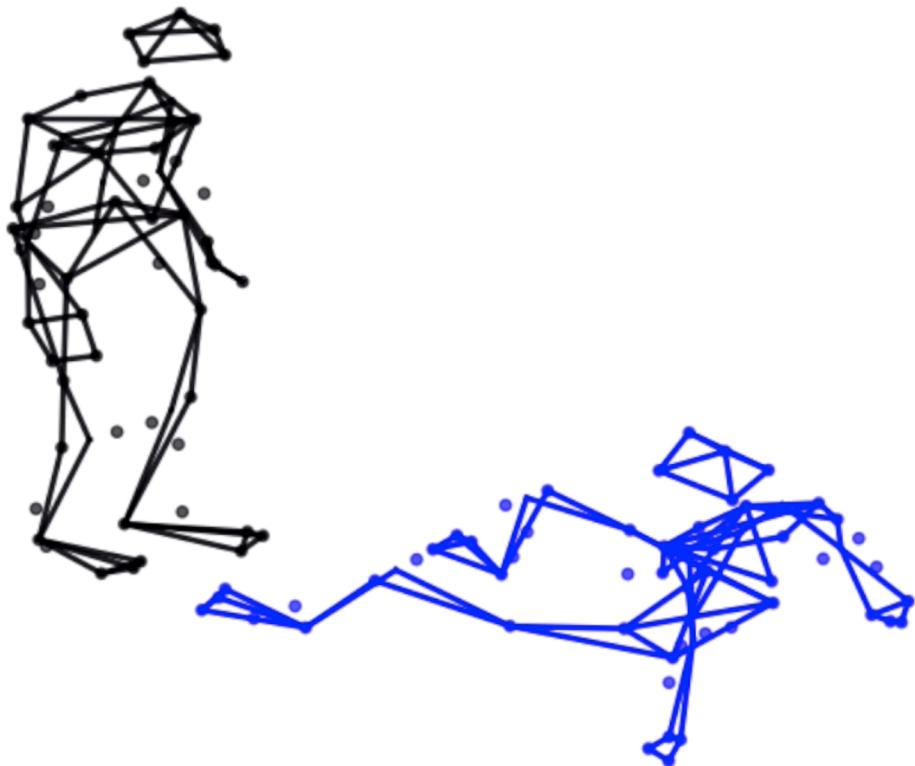


AN AI-GENERATED DANCE PERFORMANCE

# mememormee

THURSDAY, APRIL 27<sup>th</sup> • 7 PM • AMHERST, MA



Amherst  
College

# *program note*

*mememormee* is an evening-length dance-theater piece that reimagines how AI could one day engage with the human body. It envisions an alternate reality in which AI-generated outputs are organic materials with texture, flexibility, and substance. Its choreography is derived from custom machine learning models I designed and trained to analyze my own movements, and the score incorporates AI-generated music and birdsong. In the world of this piece, AI models are woven into the texture of our lived experience, amplifying our kinesthetic connections within our own bodies, within our communities, and with the natural world.

This piece represents the first full-length production to make use of the models I've built with various teams across the past 6 years that represent the state-of-the-art in AI-generated choreography. The outputs of these models have largely been tethered to screens, and I'm excited and daunted by the challenge of translating them to live performance with a cast of dancers. When I first embarked on this research six years ago, I would never have imagined how quickly AI art would emerge as a dominant force in the cultural landscape. I can't imagine a more relevant time for this piece to debut.

This work would not have happened without my teams of scientific and artistic collaborators throughout the past few years. These researchers include: Chase Shimmin, Douglas Duhaime, Santiago Miret, Marcel Nassar, Somdeb Majumdar, Amir Khosrowshahi, Mathilde Papillon, Nina Miolane, Sydney Skyebetter, Kyle Cranmer, Ben Nachman, Sarah Demers, and Emily Coates.

# *artist bios*



**Dr. Mariel Pettee** (she/her) (Physics Ph.D., Yale University) is an interdisciplinary scientist and performing artist based in Brooklyn. She is a Chamberlain Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and a visiting researcher at the Flatiron Institute Center for Computational Astrophysics in New York City. In her scientific life, she develops new AI methods to help make discoveries in high-energy particle physics and astrophysics. Since 2017, she has led independent teams of researchers using machine learning to generate choreography based on 3D motion capture of her own movements. As a dancer, she has performed in works by Kinetech Arts, Emily Coates, Renee Robinson, Brian Siebert, Elm City Dance Collective, the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company, Paul Taylor, Urban Bush Women, LeeSaar, and Jill Johnson.



**Jaren Feeley** (he/him) is a pianist, composer and arts organizer currently based in Brooklyn. Recent dance highlights include scores presented by Whim W'him, Detour Dance, and Dance On Camera Festival @ Lincoln Center. As a pianist, he records and tours internationally with the art-rock band SPELLING. As an organizer, his work focuses on facilitating outlandish performances. He has curated seven iterations of MOONSTRUCK, an arts festival based in Berkeley that commissions new works from artists to explore their concept of home, and asks audiences to undertake a four-mile roundtrip hike in the night to a secret location to experience the festivities. He is currently finishing up his first solo album of original songs, for release in 2023.



Alex Hawthorn is an artist, composer, and technologist based in Los Angeles and Brooklyn. Hawthorn's work interrogates notions of archive, memory, and time, bringing together aspects of traditional composition and experimental sound design with elements of photography, videography, and other forms of digital media. In their solo work, they combine elements of old and new technologies: traditional orchestral scoring, solo piano performance, field recordings, and various synthesis techniques, to create works that bring the listener into a place of meditation and memory. Prior to moving to LA in 2019, Hawthorn spent 15 years based in New York, working as a sound designer on numerous theatrical projects (including over a dozen Broadway productions). In 2020, they won an Obie Award for their design as part of the creative team of *A Strange Loop*, and in 2021 they won two LA Ovation awards for their design work on *Key Largo* at the Geffen Playhouse and Four Larks' production of *Frankenstein* at the Wallis Annenberg Center. Hawthorn has been an associate artist with the Brooklyn-based company, Theater Mitu, for over 15 years.



Dr. Ilya Vidrin is Assistant Professor of Creative Practice Research and Core Faculty in the Institute for Experience Robotics at Northeastern University. Born into a refugee family, Ilya grew up navigating the nuances of cultural expectations, language barriers, and diverging political ideologies. This experience of code-switching fuels Ilya's research and artistic practice to examine social ethics in artistic, clinical, and corporate settings, including intimate labors of care, cultural competence, social responsibility, and embodied cognition. Ilya has been featured at TEDxProvidence, selected as one of Dance Magazine's "25 to Watch" (2022), and invited as a guest artist at the New Museum (NYC), Jacob's Pillow, Ballet Des Moines, North Atlantic Ballet, National Parks Service, Harvard ArtLab, MIT Media Lab, Le Laboratoire, and Museum of Fine Arts (Boston), among others.



Originally from Dallas, Texas, Jessi Stegall (she/her) is a dance-theatre artist, applied ethicist, and educator based in Boston, Massachusetts. Her work explores the ethical, social, and pedagogical underpinnings of narrative forms. She is currently the Dancemaker-in-Residence at Boston Center for the Arts (2022-2023) and is a Media-Design Fellow at the Derek Bok Center for Teaching & Learning at Harvard University. As a dancer, Jessi has performed works by Jill Johnson, Ilya Vidrin, Ali Kenner Brodsky, and Jamila Glass. Her choreographic work has been featured at the Dance Complex, Motion State Dance Film Festival, Cambridge Art Association, and Boston Arts Consortium for Health. She has been a guest artist at the Harvard ArtLab, National Parks Service, Windhover Performing Arts Center, and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, and was recently featured as one of Dance Magazine's "25 to Watch" (2022). In addition to her work in dance, Jessi holds an M.S. in Bioethics from Harvard Medical School, a B.S. in Expressive Art Therapy from Lesley University, and is an alumna of Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts.



Ben Goosman is a 32 year old software engineer for Kineviz, currently living and dancing in NYC after a 7 year stay in Seattle. Right now they enjoy being a tech consultant for artists, dancer interested in improvisation, creative coder of studiofinder.fun, producer on bandcamp, performer for Kinetech Arts and others. Friends have described them as somatically obsessed, gender deviator, rabbit watcher, resource sharer, and community builder.



Kassandra Kolbeck (Sioux Falls, SD) is an athletic and diverse dancer with a passion for educating and inspiring others. She graduated from the University of North Carolina Greensboro in May 2020 with a BFA in performance and choreography as well as a BS in kinesiology. She has had the opportunity to work with choreographers such as Gregory Dolbashian, Tracie Stanfield, Eric Campros, Francesca Harper, and more. During her time at UNCG she was chosen to be in a reconstruction of Bill T. Jones Freedom of Information under the direction of Janet Lilly and Duane Cyrus in Fall 2018 and performed with the Clarice Young Project in Spring 2019. Post graduation she has been dancing with Black Box Dance Theatre under the direction of Michelle Pearson in Raleigh, NC as well as being a personal trainer at O2 Fitness Clubs. She hopes to continue dancing professionally as well as continuing her education to become a dance anatomy and injury prevention professor.



Kellyn Thornburg is a dancer, choreographer, immersive artist, and educator living in New York City. She holds her M.F.A in Choreography with a concentration on Immersive and Site-Specific Performance from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and her B.F.A. in Contemporary Dance from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. She has had the opportunity to work with companies such as Twyla Tharp, Linked Dance Theatre, HouseWorld, MElder Movement Art, John Selya, and Blue Morph Collective. She has also performed works by Ohad Naharin, Lar Lubovitch, Lucinda Childs, Merce Cunningham, and Helen Simoneau. Her choreography has been featured as a part of Awakening Movement (2016-17), Linked Dance Theatre's "Beloved/Departed" (2018) and "Remembrance," (2019), in "Noirtown" an Immersive play apart of the RAVE Festival (2019), Second Avenue Dance Company at NYU (2020) and in Blue Morph Collective's Fall Concert (2021). Kellyn is beginning her doctoral studies at Columbia University in the Fall of 2022 with a concentration in Dance Education.



Dr. Iris Platt is a physical therapist based in New York City. She completed her doctorate at Columbia University, where she also earned her Master's Degree. Her research background includes the neuroscience of movement in cognitive disorders as well as the significance of pelvic floor health. Before pursuing her research and clinical practice, Iris trained in Ballet, Modern, Tap, and Jazz at Boston Youth Moves under the direction of Jim Viera and Jeannette Neil. An avid dancer, she competed in Latin and Ballroom DanceSport before moving to New York City to further pursue dance at Marymount Manhattan College. She has performed works by renowned artists including Barak Marshall, Ohad Naharin, and Crystal Pite.

# track list

1. Razmishlenie - Kate NV
2. Mariel Motion Data - Jaren Feeley
3. Quartet Drone - Jaren Feeley
4. Assise - Camille / remix by Jaren Feeley
5. Wolf Like Howls From The Bathroom - Sonny Smith
6. Petrol Driven Organ - Jaren Feeley
7. Desert Soundscape - Alex Hawthorn
8. Heptapod B - Johann Johannsson / remix by Jaren Feeley
9. Fireplace Song - Jaren Feeley
10. All The Fruits - Jaren Feeley