Feature Series 2018–19 Season

presented by

Wintrust Community Banks

presents

GIORDANO DANCE CHICAGO

Live in the MOMENTum

February 2, 2019

Gus Giordano Founder
Nan Giordano Artistic Director
Michael McStraw Executive Director

THE COMPANY
Devin Buchanan       Adam Houston
Ashley Downs         Maeghan McHale
Jacob Frazier        Natasha Overturff
Ryan Galloway        Katie Rafferty
Zachary Heller       Linnea Stureson Tolbert

SR. PERFORMING ASSOCIATES
Ari Israel           Jack Halbert*

JR. PERFORMING ASSOCIATE
Mariterese Altosino*

GIORDANO II
Amanda Hickey*       Kimberly Prokurat*
*not performing
**PROGRAM**

**Sidecar**

2004

Choreography: Mark Swanhart  
Music: Yann Tiersen, The Platters, Jon Brion, Solex  
Lighting Design: Todd Clark  
Costume Design: Branimira Ivanova  
Dancers: Devin Buchanan, Ashley Downs, Jacob Frazier, Ryan Galloway, Zachary Heller, Adam Houston, Maeghan McHale, Natasha Overturff, Katie Rafferty, Linnea Stureson Tolbert

I. Dumbfounded  
II. May I Cut In?  
III. Hanging On  
IV. Moving On

*Choreographer and Designer fees for Sidecar were originally funded by the Chicago Community Trust as a part of its Excellence in Dance Initiative.*
PROGRAM CONT.

Loose Canon
2006
Choreography: Jon Lehrer
Music: Pachelbel’s Canon in D major played by Winton Marsalis
Lighting Design: Kevin Dreyer
Costume Design: Nina G.
Dancers: Ashley Downs, Jacob Frazier, Ryan Galloway, Natasha Overturff, Katie Rafferty

Partial funding for Loose Canon was graciously provided by the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation.

JOLT
2012
Choreography: Autumn Eckman
Concept and Structure: Nan Giordano
Original Music Score: Evan Bivins
Lighting Design: Kam Hobbs
Costume Design: Nina G.
Dancers: Devin Buchanan, Ashley Downs, Jacob Frazier, Ryan Galloway, Zachary Heller, Adam Houston, Ari Israel, Maeghan McHale, Natasha Overturff, Katie Rafferty, Linnea Stureson Tolbert

This score is comprised of playing on buckets, pots, pans, and other kitchen utensils.

INTERMISSION

Divided Against
2016
Choreography: Peter Chu
Original Music Score: Djeff Houle
Lighting Design: Kevin Dreyer
Costume Design: Branimira Ivanova
Dancers: The Company

What is your Reaction?

Thought, emotions and response all take place rapidly in your own mind. Against a fading beat, isolated events attempt to control a rhythm that seamlessly disappears and reappears as set text questions your own thoughts.

Divided Against captures the physical response to an uncontrollable reaction.

Where is your truth? Where are your wisdom and understanding?
SOUL
2018
Choreography: Ray Leeper
Assistant to the Choreographer: Kristen Leigh Wergeles
Music: Gladys Knight and the Pips, Al Green, Tina Turner
Lighting Design: Jacob Snodgrass
Costume Design: Jordan Ross
Dancers: Devin Buchanan, Ashley Downs, Jacob Frazier, Ryan Galloway, Zachary Heller,
       Adam Houston, Ari Israel, Maeghan McHale, Natasha Overturff, Katie Rafferty,
       Linnea Stureson Tolbert

SOUL was created in honor of Chicago philanthropist Candace Jordan, whose spirit, passion,
and advocacy for the performing arts are without bounds.

This work was made possible, in part, by contributions to the
Susan Carlins “Make It Happen” Initiative.

CHOREOGRAPHERS

PETER CHU  AUTUMN ECKMAN  RAY LEEPER

JON LEHRER  MARK SWANHART
Giordano Dance Chicago (GDC) In 56 years as an artistic leader and innovator, Giordano Dance Chicago - America’s original jazz dance company - has contributed greatly to the health of Chicago’s performing arts community. From our origins in Gus Giordano’s family-run studio to our current incarnation as a professionally-run organization with over a half-century of worldwide performances (27 countries, 46 states, and more than 1,200 cities), our imprint on the art form of jazz dance is far-reaching and significant. Our contributions include: a vast repertoire of more than 165 original works; the mentoring of new and emerging choreographers; the commissioning of innumerable musical scores and production designers; the education of tens of thousands of underserved public school and community students; the creation of generations of professional dancers; and performances to millions of audience members worldwide.

Several major factors combine to be the engine behind all programs and which reflect the organization’s mission and vision. First, the legacy of founder Gus Giordano suffuses the organization, its mission and its daily activities and cannot be over-emphasized. Second, the leadership of Artistic Director Nan Giordano and Executive Director Michael McStraw has challenged and transformed the organization to continuously raise its standards, take artistic risks, and expand its influence worldwide. Third, GDC recruits, hires, and fosters dance artists who possess more than just superlative technique and experience, but who also convey passion, humanity, and elegance. Lastly, ours is always a passionate and visceral offering which connects deeply with our audience.

Our mission provides for strong educational programs and services, including teaching the Giordano Technique in residencies in college and university dance programs, as well as the Nan Giordano Certification Program®, which offers multi-level instruction and certification in the proprietary Giordano Technique. GDC’s Jazz Dance/Science & Health program, established in 2006, teaches elementary-school anatomy and nutrition curriculum through a dance-centric program in the science classroom over the course of 8 weeks. In 2018 the program brought 300 classes to 450 students in four under-resourced schools.

Most exciting, GDC purchased the Hermon Baptist Church in Lincoln Park in January 2018 to serve as its new headquarters. The current structure will be modified/rebuilt to eventually house a dance school, office space, studios, informal performance space and a rented retail operation.

Giordano II (GII) is a company dedicated to the elevation of young professional dancers and is under the artistic leadership of Nan Giordano and directed by Joshua Blake Carter. The dancers of GII are provided the unique opportunity to work side-by-side with the Giordano Dance Chicago dancers to learn the vast and diverse main company repertoire, in addition to works created specifically for them. GII performs at venues throughout the Midwest, allowing the dancers to gain the on-stage experience necessary for a career in concert dance. As a stepping-stone to the professional dance world, Giordano II allows dancers to broaden and explore their technical and artistic range. Currently, nine of the main company members are former members of Giordano II.

Gus Giordano
Founder (1923 – 2008)
Gus Giordano’s dedication to jazz dance exhibited itself in all facets of his extraordinary life: dancer, master teacher, choreographer, author, and founder of the Giordano Dance School (GDS) in Evanston, Illinois, founder of the dance company Giordano Dance Chicago and founder of Jazz Dance World Congress. Mr. Giordano created and taught the Giordano Technique at venues across the United States and around the world. He choreographed in all areas of performance including television, film, stage, commercials, industrials, and concert dance. In 1976 Giordano wrote the
highly acclaimed *Anthology of American Jazz Dance*. In August 1990, Giordano organized the first Jazz Dance World Congress, which gathered renowned jazz dance master teachers and companies. The Congress has been held at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Northwestern University, the University at Buffalo, Point Park University, as well as Phoenix, Chicago, Japan, Germany, Mexico, and Costa Rica. Gus Giordano received many awards including the 1984 Dance Educators of America Award for his outstanding contribution to the world of jazz dance, the 1988 Mayor’s Award for the Arts, the 1989 Governor’s Award for the Arts for exemplary individual artistic achievement, the 1991 Dance Teacher Now Circle Award, the 1993 Ruth Page Lifetime Service to the Field Award, and the 1996 University of Missouri Distinguished Alumni Award and William Francis English Scholar-in-Residence Award. In 1985, Governor James Thompson declared April 25 Gus Giordano Day. In 1995 he received the Honorable Artist Award from Chukyo University in Nagoya, Japan. In 1997 Gus served as National Spokesperson for National Dance Week. In 1999, he received an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts Degree from Shenandoah University.

**Nan Giordano**

**Artistic Director**

At the helm for 34 years, Nan’s leadership of Giordano Dance Chicago began in 1985 as Associate Director, and in 1993 was appointed the title of Artistic Director. Nan was trained by her father and mentor, Gus Giordano, who created the world-renowned Giordano Technique. Developer of the Nan Giordano Certification Program®, Nan is the world’s preeminent authority on the essence, discipline, progression and continuance of the Giordano Technique; the vision of the NGCP® is to provide worldwide, ongoing, and in-depth access to this ground-breaking dance form. She had an extensive performing career in concert dance, as well as in the industrial and fashion worlds. Before taking the reins on the artistic side, her concert dance experience began with Giordano Dance Theatre, apprenticing and then joining GDC. With her father at the helm of the company, she traveled and performed extensively around the world; she also had the opportunity to perform in numerous WTTW dance television specials choreographed by her father including the Emmy Award winning *The Rehearsal*. When an injury ended her performing career in 1985, Nan became Associate Director of the company and was instrumental in establishing a working Board of Directors, which has evolved into today’s three separate boards. In the last thirty-four years, under Nan’s direction, GDC has established a high profile reputation for excellence in the Chicago dance community, as well as in the national and international dance worlds. Nan has guided the development of a large and diverse repertoire. Sid Smith, former dance critic of the *Chicago Tribune* in his glowing review of one new work, wrote that it was “further evidence of artistic director Nan Giordano’s shrewd instincts for choreographic talent and excellent dancers.” Nan’s concert choreography credits include five works in GDC’s repertoire. On the commercial side Nan has choreographed several television commercials. Nan teaches master classes throughout the United States, and has toured internationally as guest teacher in many countries including Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, El Salvador, France, Germany, Guatemala, Mexico, and Israel. She is also the driving force behind *Jazz Dance/Science & Health*, GDC’s outreach program in four under-resourced Chicago Public Schools. Nan received the Manford Byrd Jr. Wizard of Oz Award for Outstanding Service from Howland School of the Arts. Nan is Artistic Director of Jazz Dance World Congress (JDWC), an event that draws dancers, choreographers, and teachers from more than 30 countries.
Nan served three years on the Illinois Arts Council Dance Panel and also served on the Community Arts Assistance Program Dance Panel for the City of Chicago, Department of Cultural Affairs. She currently serves on the International Ballet Competition, National Honorary Committee and the Advisory Board for Dance Magazine. She’s most recently been recognized as a cover story in Dance Teacher Magazine’s January 2018 issue. Nan was also honored by Mayor Rahm Emanuel, who declared June 9, 2018, Nan Giordano Day for her leadership and contributions to the Chicago community. In August 2018, Chicago Dancers United honored Nan (along with Lou Conte) with the Dance for Life Impact Award, recognizing her contributions to the Chicago dance community and Dance for Life. To cap off her momentous year, the Chicago Tribune named Nan “Chicagoan of the Year” in dance.

Michael McStraw
Executive Director
Michael McStraw is a member of and outstanding advocate for the Chicago performing arts community. As a professional dancer, semi-professional musician, arts administrator, dance educator, board member, and arts patron, Michael has been a positive and constant influence in the community for the past 35 years. Raised in Western Pennsylvania, his life includes a BS degree in Geology from Allegheny College, a Master of Fine Arts degree in Modern Dance from the University of Michigan, and a stint as an agricultural extension agent in the Peace Corps in Sierra Leone, West Africa. He danced extensively with the area’s premier contemporary dance companies, including Mordine & Company Dance Theater, an organization he also managed, Jan Erkert & Dancers, and DanszLoop Chicago, of which he was a founding member. Michael was a member of and soloist with Chicago Master Singers for over 12 years, and has performed extensively at numerous area churches and synagogues. Michael’s return to full-time arts administration ended a successful 17-year career in the pharmaceutical industry, most notably with G.D. Searle and Takeda Pharmaceuticals North America. He is an experienced marketing, operations, and project management professional with special skill in developing strategic long-term solutions for complex business issues. Michael is Executive Director of Jazz Dance World Congress, has twice served three-year terms on the Illinois Arts Council Dance Panel, is President and Board member for See Chicago Dance, Chicago’s dance marketing and advocacy organization, and has mentored young artists/administrators within Pentacle’s Help Desk program. Most recently, Michael was elected to the Harris Theater Board of Directors as an ex officio member, representing that organization’s Resident Companies.

Jacob Snodgrass
Technical Director
Jacob has designed lighting and has worked within the performing arts community since 2000, both domestically and abroad. Some artists he has worked with are Aerial Dance Chicago, BONEdanse, The Dance COLEctive, Khecari Dance Theater, Breakbone Dance Company, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, instruments of movement, Same Planet Different World, Chamber Opera Chicago, Cuba’s Escuela Nacional de Ballet, REIDance, Havana Cuba’s DanzAbierta, Soham Dance, Cerqua Rivera Dance Theater, Concert Dance Inc./CDi, Joel Hall Dancers, Hedwig Dances, the Ruth Page Foundation, Canada’s lbs/sq”, NEIU Repertory Dance, Thodos Dance Chicago’s New Dances, Shaw Chicago, WNEP Theater, The Neofuturists, City Lit Theater, 16th Street Theater, and Free Street Theater. He has been technical director at the Ruth Page Theater, Links Hall and Hamlin Park Dance Theater, and has recently taken the position of Lighting Director at the Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago. This is Jacob’s seventh season with GDC.
DANCERS

Devin Buchanan
COMPANY MEMBER
Hometown: Columbus, OH
Education: The Ailey School
Years With GDC: 8

Maeghan McHale
COMPANY MEMBER
Hometown: Baltimore, MD
Education: Baltimore School for the Arts
Years With GDC: 13

Ashley Downs
COMPANY MEMBER
Hometown: St. Paul, MN
Education: Point Park University
Years With GDC: 6

Natasha Overturff
COMPANY MEMBER
Hometown: Des Moines, IA
Education: University of Arizona
Years With GDC: 6

Jacob Frazier
COMPANY MEMBER
Hometown: Cincinnati, OH
Education: Point Park University
Years With GDC: 2

Katie Rafferty
COMPANY MEMBER
Hometown: Trevose, PA
University: The University of the Arts
Years With GDC: 8

Ryan Galloway
COMPANY MEMBER
Hometown: New Richmond, IN
Education: Indiana University
Years With GDC: 3

Linnea Stureson Tolbert
COMPANY MEMBER
Hometown: Erie, PA
Education: Mercyhurst University
Years With GDC: 4

Zachary Heller
COMPANY MEMBER
Hometown: Alexandria, VA
Education: University of Arizona
Years With GDC: 10

Ari Israel
SR. PERFORMING ASSOCIATE
Hometown: Jacksonville, NC
Education: Towson University
Years With GDC: 3

Adam Houston
COMPANY MEMBER
Hometown: Boone, IA
Education: University of Arizona
Years With GDC: 5
GIORDANO DANCE CHICAGO STAFF

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Giordano Dance: Live in the MOMENTum 9
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