

INNOVATIVE WORKS

UNSEX ME HERE

Choreographer, Concept and Direction by Stephanie Martinez
Concept and Direction by Dr. Lynne Conner
Score Design by Stephanie Martinez, Ethan Kirschbaum, Johnny Nevin and Peter de Klerk
Original music composed by Peter de Klerk and Johnny Nevin
Music: Selections by Vivaldi, Bach, Handel and Sasseti
Voice-over of Lady Macbeth speech by Kate Fleetwood
Assistant to the Choreographer: Ethan Kirschbaum
Costume Design by Aimee J. Coleman
Lighting Design by JP Woodey

***Unsex Me Here* was commissioned for Charlotte Ballet by M. Marie Mitchell.**

Juliet (*Romeo and Juliet*).....Sarah Hayes Harkins
Romeo (*Romeo and Juliet*)Ben Ingel
Titania (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*).....Sarah Lapointe
Bottom (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*).....Peter Mazurowski
Lady Macbeth (*Macbeth*).....Alessandra Ball James
Macbeth (*Macbeth*).....Drew Grant
Kate (*The Taming of the Shrew*)Amelia Sturt-Dilley
Petruccio (*The Taming of the Shrew*)James Kopecky

PROGRAM NOTES

The title *Unsex Me Here* is a reference to one of Lady Macbeth's lines from *Macbeth* Act I, Scene 5:

Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty. Make thick my blood.
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it!

Unsex Me Here explores Shakespeare's world view of gender in order to question our own world views on gender. What has changed in the 400+ years since the plays were written? What hasn't changed? How do Shakespeare's plays shed light on the ageless question of what gender is and why it is so important to us? Our piece mixes images and characters from *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with contemporary references in order to explore gender stereotypes, gender fluidity, gender misconduct and the cultural codes for masculinity and femininity—all in the context of questioning the "rules" about how men and women are supposed to behave.

20 MINUTE INTERMISSION

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LET BE

Choreography by Peter Chu
Robinson Distinguished Professor of Shakespeare, Dr. Andrew Hartley
Original Composition by Jacob Kelberman
Music: "Nyepi" by Ólafur Arnalds
Assistant to the Choreographer: Jenni Gordon
Costume Design by Peter Chu
Assistant Costume Designer: Katherine Zywczyk
Lighting Design by JP Woodey

Let Be was commissioned for Charlotte Ballet by Todd Porter and Steve Rasnick.

Juwan Alston Elisabeth Baehman* Raven Barkley Chelsea Dumas
Colby Foss Josh Hall Maurice Mouzon Jr. David Preciado
Andrés Trezevant* Elizabeth Truell Shaina Wire Anson Zwingelberg

**Charlotte Ballet II*

PROGRAM NOTES

Rather than attempting to retell the *Hamlet* story, or to capture its major plot features—vengeance, tragedy and procrastination—we are focusing on Hamlet's dramaturgical shift in character. He begins in melancholy and depression, and the only reason he does not take his own life is because he is terrified of what divine judgment may follow. This state of mind generates a paralyzing internal conflict from which he is unable to act or find any kind of peace. We found this fascinating because it suggests, particularly outside the plot confines of the play, the way a preoccupation with death might prevent someone from truly living. Later in the play, however, from the graveyard scene onward, Hamlet seems to find a new maturity, moving beyond his dreadful contemplation of death to a clear, calm, reflective and accepting state of mind. That was what we wanted to track in our piece, shedding the trappings of the story itself and focusing on that positive journey, while still drawing on the richness and beauty of the text.

In order to more deeply understand the rapid yet liquid-like actions the work demands and to actualize the movement qualities prominent in the piece, we have begun working with Qi Gong and Tai chi fundamentals: relaxed, rooted posture; straight, supple spine; controlled breathing; and mind/body familiarity. Being introduced to these ideas help further the dancers' gentle, tranquil approach to movement and strengthen their emotional control and the ability to be out of control when required to do so. Searching for balance, these figures create action with healthy intention while capturing the serene and catastrophic beauty of humanity.

The moving images and text in this work express courage and strength while building awareness through the art of listening. Incorporating spoken text also helped to push the performers beyond their comfort zone, allowing us to build something unique and genuinely collaborative in which we blended various and disparate skills into something we hope is cohesive despite—even because of—its hybridity.

Please join the dancers and artistic staff in the lobby immediately following the performance for coffee and dessert