



UtahPresents

VERSA-STYLE DANCE COMPANY

FREEMIND FREESTYLE

SEPTEMBER 16, 2022



THANK YOU TO OUR 2022-2023 SEASON SPONSORS



NANCY PEERY MARRIOTT



ALICE AND KEVIN STEINER

STEINER FOUNDATION



WESTAF



ORIGINS/Freemind Freestyle

Choreographed and Directed by:

Jackie "Miss Funk" Lopez and Leigh "Breeze-Lee" Foaad
in collaboration with the company dancers

Music by: Various Artists

Freemind Freestyle was made possible by the
New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project,
with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Kingsbury Hall
September 16, 2022

ORIGINS of Hip Hop consists of high-energy, unadulterated street dance movement that will explore and push the boundaries of the ORIGINS and ROOTS of street vernacular dances such as Locking, Popping, Hip Hop, Krump, and more. Audiences will walk away with a different view on Hip Hop dance culture and will be vividly immersed into the depth and beauty that UNITES us all.

Intermission

Versa-Style Dance Company's latest full-length work, **Freemind Freestyle**, explores the depths of improvisational dance. Each show will offer a brand new experience of FREESTYLE street dance live on stage. The work dives into the concept of freedom from all angles: the personal, political, physical, and the spiritual. How do we experience freedom? What contains us, oppresses us? What allows us to break free? Freemind Freestyle explores these questions from both the evolutionary and ancestral lens, blending Hip Hop, Popping, Krump, and House dance movement that pays homage to the Afro-Latin roots of Hip Hop dance culture from which we draw our revolutionary power.

A special thank you
to our sponsors



Richard K. and Shirley S.
HEMINGWAY
FOUNDATION



NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

Freemind Freestyle was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

for supporting this performance of
Versa-Style Dance Company

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

UtahPresents is based in Salt Lake City, on land which is named for the Ute Tribe and is the traditional and ancestral homeland of the Shoshone, Paiute, Goshute, and Ute Tribes. We recognize and respect the enduring relationship that exists between many Indigenous peoples and their traditional homelands.

We also must acknowledge that the prosperity of what we call the United States has depended on the labor of enslaved peoples. Rather than simply speak these words, we encourage all of us to consider donating to organizations like the ACLU, Black Lives Matter, Campaign Zero, and the NAACP.

WHAT WE DO

Versa-Style is a 501 C 3 non-profit organization and dance ensemble that consists of committed and conscientious artists representing the diversity and beautiful complexity of Los Angeles.

Founded in 2005 by Los Angeles natives and co-artistic directors Jackie Lopez aka Miss Funk and Leigh Foaad aka Breeze-lee, Versa-Style Dance Company was created to promote, empower and celebrate the artistry of Hip Hop and street dance culture. Named “Los Angeles’ Best Dance Troupe for Hip Hop Empowerment” by *LA Weekly*, Versa-Style is recognized for its electrifying performances and inspiring engagement activities for schools and local communities. Consisting of committed, highly skilled street dance artists and educators representative of the diversity and beautiful complexity of Los Angeles, Versa-Style Dance Company harnesses the exhilarating energy of street dance onto the concert stage for an unforgettable evening of dance.

OUR MISSION

Versa-Style Dance Company seeks to empower underserved and marginalized groups worldwide through the movement and culture of Hip Hop dance by creating groundbreaking concert dance works that represent messages of diversity, inclusion, and equity both on stage and within our communities.

VERSA-STYLE IN THE COMMUNITY

Here at UtahPresents, connecting artists with our community is a huge part of what we do. Our community engagement program, called REACHUP, connects artists with students through school matinees and classes, with teachers through professional development courses, with community members through classes, workshops and preshow events, and much more.

In addition to tonight's performance, Versa-Style's founders Jackie Lopez and Leigh Foaad, along with the company dancers, have been in classes and workshops with:

- 8th grade students at SL Center for Science Education Bryant
- School of Dance students at the U
- K - 5th grade students in an after-school program at the Community Learning Center
- More than 1500 3rd - 12th grade school children at a student matinee

Find out more about the REACHUP program and upcoming events at <https://www.utahpresents.org/reachup/>



Versa-Style Movement Artist Harry Weston teaching a class with U of U School of Dance students

THE FOUNDERS

In 2005, Jackie Lopez, aka Miss Funk, was in the final year of pursuing her Bachelor of Arts degree at UCLA in World Arts and Cultures, with a Dance emphasis. She was creating her first repertory work, "The Perfect Song" and was recommended to work with a dancer named Leigh Foaad, aka Breeze-lee. Through this project, the two instantly bonded as collaborators, and decided to create a company together, calling it "Versa-Style," to reflect versatility within street dance, and to honor the roots, origins, beauty, and power of Hip Hop dance.

In May of 2005, Lopez and Foaad co-created their first work together, debuting their brand new company, Versa-Style, at the world famous Los Angeles dance industry showcase, "Choreographer's Carnival." In the following years, they continued to showcase at prestigious Hip Hop dance festivals such as The J.U.i.C.E. Hip Hop Dance Festival (2009, 2010, 2012 & 2014), San Francisco Hip Hop Dance Festival (2009-2012), and internationally renowned Hip Hop dance theater artist Rennie Harris' Illadelph Legends Festival (2010). Also in 2010, the company performed its first full-length theater work, "Feel Our Rhythm," at the intimate Rosenthal Theater at Inner-City Arts in Los Angeles, achieving rave reviews from audiences, inducing an encore run later in the fall. In 2011, the company produced its second full-length work, "Positive Dose," also premiering at the Rosenthal Theater.

2013 was a year of exponential growth for the company, debuting a new work, "Furious Beauty," this time in the John Anson Ford Amphitheater's Summer Series Partnership Program, selling out the theater and again garnering rave reviews. This year also saw Versa-Style grow internationally, performing in Chennai, India, as part of the city's first ever Hip Hop dance festival, as well as a seven-city tour of Israel, as part of the US Embassy Envoy program. Since that year, Versa-Style has enjoyed significant momentum, performing all over the country in Iowa, Montana, Utah, and touring

throughout Alaska, as well as continuing its international efforts, performing at the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland, as well as in Bogota, Colombia, and Cesenatico, Italy. In 2016, Versa-Style returned to the Ford Amphitheatre to debut its latest full-length work, *Box of Hope*, which also premiered in 2017 at The Japanese Cultural and Community Center, as well as The Broad Stage. At the conclusion of the *Box of Hope* tour in 2019, Versa-Style began developing their latest production, “Freemind Freestyle” set to debut once again at the Ford Amphitheatre in Summer of 2020.



Jackie Lopez
Co-Founder & Artistic Director - Organizational Wellness

Jackie Lopez aka Miss Funk is a first generation Latina Los Angeles native. She was the first in her family to graduate high school, continue her education in LA Valley College, transfer to a UC and graduate, all due to the impact of the arts and dance in her life. Jackie graduated Summa Cum Laude from UCLA in 2004 from the Department of World Arts and Cultures, with a concentration in Dance. For the last 23 years, Jackie has been working as a professional dancer, choreographer, teaching artist and cultural educator who has worked with students and artists of all ages nationally and internationally.

Jackie is not only Versa-Style's Co-Founder/Co-Artistic Director, simultaneously Jackie is also Lecturer at UCLA's Dept. of World Arts and Cultures/Dance teaching Hip Hop dance, while also developing the Hip Hop curriculum. Jackie found love for street dance since the late 90's and she has continued to serve the Hip Hop Dance community for over 23 years. Jackie is inspired to keep Versa-Style's mission alive by using her upbringing in LAUSD, her background in arts education and passion for youth and the arts.

**Leigh Foaad****Co-Founder & Artistic Director - Artistic Quality and Integrity**

Leigh Foaad aka Breeze-lee was exposed to dance early, which has largely contributed to his knowledge and experience among a large variety of different dance styles ranging from classical ballet to street-dance vernacular social dances. Most notably, Leigh found his passion and skill set for a street-dance style called "Popping" in 2002. Since then, Leigh has won many national and international competitions gaining him global recognition within the dance community as a dancer, teacher, and artist.

In addition, Leigh has been working with Rennie Harris' Puremovement since 2007 and experienced being a Cultural Ambassador for the United States, touring the Middle East. He is currently a Lecturer at UCLA's Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance teaching Hip Hop dance. Most recently, he was selected as a Hip-Hop diplomat for the NEXT LEVEL program, which is an initiative of the U.S. Dept. of State, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Meridian International Center that uses Hip Hop music, dance and art to foster cross-cultural creative exchange in diverse communities. Leigh was fortunate to travel for 2 weeks to build and exchange with the folks of the Dominican Republic. As a leader and member of Versa-Style Dance Company he is determined to express and share the knowledge and importance of hip-hop culture, while providing high intensity movement and passion for all artists around him.

**Harry Weston****Movement Artist & Artistic Director - Fundraising & Development**

Harry Weston grew up in Santa Cruz, California, surrounded by West African dance and drumming, his first artistic inspirations. He fell in love with Hip Hop dance culture and history at the age

of 15, changing his life forever. At the age of 18, he moved to Los Angeles to study dance at UCLA where he met Jackie Lopez and Leigh Foaad, who eventually asked him to join Versa-Style in 2009. During his time in college he directed the after school Hip Hop dance team at Lincoln High School in East LA, which is now alumni-led and still thriving, and he served as Head Counselor for the UCLA Dance Theater Summer Intensive, which he now directs and is shifting to become the UCLA Hip Hop/Street Dance Summer Intensive. He has traveled the world teaching, performing and battling, but has always stayed connected to his love for Los Angeles. He remains humbled and grateful for the experiences and opportunities Hip Hop and street dance culture have provided him, and pays respect and homage to all the dancers and culture creators from the communities of color who created the dance and music he loves so much.



Alli Gray

Movement Artist & Artistic Director - Artist Wellness

Allison "Alli" Gray-Odeniyide is a dancer, choreographer, and teaching artist based in Los Angeles, California. Stepping onto the performing stage at the age of five, Alli has continued to pursue dance as her greatest life passion. While earning her B.A. degree from UCLA's Department of World Arts and Cultures, she met inspiring teachers and mentors including Sabela Grimes, Rennie Harris, Jackie Lopez, and Leigh Foaad. At this juncture, her life pivoted when she joined Versa-Style Dance Company in 2009, falling in love with Hip Hop dance, culture, and history. Since then, Alli has enjoyed an active artist life; performing in such places as New York, San Francisco, Israel, Oregon, Alaska, India, and Scotland. In 2011, she began teaching at Torres East LA Performing Arts Magnet where she shares her passion and commitment to arts education. Here she founded Rhythm Impact, an after-school dance program dedicated to giving students access to dance training, performance opportunities, and mentorship. Based on her educational successes, Alli was selected in 2019 as the Lead Teaching Artist for Versa-Style: Performance, Education, Community to provide guidance

and professional development for current and upcoming teaching artists.



Ernesto Galarza
Movement Artist & Artistic Director - VSNG
Program & Digital Content/Marketing

Ernesto "Precise" Galarza was born & raised in the city of Pacoima, Ca. Ernesto first met Jackie "Miss Funk" Lopez through an after school program in the sixth grade at his middle school, Lakeview Charter Academy. Later Jackie helped him apply to receive some scholarships from the Flourish Foundation to take Hip Hop/Street Dance courses at the Jonette Swider Dance Center where Jackie then introduced him to Leigh "Breeze-Lee" Foaad. Ernesto was one of the original members of Versa-Style Next Generation starting in 2009, but is now a Principal Dancer and Media and Marketing Manager for Versa-Style Dance Company, as well as one of the Co-Managers for Versa-Style Next Generation. He graduated from UCLA in 2015 with a major in World Arts and Cultures/Dance and a minor in Visual and Performing Arts Education. With over 17 years of experience in Hip Hop/Street Dance, Ernesto remains a student of his craft and continues to learn/train every day with the goal to pass on his knowledge and inspire the future generations.



Brandon Juezan
Movement Artist & Artistic Director - Touring & Events

Brandon Allen Juezan-Williams a.k.a. "Beast Boi" first showed interest in Hip-hop dance when he was in middle school. He initially took a liking to the street dance style Krump, and was eventually exposed to other dance styles once he reached high school. He later met Jackie Lopez at a local dance competition, who invited him and gave him a scholarship to attend the UCLA Dance/Theater Intensive in the summer of 2009. By 2010, he was a member of Versa-Style Next Generation and went on to become a professional dancer

with Versa-Style Dance Company in 2014. He is currently the Project Manager for Versa-Style Dance Company, managing bookings for the company, planning special events, budgeting, and assisting with various administrative tasks. He graduated from Cal State Fullerton in 2017 with a B.A. in Entertainment Business, and his goal is to help/mentor the dance community and families on financial literacy and how to establish strong business acumen.

**Anthony Berry****Movement Artist & Artistic Director - VSNG Program**

Anthony Berry a.k.a. "Berry Groove" was born and raised in the San Fernando Valley, CA. During his junior year of high school he was introduced to Jackie Lopez and Leigh Foaad. He began training with Jackie and Leigh in various street

style dances, and his commitment led him to be one of the original members of Versa-Style Next Generation starting in 2009. Since October 2011, Anthony has been a member of the Versa-Style dance company and is now Principal Dancer since that day. Along with now being Versa-Style's Merchandise Manager, and as well as one of the Co-Managers for Versa-Style Next Generation. He has loved dance ever since he can remember, and he puts his heart and soul into every performance and battle he participates in.

**Cynthia Hernandez****Movement Artist & Artistic Director- Educational Programs**

Cynthia Hernandez is a first generation Mexican-American born and raised in the San Fernando Valley. Growing up in a Latinx household she was exposed to many different genres of

Latinx music and dances like, Cumbia, Salsa and Merengue. Having a strong connection to her heritage and roots, she found an interconnection with Hip Hop dance and culture almost instantly. She met Jackie Lopez and Leigh Foaad in 2006, where she first learned the history and knowledge of Hip Hop and began to train in

Streetdance. Cynthia is a founding member of Versa-Style Next Generation, she joined the group in 2009. In 2014, she joined Versa-Style Dance Company as a core dancer and is now currently a Principal Dancer. Cynthia's had the opportunity to travel and perform all over the country, visiting places such as Alaska where she did a 3-week 5-city tour with Versa-Style and other places like El Salvador and Amsterdam where she performed and battled. In 2017 she earned her Bachelorettes in Science in Public Health from Cal State University Northridge. Cynthia aspires to continue learning and being a practitioner of the Hip Hop and Streetdance culture.



Brianna Grey
Movement Artist

Brianna Grey a.k.a "Passion" always was in love with the arts. From dancing, to singing, to film/photography. But dance was her strongest passion. She grew up with her brother being her first biggest inspiration. He introduced her to break and many other styles. From then and on she has been dancing every since. Growing up her role models were Michael Jackson, Janet Jackson, Chris Brown, and Britney Spears. She would copy each of the moves from their music videos and then make it her own. The year 2011 she met her very first mentors Harry Weston, Jackie Lopez, and Leigh Foaad. They introduced her to the real Hip hop, house, and many different styles. She has been training with them every since and wants to continue to grow. She loves the idea of exploring movement and never knew how far dance would take her. If it wasn't for her mentors guiding her into the right path, knowledge, and history she wouldn't know where she would be at. She is very thankful and excited to see what the future holds for her.

**Kane Smego**
Guest Spoken Word Artist

Kane Smego is an international touring spoken word poet and hip hop artist, educator, and National Poetry Slam finalist. He is the Associate Director and an artist alumnus of Next Level, a cultural diplomacy program that sends American hip-hop artists around the world to use music and dance in promoting cultural exchange, artistic collaboration, and community building. Kane has performed, taught, and managed programs with youth and adults of all ages across the U.S. and abroad on five continents.

Kane's one-man show, *Temples of Lung and Air*, is a work of hip hop theater that premiered at Playmakers Repertory Company in 2018, was featured at the United Solo Theatre Festival in NYC in 2019, and will run as a full production at the Detroit Public Theater in Nov-Dec of this year.

As a recording artist, Kane has released multiple albums featuring his poetry and hip hop music. He also featured on Grammy Award-winner King Mez's debut album *My Everlasting Zeal*, and topped the Spotify Viral 50 billboard in May 2017 featuring on the song *North Cack* with G Yamazawa. The music video for the song appeared on BET Jams, and went on to win Best Music Video at the Hip Hop Film Festival in Harlem, NY.

He has been a keynote speaker at various conferences, a TEDex presenter, and performed at the Shriver Report Live hosted by *Atlantic Magazine*. Kane showcased mainstage at NACA West in 2014, as a lecturer at NACA Nationals 2017, and won Best Educational Session at NACA South 2017.



THANK YOU TO OUR LEVELUP PATRONS

Scott and Kathie Amann

John Bergerson

Havilah Clarke

Patricia and John Clay

Greg Hatch and Terry Kogan

Laurie Hofmann and David Classen

Carolyn and Peter Kowalchik

Mike Lobb

Sallie Dean Shatz

Jill Smith

Jody and Wai-Ming Wong

Learn more about the benefits
of membership at utahpresents.org/levelup

COMING UP NEXT ON THE 22-23 SEASON!



SUGAR SKULL! A DIA DE MUERTOS MUSICAL ADVENTURE

OCT 1 • 2:00PM

Join twelve-year-old Vita Flores on a magical, musical journey to unravel the true meaning of Dia de Muertos. This bilingual/bicultural musical for audiences both young and young-at-heart uses traditional regional music and dance from Mexico to create a joyous, heartfelt adventure.

Tickets and info at utahpresents.org

SPONSORS



Thank you to the people of Salt Lake County for supporting Zoo, Arts and Parks



Nancy Peery Marriott
Alice & Kevin Steiner
Steiner Foundation



Marney & Peter Billings
The Castle Foundation
Mary L. Daines
Robert & Mary Gilchrist
Gordon and Connie Hanks
Greg Hatch & Terry Kogan
Lee & Audrey Hollaar
Kathie and Charles Horman

Tory & Jim Magleby
Robert and Mikelle Mansfield
Lori McDonald
Herbert I. and Elsa B Michael Foundation
Dinesh & Kalpana Patel
Sustainable Campus initiative Fund
Kyle Treadway & Greg Pedroza
John & Martha Veranth



CACTUS & TROPICALS



Carolyn Abravanel
R. Scott & Kathleen Amann
J. Scott Anderson
Jennifer Bach
Luna Banuri
John Ballard & Karen Miller
The Bar Method
John Bergerson
Margaret & Peter Billings
Phillip Bimstein
Gregg Bissict
William Bowden
Amy Bridan
Eden Brush
Darryl & Ann Butt
R. Harold Burton Foundation
Dennis Busch
Cactus & Topicals
Patricia Callahan
Jennifer Campagna
Dhiraj Chand
Havilah Clarke
Patricia Clay
Community Foundation of Utah
Rainey Cornaby
CRS Outdoor Adventures
Mary L. Daines
The Brent & Tearsa Daines Family
Tiffany Danise
Annie & Jahn Davis
Kent Difiore
Kirsten Dorius
George S. & Dolores Doré Eccles
Foundation
Eric & Shellie Eide
Karen Ellison
Amanda Empey

Elise Erler
Micharl Ferro
GAM Foundation JazzSLC
Sarah George
Bob & Mary Gilchrist
Goldman Sachs
Darla Gill
Chet & Carrie Goodwin
Mary Jane Gregoire
Maurena Grossman
John & Illauna Gurr
Ruth Hadlock
Shanna Hall
Hampton Inn & Suites/ Salt Lake
City-University/ Foothill
Gordon & Connie Hanks
Gregory Hatch & Terry Kogan
Richard K. & Shirley S. Hemingway
Foundation
Jessica Henning
Joshua & Masha Herzbrun
Hillcrest Investment Co.
Lisa Himonas
Raymond Hipwell
Laurie Hofmann & David Classen
Lee & Audrey Hollaar
Tiana Hood & Steven Morales
Brooke & Michael Horejsi
Chuck & Kathie Horman
Karineh Hovsepien
Jacqueline Hsiang Haddenham
Thelma Iker
Heather Ingham
Laurel Ingham
Marian Ingham
Elizabeth Ivkovich & Calvin
Smothers

DONORS



Lorraine & Daniel
Jackson
Hilary Jacobs
Sheri Jardine & Erica
Casey
Sterling & Lisa Jardine
Christina Jepson
Cosette Joesten
Sherry Jones
Page & Dan Juliano
Safia Keller
Kenworth Sales
Company
David & Lisa Kieda
David & Renae Kirby
Gregory Kofford
Carolyn & Peter
Kowalchik
Jill Leonelli
LIFEWTR
Michael Lobb
Lucia Lucci
Jonathan Lucero
Nancy Peery Marriott
Hartman Macey
Simione Malohifo'ou
R. Tyler & Josel
McCabe
Rebecca McCann
Marilyn McConkie
Chrissy & Kurt Micek
Herbert I. & Elsa B.
Michael Foundation
Donald & Clara
Murphy

Nancy Murphy
National Endowment
for the Arts
National Dance Project
New England
Foundation for the
Arts, Inc
David Oberle
Charlotte Oshiro
Dinesh & Kalpana
Patel
Arcadia Payne
John & Marcia Price
Family Foundation
Karin & Scott Pynes
Rebecca Ragain
Margaret Reiser
Jose Rivera-Lluberas
Harold Rust
Karlyn Salazar
Salt Lake Arts Council
Salt Lake County Zoo,
Arts, and Parks
Mary Schubach
McCarthy
Sallie Dean Shatz
Melinda Shelley
Jill Smith
David Sound
Andrea Stavrakakis
Steiner Foundation Inc
Alice & Kevin Steiner
Sam & Diane Stewart
Family Foundation
Katheryn Stockton

Ann Marie Sturm
Summit Sotheby's
International Realty
Barbara Svee
Eric Swenson
Andrew Swindle
The B.W. Bastion
Foundation
Mary Thomson
Ellen Tolstad & Ray
Piskadlo
R. Kyle Teadway &
Greg Pedroza
Janzell & Ben Tutor
United Way of Salt
Lake
University Guest House
Utah Division of Art &
Museums
Utah Humanities
John & Martha Veranth
Elizabeth Warner
Cindy Watson
Sarah Wells
Western Arts
Western States Arts
Federation
Kelly & David Winslow
Jody & Wai-Ming
Wong
XMission
Zions Bank

Thank you to all our donors giving gifts of \$25+ over the last 18 months

Ashley Behunin	Production Manager
Dennis Busch	Campaign Manager
Toni Byrd	Assistant Ticket Office Manager
Janet Graham	Finance Manager
Kelleigh Helm	Major Gifts Officer
Sheri Jardine	Content Manager/Co-Interim Director
Joe Killian	Production Manager
Kaleb Klaypool	Ticket Office Manager
Keven Myhre	Operations Director/Co-Interim Director
Stephanie Overfelt	Event Manager
Jude Ruelas	Event Manager
Bethany Tucker	Audio Engineer
Robin Wilks-Dunn	Community Engagement Manager
Steve Wimmer	Stage Manager

UTAHPRESENTS ADVISORY BOARD

David Kirby, chair	Jake Garn	Sallie Dean Shatz
Michael A. Billings	Josh Herzbrun	Srilatha Singh
Gregg Michael Bissict	Laurie Hofmann	Alice Steiner
Patricia Callahan	Tiana Hood	Anne Marie Sturm
Dhiraj Chand	Marian Ingham	Elizabeth Menlove
Rainey Cornaby	Jill Leonelli	Thomas
Annie Davis	Lydia Martinez	Kyle Treadway
Don Gale	John W. Scheib	Heather Wybrow



facebook.com/utahpresents



twitter.com/utahpresents



instagram.com/utahpresents