



## Dancing the Archives: Emerging Choreographers and Living History

Thursday, February 13, at 12 p.m.  
University of Southern California

### KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- USC recently debuted the Dance Heritage Video Archive Project (DHVA).
- In this event, choreographers Chris Emile, Jinglin Liao, and Marina Magalhães will engage with materials in the DHVA as well as several other USC archives—ONE Archives, the California Historical Society Collection, and the Los Angeles City Archives—to create site-specific dance works for roving audiences.
- After the performances, the choreographers will participate in a panel led by Bebe Miller, an award-winning choreographer who has expanded the language of dance through innovative work involving film, video, and digital media.

### WHAT IS AN ARCHIVE(S)?

“An archives is a place where people can go to gather firsthand facts, data, and evidence from letters, reports, notes, memos, photographs, and other primary sources.”—The National Archives

Archives are repositories of primary source documents. As distinct from, say, a book, which may illuminate a given history by summarizing, analyzing, or creating an informed and intentional narrative of that history based on research and reflection on primary sources, an archive is the naturally generated primary sources themselves—the personal papers of a historical figure, the records of a household or a neighborhood. Where the biography or history book is a conscious creation, the archive is the accumulation of materials that happens organically—the administrative documents that are a necessary part of life in society, the material evidence of relationships between people (correspondence, snapshots). An archive might include letters, photographs, audio and video recordings, handwritten notes, ephemera like menus and event flyers, and other primary sources. You probably have personal archives in your home—collections of tickets and programs from

events you’ve attended, journals and notebooks, notepads with old to-do lists, receipts, or any other materials that contain information about your or your household’s history.

Professional archivists make sure that primary source materials are available for future generations to learn and gather information from. They preserve materials, catalog them, and make them accessible to researchers both in person and, increasingly, online.

### VOCABULARY CORNER

“[U]nbeknownst to most word processors, ‘an archives’ is a grammatically correct phrase. ‘Archives’ is one of those words that can be either singular or plural, though it is relatively common to drop the ‘s’ when referring to the singular. ‘Archives’ can refer to a collection of archival materials, the facility in which the materials are stored, or the organization that collects and maintains them.”

—“Just what is an archives, anyway?” by Jennifer Wright on the Smithsonian Institution Archives blog

### ARCHIVING DANCE

Dance poses unique challenges for archivists. In a 2014 article in *The Guardian*, choreographer Siobhan Davies asked, “Can dance be archived?” Davies articulated the conundrum: “The visual arts have been able to develop a public discourse partly due to their rich and historic archives. Conversely, dance and choreography’s principal elements deal with movement and change, and to support how the dance arts can evolve and be appreciated, we must stay true to its transformational nature.” Davies went on: “How [do] we use these qualities of change and the live performance element, yet still have a record of what went before. Can dance as an artform contribute to a change in archival practice?”

The dance artist Chloe Chotrani, who established a digital archive of performing artists from South and Southeast Asia and their diasporas, notes that the body itself is an archive, which “holds our narratives, cultural conditions,

environment, ancestry, heritage, perspectives, trauma, and healing.” Chotrani also points to how important it is for performance to be documented so that it can be known to people who were not present at the moment and in the space of the performance.

Dance/USA has an archiving department whose mission is “to advance the ability of diverse dance communities to safeguard and share their legacies.” They offer fellowships in dance archiving practices and a toolkit to help artists organize and preserve their records.

## ARCHIVES FEATURED IN THIS EVENT

### USC DANCE HERITAGE VIDEO ARCHIVE PROJECT

The USC Dance Heritage Video Archive Project preserves culturally significant recordings that document global and U.S. dance traditions, creative work by outstanding choreographers and performers, and performances that helped to advance the art form. The DHVA collection continues the work begun by the Dance Heritage Coalition’s Dance Preservation and Digitization Project to address the challenges faced by dance artists, choreographers, performers, and companies in preserving a record of their work and helping to share it as broadly as possible with global and U.S. audiences and scholars.

Over a 15-year period, the Dance Heritage Coalition assembled more than 1,200 important dance performances digitized at hubs in New York, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. Thanks to support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, those recordings were migrated to their new permanent home in the USC Digital Library during the summer of 2018. The USC Libraries will make the DHVA collection available as broadly as reasonably possible within contractual and legal limits (since some of the recordings have rights restrictions) for educational research, study, and teaching.

### ONE ARCHIVES: NATIONAL GAY & LESBIAN ARCHIVES AT THE USC LIBRARIES

ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives at the USC Libraries is the largest repository of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer materials in the world. Founded in 1952, ONE Archives currently houses over two million archival items, including periodicals; books; film, video, and audio recordings; photographs; artworks; organizational records; and personal papers. ONE Archives has been a part of the USC Libraries since 2010.

### THE CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION

The California Historical Society Collection contains more than 25,000 photographs that document the growth of Southern California, particularly the development of the Los Angeles region, between 1860 and 1960. The full archive was placed on long-term deposit at USC in 1990 and includes the Title Insurance and Trust Company Collection (TICOR) and the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce Collection. The Title Insurance and Trust Company Collection (1860–1960) comprises nearly 15,000 unique photographs of L.A.

city, street, and architectural views; California Missions; Southwestern Native Americans; and turn-of-the-twentieth-century Nevada, Arizona, and California. The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce Collection (1888–1960) contains more than 3,600 unique photographs documenting the Chamber’s promotional efforts during L.A.’s early years, which depict the growth of municipal enterprises such as ground transportation systems, aviation, and shipping. The collection also includes about 1,000 lantern slides.

### THE LOS ANGELES CITY ARCHIVES

The Los Angeles City Archives contains selected documents relating to the early history of Los Angeles (including land grants and maps), and videos from the mid-twentieth century, from city departments and offices including the Department of City Planning, Office of the City Clerk, LAPD, and Department of Public Works.

## PARTICIPATING CHOREOGRAPHERS

Chris Emile is a choreographer, performer, and director based in Los Angeles. He received his formal education from the Alvin Ailey School and the Alonzo King LINES Ballet/Dominican University joint program. He is the co-founder/curator of the movement-based collective No)one. Art House. His work has been presented by Hauser & Wirth, the Getty Museum, MOCA, and the California African American Museum, among others. His choreography has been commissioned by LA Opera, San Francisco Symphony, Solange Knowles, Anderson Paak, and Refinery 29.

Jinglin Liao is an interdisciplinary choreographer and performer. Inspired by animals’ alertness, her aim is to transform classical/traditional movement to individual body language with a sense of danger, using human instinct, impulse, emotions, and voice to trigger movement. She received her MFA in choreography with a minor in integrated media from CalArts in 2019.

Marina Magalhães is a border-crosser, bridge-builder, and dance-and-change-maker from Brazil who is based in Los Angeles. Her work is rooted in decolonial diasporic praxis, wherein ancestral, ritual, and social practices are located as fertile sites for choreographic inquiry, pedagogic encounters, and political possibility. She has shared her work throughout the U.S., Brazil, Cuba, Botswana, South Africa, Germany, and France, and is the recipient of an LA Weekly Theater Award for Best Choreography. Magalhães founded the Dancing Diaspora platform.

## FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

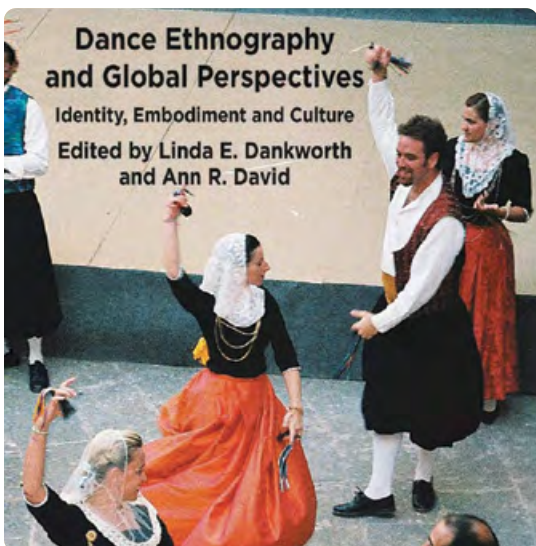
- ◉ Why are archives important?
- ◉ Chloe Chotrani states, “Performing arts is the most vulnerable art because of its ephemeral nature. It is also the reason why it is pure, always experienced best live.” How can dance artists and archivists navigate this tension?
- ◉ How would you answer Siobhan Davies’ question: “Can dance as an artform contribute to a change in archival practice?”



Paul Taylor Celebration | 2/26/20



Dorrance Dance | 3/4/20



## IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- 🕒 The USC Dance Heritage Video Archive  
[digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15799coll105](http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15799coll105)
- 🕒 Paul Taylor Celebration @ USC, 2/26/20  
[bit.ly/VVpaultaylor](http://bit.ly/VVpaultaylor)
- 🕒 DorranceDance @ USC, 3/4/20  
[bit.ly/VVDorranceDance](http://bit.ly/VVDorranceDance)
- 🕒 Events and Classes at the USC Glorja Kaufman School of Dance  
[kaufman.usc.edu](http://kaufman.usc.edu)
- 🕒 A List of Dance Archives Created by the German Dance Heritage Fund  
[tanzfonds.de/en/magazin/overview-dance-archives-around-the-world/](http://tanzfonds.de/en/magazin/overview-dance-archives-around-the-world/)
- 🕒 ONE Archives: National Gay and Lesbian Archives at the USC Libraries  
[one.usc.edu](http://one.usc.edu)
- 🕒 The California Historical Society Collection at the USC Libraries  
[digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15799coll65](http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15799coll65)
- 🕒 The Los Angeles City Archives at the USC Libraries  
[digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15799coll88](http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/p15799coll88)
- 🕒 Los Angeles Contemporary Archive  
[lacarchive.com](http://lacarchive.com)
- 🕒 (Free!) Dancing Diaspora Classes at Pieter Space  
[pieterpasd.com](http://pieterpasd.com)

## DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

**JAVIER S. GARIBAY AND ANTHONY ANDERSON** of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about this evening's event. Those with a call number (e.g., books) are physical items which you can find in our campus libraries. Those without a call number (e.g. e-books, journals, and databases) are electronic resources, which you can access through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at [libraries.usc.edu](http://libraries.usc.edu).

### RECOMMENDED BOOKS

David, Ann R., and Linda E Dankworth. *Dance Ethnography and Global Perspectives: Identity, Embodiment, and Culture*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2014.

DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY GV1588.6 D36 2014

Taylor, Diana. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2003.

DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY E20 T39 2003

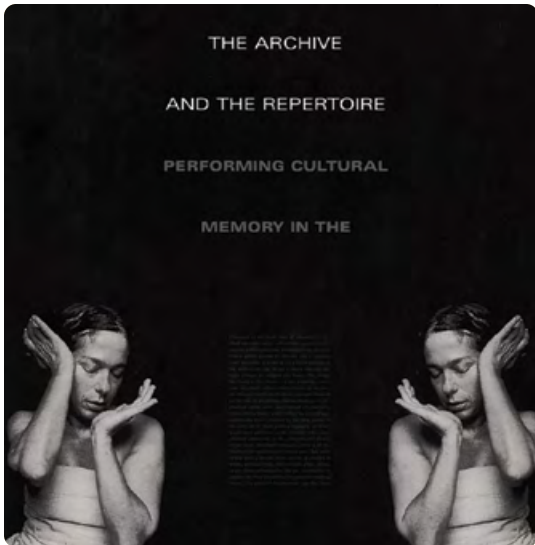
Franklin, Eric N. *Dance Imagery for Technique and Performance*. Champaign: Human Kinetics, 2014.

DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY GV1589 F73 2014

Hamilton, Trenton. *The History of Western Dance*. New York: Britannica Educational Publishing, 2016.

DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY GV1596.5 H57 2016





## RECOMMENDED JOURNALS

### *Dance Magazine*

Focuses on the dance community with articles, interviews, and performance reviews.

### *Dance Research*

Provides an international forum for the presentation and discussion of contemporary dance research and contains a section of comprehensive book and journal reviews.

## RECOMMENDED DATABASES

### Dance Heritage Video Archive

A collection of more than 1,200 digitized videos of dance performances that preserve culturally significant global and US dance traditions.

### Dance in Video

Contains nearly 250 dance productions and documentaries by the most influential performers and companies of the twentieth century. Selections include ballet, tap, jazz, contemporary, experimental, and improvisational dance.

### IIPA (International Index to the Performing Arts)

Indexes content from more than one hundred international performing arts periodicals around the world, and includes performing arts articles and obituaries appearing in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. IIPA covers nearly all aspects of the world of the performing arts, from the most scholarly studies to the latest crazes.

