

# PROGRAM

## 1:30pm – 3:00pm Haitian Folkloric Dance Class

Jean Appolon will lead his Haitian Folkloric community dance class. This all-levels class begins with a complete warm-up that blends modern technique with Afro-Haitian styles of dance. Accompanied by live drummers, the dancers will learn movements and rhythms of Haiti including but not limited to Yanvalou, Ibo, Kongo, Nago, and Petwo. The movements are intricate and technical – yet loose and expressive at the same time.

## 3:30pm – 4:30pm Ouvèti ["opening" in Haitian Creole]

Appolon's latest work in development portrays feelings of isolation, fear, and ultimately hope and connection that people experiencing trauma might cycle through. Bringing together these emotions and experiences through dance, combined with the soundscape created by musician Val Jeanty. A short opening restorative justice circle will be led by JAE's Cultural Strategist, Nadia Issa, to collectively welcome the community into the public space and set the "stage" for the site-specific performance.



JEAN  
APPOLON  
EXPRESSIONS

Jean Appolon Expressions (JAE) is a contemporary dance company deeply rooted in Haitian-folkloric culture that nurtures a global community through professional performances, educational opportunities, dance training, and the joy of movement for people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

JAE shares the liberating power of Haitian-folkloric dance to cultivate hope and healing towards a more expressive and socially just world.

[jeanappolonexpressions.org](http://jeanappolonexpressions.org)



## JEAN APPOLON

### Artistic Director & Co-Founder

In addition to being the Co-founder and Artistic Director of Jean Appolon Expressions (JAE), Jean Appolon is a successful choreographer and master teacher based in Boston and Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Appolon received his earliest training and performance opportunities in Port-au-Prince with the Viviane Gauthier Dance Company and the Folkloric Ballet of Haiti. Appolon continued his dance education in the U.S. at the Harvard and Radcliffe Dance Program (1995-1996, Boston, MA), Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (1996-1998, New York, NY) and the Joffrey American Ballet School (1998-2003, New York, NY), where he graduated with a B.A. from a joint degree program offered by The New School.

Appolon has also performed with Elma Lewis Productions (Black Nativity), Marlene Silva, North Star Ballet Company (Fairbanks, AK), Black Door Dance Company (Miami, FL), and the Atlantic City Ballet Company. Jean Appolon teaches regularly at Boston Ballet, UMASS Boston and The Dance Complex (Cambridge, MA), among other locations. Beginning in 2006,

Appolon conceived and has since directed a free annual summer dance course in Port-au-Prince that serves young, aspiring Haitian dancers who do not have regular access to dance training. The 2019 Summer Dance Institute is being held in Lawrence, MA for the first time, in partnership with the Izizwe Dance studio and Bread and Roses.

Appolon has been the subject of feature articles and interviews in The Boston Globe, Dance Studio Life Magazine, World Vision Report, The Boston Haitian Reporter, Le Nouvelliste and NPR, and has received significant coverage by Haiti's television and radio stations.

Appolon is an Inductee of the Haitian Roundtable's 1804 List of Haitian American Changemakers (2014) for his groundbreaking accomplishments in dance. Jean Appolon has been endorsed by E. Denise Simmons, Mayor of the City of Cambridge, for his positive contributions to the Cambridge community. Jean Appolon is a member of The International Association of Blacks in Dance and The Boston Dance Alliance.



## **MCEBISI XOTYENI**

### **Company Dancer & Artistic Manager**

Mcebisi Xotyeni, of Cape Town, South Africa, is a professional dancer, teacher, and choreographer. He began dancing with the outreach program Dance For All, where he trained extensively in ballet, African, contemporary, and hip hop. He was awarded a full scholarship with Dance For All and eventually began working for the professional dance company iKapa Dance Theatre. He has also worked with leading companies in South Africa such as Cape Town City Ballet, Suede Productions, and Sibonelo Dance Project. He has performed for numerous festivals and has collaborated with international artists for performances and outreach projects.



## **LONNIE STANTON**

### **Company Dancer & Rehearsal Manager**

Lonnie Stanton is a Northern California native based in Boston. For the last decade, Lonnie has been committed to dance education with a strong somatic focus as well as a professional contemporary performance career. She graduated from the Boston Conservatory with a BFA in Dance and has completed her 200 hour yoga certification through Yogaworks. For 10 years, she worked with Prometheus Dance, performing and teaching with the company. Lonnie currently performs with Jean Appolon Expressions, Peter DiMuro/ Public Displays of Motion, Lynn Modell, and Callie Chapman. During her time dancing in NYC, she worked with Kinesis Project Dance Theatre focusing solely on site-specific performance. Stanton is passionate about sharing dance in unconventional, often outdoor spaces where a broad audience can be reached. She has produced and structured dance for film or public space for the Somerville Arts Council, Neoscape (advertisement), Tamara Al- Mashouk, Silvi Naci, Moe Pope, Linda Tegg, and Toni Lester (all visual or sound artists). In addition to Harvard Dance Center, Stanton is on faculty at Boston Ballet (ECI), The School of Classical Ballet, and Deborah Mason School of Dance. Bringing dance education into public schools through Notes in Motion, New York City Ballet, and Boston Ballet has been especially rewarding to Lonnie.



## MEGHAN RILEY

### Company Dancer & Media and Marketing Director

Meghan Riling grew up dancing in Connecticut and moved to Boston to study at Boston University, where she joined the Dance Theatre Group and got very interested in choreography and improv dance. Since graduation, she has performed and/or choreographed for the Harvard-Radcliffe Modern Dance Company, the CRLS Modern Dance Company, and Luminarium Dance Company. She co-directed and choreographed for Calamity Co Dance, which performs goofy modern dance pieces and produces casual modern and pop art variety shows. Outside of dance, she was one third of the indie pop band One Happy Island, which played around the country and did some brief tours in the UK. Meghan also taught high school math for a number of years and earned a Ph.D. in Math Education at Boston University, researching creativity, social dynamics, and aesthetic experiences in the mathematics classroom.



## VAL JEANTY

### Composer & Accompanist

Val Jeanty, also known as Val-Inc, is an Haitian afrofuturist drummer, turntablist, and professor at Berklee College of Music. Jeanty is a pioneer of the electronic music subgenre called Afro- Electronica (also called "Vodou-Electro") incorporating Haitian Vodou rhythms with digital instrumentations by synergistically combining acoustics with electronics and the archaic with the postmodern. Jeanty's Afro-Electronica performances include The Whitney Museum, The Museum of Modern Art and internationally at The Venice Biennale in Italy. She is a Van Lier fellow and was commissioned by NYSCA for Roulette's Intermedium Residency. Jeanty has worked with a diverse array of artists including the late great Geri Allen, Anthony Braxton, Terri Lyne Carrington and Francisco Mora Catlett. Other highlights include "Fascinating Her Resilience" a Wesleyan University commissioned multimedia collaboration with professor Gina Ulysse and with Afro-Cuban bassist Yosvany Terry on his grammy nominated album "New Throned King".



## **MEGHAN MCGRATH**

*Executive Director & Company Dancer*

Meghan McGrath began her dance training in New Hampshire and studied under Barbara Mullen, Dee Keri, Matt Mattox, Jr. and Bryan Steele. She received a BA in Psychology and Dance from UMass Amherst and a MEd. in the Creative Arts from Lesley University. Meghan is a founding member of Jean Appolon Expressions (JAE) Dance company, has performed with Boston-based BoSoma Dance Company, and in Texas with Austin Allegro Dance. She is also an early childhood educator, with over 15 years of teaching experience and a passion for bringing the arts and movement into the classroom with a social justice lens. Meghan earned her 200-hour yoga certification through Yogaworks NYC, and weaves this practice into her work with youth.

She has also volunteered as a yoga instructor with Hands to Heart, a nonprofit organization that shares the healing practice of yoga with people affected by addiction, poverty & trauma in Greater Boston.

Meghan began working with JAE in the fall of 2010. She has advanced JAE partnerships and inclusive practices for the organization. She became JAE's Executive Director (ED) in 2020. In that role, she is committed to ensuring that JAE is a vehicle for anti-racism. She plans to work to expand the company's educational arts programming and organizational partnerships, both centered around social justice, for youth and adults alike. She plans to focus on bringing anti-racist conversations and activism to white spaces and audiences to bridge gaps and support effective communication. Meghan believes that elevating Black dance and Black voices, and integrating them into artistic and educational outreach, can bring communities together. In this way, JAE can play an important role in the larger effort to dismantle systemic racism and inequities. While working alongside Jean Appolon for 10 years, Meghan has aided him in successfully building a rich, diverse dance community that has provided healing space for many. Her primary charge as ED is to partner with Jean to expand this community using dance, artistry, and cultural education as a mechanism for social change. She is grateful to everyone in the JAE community for their support in this mission.



## **NADIA MILAD ISSA**

### ***Company Dancer & Cultural Strategist***

Nadia is as an Afro-Dominicanx and Lebanese Queer Artist-Academic-Activist. Nadia recently graduated from Hampshire College where they studied Dance, African(a) Studies, and Anthropology and will be attending Harvard Divinity School in Fall 2020 pursuing the Master of Theological Studies in African and African American Religious Studies. Prior to Hampshire, Nadia was a Dance major at Boston Arts Academy, a visual and performing arts high school. Nadia has received training from and performed in dance works by William McLaughlin, Sheryl Thomas, Cristal Brown, Frederick Earl Mosley, Vincent Hardy, Heidi Cruz, Princess Mhoon, Bronwen MacArthur, Bill T.

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Jones and Arnie Zane, Bebe Miller, Bárbara Balbuena, Yeniselt Galata Calvo, Eva Despaigne-Trujillo and Obini Batá, Camille A. Brown, and Emilio Hernández González of the company Raíces Profundas. Nadia's dance choreography has been presented at Boston University, Hampshire College, and la Fundación de Alejo Carpentier (Casa de la Conde de la Reunión) in Havana, Cuba. Nadia is all about cultivating art and research that challenges and dismantles white supremacy. Nadia continues to work through the lens of Traditions and Religions of Afrikan origin, Survival, Blackness, and the Black Caribbean Diaspora within dance and written works. Nadia recognizes that dance is an embodied tool of ritual and resistance in their research and training. Through dance and ethnographic research, Nadia has been able to navigate and communicate Blackness, queerness, and the sacred.

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*We support the Haitian  
Community!*

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## My Little Best Friends Early Learning Center

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# EVENT SPONSORS



City of Malden

Unite Malden Initiative

[www.cityofmalden.org/741/UniteMalden-2020](http://www.cityofmalden.org/741/UniteMalden-2020)



Urban Media Arts

[urbanmediaarts.org](http://urbanmediaarts.org)



Malden Cultural Council

[massculturalcouncil.org/local-council/Malden/](http://massculturalcouncil.org/local-council/Malden/)



People's United Bank

[branches.peoples.com/ma/malden/51-commercial-street.html](http://branches.peoples.com/ma/malden/51-commercial-street.html)

These organizations were researched and compiled by Nicolas Hyacinthe, who says "These organizations have been around and have a track record of being on the ground and helping. They have a legacy, an imprint in Haiti. I favored organizations that are Haitian-led or where Haitians are part of the top administration. These all have a good score on Charity Navigator and they make it easy to donate. People can go on their website and read about them. Many I've heard about from people in Haiti – where they have directly encountered the organization's work."

- **AMHE** [www.amhe.org](http://www.amhe.org)
- **FOKAL** [www.Fokal.org](http://www.Fokal.org)
- **Fonkoze** [www.fonkoze.org](http://www.fonkoze.org)
- **Haitian Women For Haitian Refugees** [www.haitianrefugees.org](http://www.haitianrefugees.org)
- **Health equity international St Boniface Haiti Foundation**  
[www.healthequityintl.org](http://www.healthequityintl.org)
- **Hope For Haiti** [www.hopeforhaiti.org](http://www.hopeforhaiti.org)
- **Lambi Fund** [www.lambifund.org](http://www.lambifund.org)
- **Partners in Health** [pih.org](http://pih.org)
- **SOIL** [www.oursoil.org](http://www.oursoil.org)
- **Sowaseed** [www.sowaseedonline.org](http://www.sowaseedonline.org)

## Local Efforts & Ways to Help

**Help Feed Southern Haitians After the Earthquake |**

[https://www.gofundme.com/f/t3gcsu-help?](https://www.gofundme.com/f/t3gcsu-help?fbclid=IwAR0hDgxKc3VnErjkAFLKKh8LNtiHE5NTJo81BQcx3K5Uk9sbdbnr3uE1U_8)

[fbclid=IwAR0hDgxKc3VnErjkAFLKKh8LNtiHE5NTJo81BQcx3K5Uk9sbdbnr3uE1U\\_8](https://www.gofundme.com/f/t3gcsu-help?fbclid=IwAR0hDgxKc3VnErjkAFLKKh8LNtiHE5NTJo81BQcx3K5Uk9sbdbnr3uE1U_8)

*Fundraising & distribution initiative by Marie Coulanges*

**Malden Comes Together for Haiti |** [https://www.gofundme.com/f/malden-comes-together-for-haiti?member=13608909&sharetype=teams&utm\\_campaign=p\\_na+share-sheet&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=facebook](https://www.gofundme.com/f/malden-comes-together-for-haiti?member=13608909&sharetype=teams&utm_campaign=p_na+share-sheet&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook)

*Organized by the local Ceide family in collaboration with Greg Gourgue*

*Matènwa Community Learning Center*

**Support a learning center in Haiti that partners with Malden High School**

<https://www.matenwa.org/about1-c186v>

**Earthquake relief efforts in the southwest of Haiti through Jean Appolon partner organization ACEGA |** <https://jeanappolonexpressions.org/give>

*ACEGA's mission is first to accompany youth in Jeremie and around Grand'Anse, and to contribute to the education sector, particularly through arts and culture.*