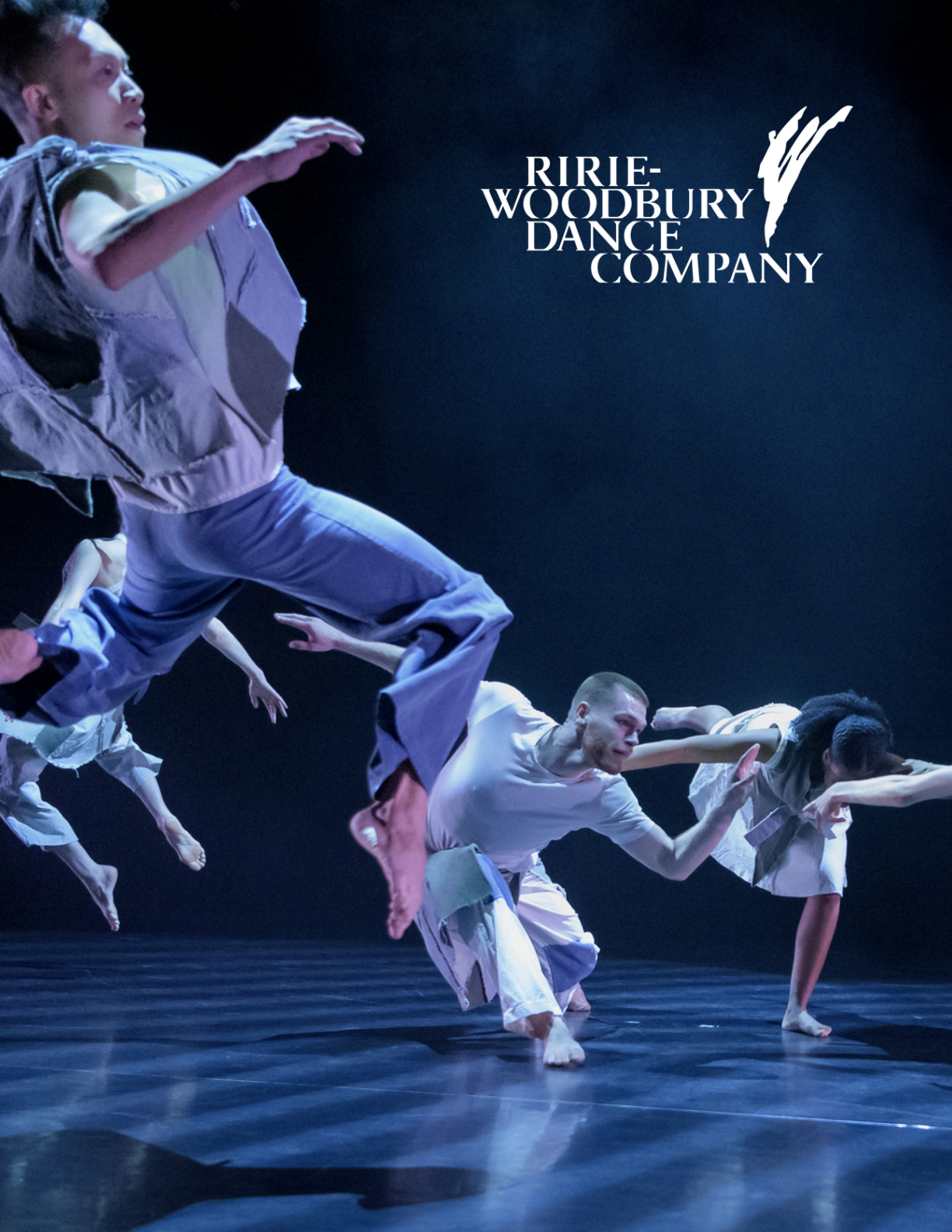
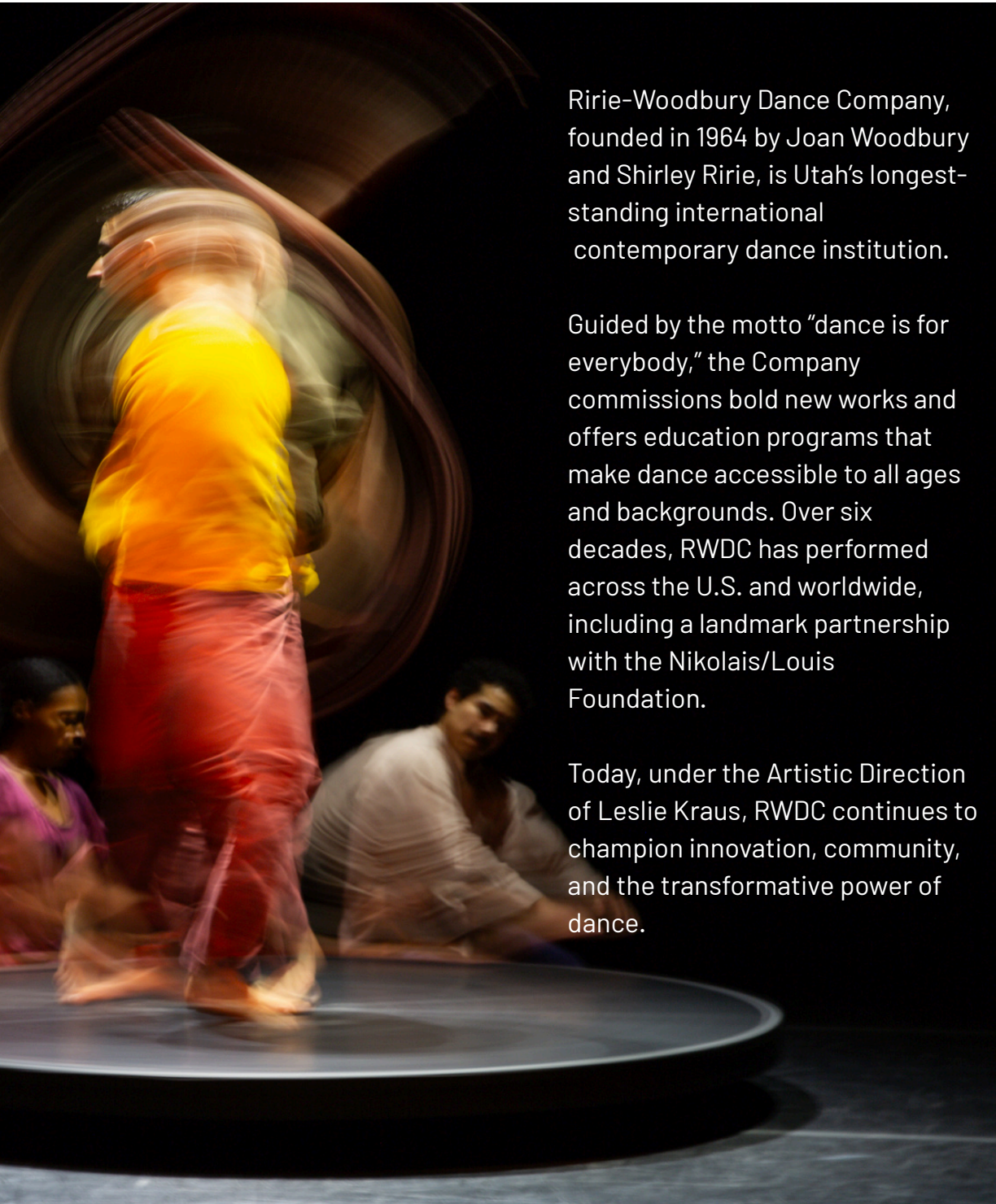

RIRIE-
WOODBURY
DANCE
COMPANY

ABOUT THE COMPANY



Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company, founded in 1964 by Joan Woodbury and Shirley Ririe, is Utah's longest-standing international contemporary dance institution.

Guided by the motto "dance is for everybody," the Company commissions bold new works and offers education programs that make dance accessible to all ages and backgrounds. Over six decades, RWDC has performed across the U.S. and worldwide, including a landmark partnership with the Nikolais/Louis Foundation.

Today, under the Artistic Direction of Leslie Kraus, RWDC continues to champion innovation, community, and the transformative power of dance.

LESLIE KRAUS - ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Leslie Kraus is a choreographer, performer, and educator with a distinguished career spanning performance and academia.

From 2006 to 2014, she was a principal dancer with the Kate Weare Company. From 2012-2015, Kraus performed with Punchdrunk in both Sleep No More (NYC) and The Drowned Man (UK), and has continued with the company as both performer and guest rehearsal director through 2024.

From 2018-2025, she taught at the University of Oklahoma, earning the rank of Associate Professor. In 2025, she became the artistic director of Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company.

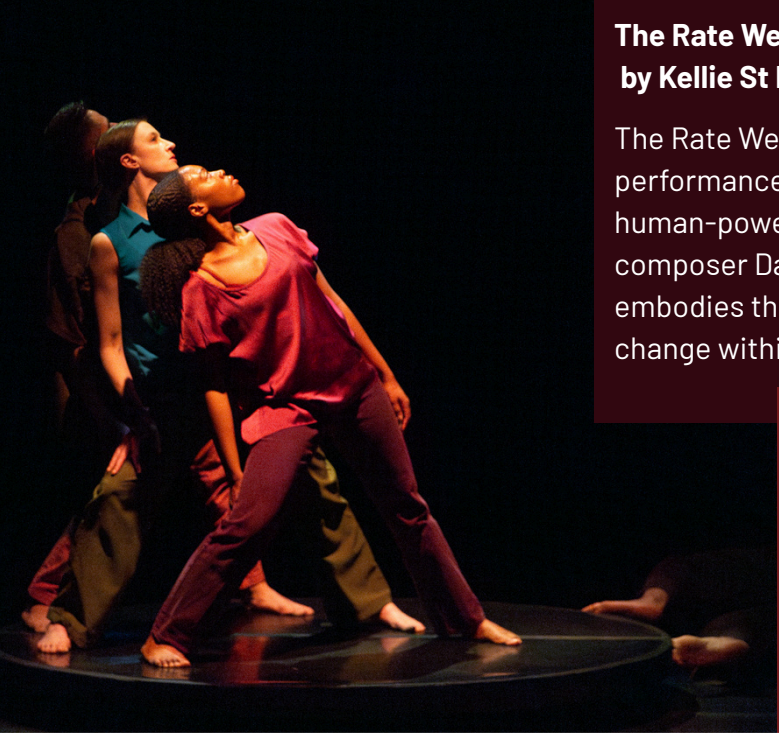
Sarabande for 6
by Annie Rigney

Sarabande for 6 is a visceral exploration of emotion, relationships, and human complexity. Through rich, sensory, image based movement, the work invites audiences into an intimately embodied experience. In the round or proscenium.

REPERTORY

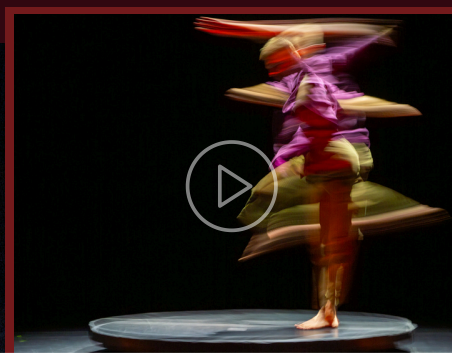
The Opposite of Killing
by Tzveta Kassabova

The Opposite of Killing explores anger, sorrow, and understanding through improvisation, dynamic phrase work, and theatrical imagery. Costumes transition from dark to light gray, darkness to hope. Accommodates six additional dancers.



The Rate We Change
by Kellie St Pierre

The Rate We Change is a collaborative performance featuring six dancers, a human-powered spinning platform, and composer Daniel Clifton. This work embodies the metaphor of evolving, ongoing change within our dynamic world.



REPERTORY

Glitter
by FLOCK

Glitter is a visceral and emotionally resonant piece that uses the mythology of unicorns to explore the duality of confinement and expansion, safety and freedom, and the price of individuality.

PRESERVING THE WORKS OF ALWIN NIKOLAIS

Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company is the only company worldwide with rights to perform full evenings of Alwin Nikolais' groundbreaking works.

Called the "father of multi-media theater," Alwin Nikolais was an American choreographic master who designed every element of his productions (lighting, sound, costumes, movement, props) into his signature striking geometric style. His groundbreaking vision profoundly shaped generations of choreographers and companies.

Alongside Nikolais Foundation Artistic Director Alberto del Saz, RWDC has toured these legacy works internationally since 2003, and remains committed to preserving Nikolais' legacy while continuing to expand its contemporary repertory.

EDUCATION & AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company is unique in its ability to educate on tour, with dancers trained as both performers and educators.

We offer **tailored residencies:**

- master classes
- workshops
- lecture-demonstrations

We work with participants of all ages and levels to deepen audience engagement, expand access to the arts, and build lasting community connections alongside our performances.

"We have been bringing professional companies to Baton Rouge for almost 30 years and this was one of our best experiences ever! We fell in love with Ririe-Woodbury when they delighted two entire schools with their lecture demonstrations. They then taught incredible master classes before wowing our public with their diverse repertory and outstanding dancers. Add to that the generosity of their publicity appearances and guest lecture and we could not have been happier. They are smart, generous and incredibly talented. I wish we could bring them in every year!"

-Molly Buchmann, Dance Dept. Head, Louisiana State University

PRESS & TESTIMONIALS

"The Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company of Salt Lake City staged a magical retrospective of multimedia innovations by the late Alwin Nikolais. Costumes, lighting, set design, electronic music and choreography. Nikolais did it all, and the program unfailingly conveyed the sense of childlike wonder at the heart of his style."
-Lewis Segal, Los Angeles Times

Ririe-Woodbury has an approach to movement that is innovative, sophisticated, and very accessible. Their motto of "Dance is for Everybody!" rang true in all their works..."
-**Anchorage Daily News**

"The RWDC residency at Brenau University was an exciting, educational and transformative experience for the students. The dance students were challenged technically and creatively in a way that brought out inner strengths and abilities that they previously had not called upon. This experience gave them a renewed appreciation of their chosen art form and inspired them to aim for new heights in their artistic life goals."
-Vincas Greene, Brenau University

"In a word, Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company was superb. Tremendous emotional intensity propelled the enthralling pace of the program ... The company's six dance artists exhibited a strong cohesive chemistry in their ensemble work ..."
-Les Roka, The Utah Review

"Ririe-Woodbury brought the audience to its feet applauding...exuberantly performed... they have one direction, forward."
-Dance Magazine

BOOKING

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR:
Leslie Kraus
leslie@ririewoodbury.com

BOOKING COORDINATOR:
Sasha Rydlizky
sasha@ririewoodbury.com

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
Thom Dancy
thom@ririewoodbury.com

REPRESENTATIVE:
Rachel Cohen, Cadence Arts Network
rachel@cadencearts.com