



UH DANCE ENSEMBLE



The Dance Ensemble is the University of Houston's pre-professional performing dance company. Formed in 1992, the Dance Ensemble offers students the opportunity to practice performance skills by rehearsing with prestigious guests artists and faculty. Under the direction of **Key'Aira Lockett**, these student dancers rehearse a minimum of eleven hours a week, preparing for numerous performances held throughout the year. The repertory consists of a variety of dances from environmental pieces to stage productions.

Each year, the Dance Ensemble performs site-specific works on campus and in the community. Collaborations with UH Public Art, Moores School of Music, and the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center have included performances on stage and across the campus. The company has performed at sites such as the Blaffer Gallery Art Museum, Miller Outdoor Theatre in Hermann Park, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, and Discovery Green.

In addition to their exceptional performance abilities, some members of the Dance Ensemble are also aspiring choreographers. In the past, student works have received high honors and represented the University of Houston at the American College Dance Festival's national conventions. The Dance Ensemble has also appeared as the guest artists of local professional dance companies and many graduates have gone on to perform in professional companies here in Houston, on Broadway, and across the country.

UH DANCE ENSEMBLE AUDITION INSTRUCTIONS FALL 2020

The audition consists of several components as listed below:

1. Fill out, and submit, an audition application by [CLICKING HERE](#)
2. Create a SINGLE VIDEO that contains TWO components

a. An introduction as to who you are (a personal statement)

Discuss what interests you, what inspires you, what scares you, and where your talents lie. You don't need to "dazzle"; I am simply interested in seeing and hearing who you are as a person and artist. This is for you to interpret. Talk candidly about a version of yourself that you dream up. Do not write down a statement and memorize it. Speak off the cuff, conversationally, and informally. Help me get to know you a bit better. There are no right or wrong presentations. If you want more guidance in choosing a topic to speak about, feel free to choose one of the following questions: 1. Describe a day in your past that did not go according to plan, and yet, if you could go back, what would you change? 2. Future alien archaeologists will learn all about the human race when they uncover a time capsule, the size of a microwave, that YOU packed full of things. What did you put in it? 3. Imagine you have your own small restaurant. Where is it? What is it called? What is the daily special? What kind of music do you play? How is the restaurant decorated? And so forth. Be creative!

b. A one-and-a-half to two-minute dance solo*

When choosing your audition material, please submit whatever you feel represents you the best. Although UH Dance Ensemble is contemporary dance based, it also embraces the rich diversity of other dance styles that are often incorporated by UH dance's invited guest artists. There is no specific style requirement for this particular video audition, however, please do not patch together existing pre-recorded material; nothing from a past school production, recital, or anything like that. Just turn on a camera and make a new video with the above required elements.

*** Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, there might be challenges with utilizing traditional spaces for filming one's solo, so outdoor areas for dance solos will be accepted as an alternative space. Please exercise caution and safety when determining a location for filming. In addition, make sure that there is adequate lighting for your solo, to help ensure the clarity of your video. Check the quality of your video before submitting!**

3. Upload your video online. Your video should be uploaded to an online website service, using either YouTube or Vimeo. When doing so, create a private link of that video so that your audition is not made public. Making your video private is up to you, but please make sure that whatever link you send to the below email address works properly.
4. Send an email to UHDANCINGVIDEOS@GMAIL.COM using the subject "Digital Submission -Your Name", including the private (or public) link to your video.

THE DEADLINE FOR AUDITION APPLICATIONS AND VIDEO LINK EMAILS IS ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 20TH. RESULTS OF THE AUDITION WILL BE SENT NO LATER THAN MONDAY, AUGUST 24TH.

Thank you for your interest in UH Dance Ensemble!

Sincerely,



John Beasant III
UH Dance Ensemble Director 2020-2021

August 6, 2020

Dear Students,

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones safe and in good spirits!

It sure has been an interesting summer and is proving to be an interesting fall semester as well! The faculty of the University of Houston Dance program have some different opportunities that reflect the current pandemic situation in new and exciting ways.

That said, the show will go on! We look forward to a fun and fulfilling learning experience through UH Dance Ensemble this year. By joining Ensemble, students will be able to:

- ❖ Participate in various UH Dance faculty choreographed pieces preparing for an Ensemble Dance Works concert in the spring of 2021. Whether the show will be virtual or presented live onstage will be decided next year.
- ❖ Develop learning, teaching, and creativity skills through sharing dance movement techniques for fellow Ensemble members during the 1-2pm slots of “Ensemble Virtual Dance Fridays”.
- ❖ Participate in artistic collaborations with myself and other Ensemble members, creating original dance solos that will embody the concept of *home* as an experience rather than a place. These dances will be filmed and streamed “live” or presented in their recorded forms via Zoom and YouTube in November. Filming and/or performing locations will be decided at the discretion of each Ensemble member and the UH Dance Ensemble Director (me.) For students who may be on or near campus, a possible site to use (I am still waiting for confirmation), will be the University of Houston’s Blaffer Arts Museum.
- ❖ Audition for guest artist Tina Mullone (Louisiana dance artist) during the beginning of the spring semester of January 2021. She will be creating a new group dance for Ensemble. A brief summary of Tina: she works with Beckles Dancing Company, Contemporary Dance/Fort Worth (as Associate Artistic Director) and co-director of m² (m squared.) She also served as Dance Education Specialist for the International Association of Blacks in Dance and ACDA board member for two consecutive terms. She is thrilled to be able to collaborate with UH Dance students!

All of the performance opportunities being offered for Ensemble this fall semester, with the slight possible exception of the collaboration dance solos, will be virtual. With the trying times facing the country currently, the need for virtually accessible art and safe, meaningful arts education is more important than ever. Creating art is not just biding time while we wait for the catastrophe to pass. It gives us meaning and connection to each other and the world. It inspires us to take our thoughts in different and new directions. What excites me the most is, is that art can help weave the different parts of our lives, our thoughts, and our communities together. Ensemble is an opportunity to do just that with your fellow classmates, so I hope that you will consider joining the group this semester!

If you are interested in participating in Ensemble, please find the attached “UH Dance Ensemble Audition Instructions” to this email. Read through the document carefully.

UH Dance looks forward to a great semester of creativity and learning that adapts to the ever-changing circumstances of COVID-19. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at any time (my email address is listed below). Dance on!

Sincerely,



John Beasant III - UH Dance Ensemble Director
Email: uhdanceensembledirector@gmail.com