

A CELEBRATION OF
THE PERFORMING ARTS AT COLUMBIA
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK
PROGRAM

Opening Remarks Lisa Rosen-Metsch '90
Dean of the School of General Studies

Book Excerpts Ariel Osterweis, PhD

Dancers of Complexions Dwight Rhoden
Contemporary Ballet Introduction

Complexions Dance Jillian Davis, Joe Gonzalez, Lucy Stewart,
Michael Cherry

Conversation and Q&A Ariel Osterweis, PhD, Dwight Rhoden,
Jillian Davis, Joe Gonzalez



Friday, May 30, 2025, 7 p.m.
Miller Theatre
Columbia University in the City of New York

ARIEL OSTERWEIS, PHD

(Author, Scholar-Practitioner)

Ariel Osterweis (she/they) is a scholar-practitioner of dance and performance. Osterweis has a PhD in performance studies from UC Berkeley, a BA in anthropology from Columbia University School of General Studies, and is on faculty at CalArts, teaching courses in performance studies and critical dance studies. Their book, “Body Impossible: Desmond Richardson and the Politics of Virtuosity,” is published with Oxford University Press (Oxford Studies in Dance Theory Series, 2024), and current book projects include “Prophylactic Aesthetics: Latex, Spandex, and Sexual Anxieties Performed” (University of Michigan Press, Theater: Theory/Text/Performance Series), “Disavowing Virtuosity, Performing Aspiration: Dance and Performance Interviews” (Routledge), and “Prince Moves” (Oxford). Osterweis has danced and performed professionally with Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Mia Michaels R.A.W., Heidi Latsky, and Julie Tolentino. They were also a dramaturg for John Jasperse, Narcissister, and a.k. payne, and directed evening-length performances, Jérôme Bel and Talent Show at REDCAT. Upcoming projects include working toward an ongoing performance concept called BODY SHOP include Bad Korean (LA Phil/GYOPO), curation with BOFFO, and a collaboration with Julie Mehretu. Osterweis is a queer, mixed-race, Korean-American parent of two teens and a tween.

DWIGHT RHODEN

(Complexions Co-Founding Artistic Director, Principal Choreographer) has established a remarkably wide-ranging career, earning distinction from The New York Times as “one of the most sought out choreographers of the day.” In 1994, alongside Desmond Richardson, he founded COMPLEXIONS Contemporary Ballet, bringing their unique brand of contemporary ballet to the world, forging a center for innovation and cutting-edge programming. Rhoden’s choreography has been the lynchpin of the company’s repertory development. In three decades, he has created over 100 ballets for COMPLEXIONS, as well as for numerous world-renowned companies around the world. Rhoden has also choreographed for Broadway, Cirque du Soleil, and TV and Music Video, and collaborated with

legendary artists in both Music and Visual Arts. A recipient of many prominent awards, Dwight is currently Adjunct Professor at Howard University, and Artistic Professor of Dance at Chapman University.

DANCERS OF COMPLEXIONS CONTEMPORARY BALLET

JILLIAN DAVIS

(Complexions Senior Artistic Associate, Dance Artist) is from Pennsylvania and began her ballet training at the age of 3. She studied extensively with Risa Kaplowitz and Susan Jaffe at Princeton Dance and Theater Studio in Princeton, NJ. She has been a Company Artist with Complexions since 2014 and has been a part of several Dwight Rhoden world premieres. Additionally, she is a Co-Senior Artistic Associate and a Production Associate with the Company. Jillian is also a Choreographer Assistant with Jae Man Joo and Dwight Rhoden. Jillian is a Master Faculty member for Complexions Academy, teaching at the Winter and Summer Intensives, as well as Master Classes around the U.S.

JOE GONZALEZ

(Complexions Senior Artistic Associate, Dance Artist) is from Boston, Massachusetts, where he trained at Roxbury Center Performing Arts and the Boston Arts Academy. Joe has participated in Boston Conservatory's summer intensive, American Dance Festival, Bates Dance Festival and twice at Springboard Danse Montreal. He received his BFA from Boston Conservatory. He has commissioned works for a few universities, educational institutions, and dance companies. Joe toured nationally and internationally as performing artist with Philadanco, Anna Myer & Dancers, Prometheus Dance, #DB-danceProject, WaheedWorks, and was the 2020/21 DanceVisions Artist in Resident at Performance Garage. He is currently founder and Artistic Director of Jo-Mé Dance and was on faculty at Temple University, Georgian Court University, and Boston Arts Academy. He joined Complexions in 2022.

LUCY STEWART

(Complexions Dance Artist) grew up right outside of Denver, Colorado, dancing at Colorado Ballet and Kinetic Arts Dance Studio. She spent her summers training with American Ballet Theatre, The Joffrey Ballet, COMPLEXIONS, and Colorado Ballet. Lucy attended numerous Complexions summer intensives from the years 2017 to 2021, in addition to the pre professional program in New York in 2019 and 2020. She studied at The Juilliard School in the dance division from 2020-2022, before joining Complexions for their summer tour that year. She has had the opportunity to study with various leading artists in the dance world, including Ohad Naharin, Francesca Harper, Tiler Peck, Rena Butler, James Whiteside, Karole Armitage, Matthew Neenan, Jae Man Joo, Jenn Freeman, and Ricardo Amarante, as well as the opportunity to perform Set and Reset by Trisha Brown. Lucy spent her 2024 summer dancing with Traverse City Dance Project and teaching at Complexions Florida Summer Intensive.

MICHAEL CHERRY

(Complexions Dance Artist) was born and raised in Springfield, Virginia. He is a graduate of George Mason University and received a BFA in dance as well as a minor in arts management. Michael has had the opportunity to dance in works created/set by Camille A. Brown, Alejandro Cerrudo, Doug Varone, Manuel Vignoulle, Rafael Bonachela, Rena Butler, Fiona Jopp, Susan Shields, Shaun Boyle-Darcy, and Christopher d'Amboise. He had the opportunity to attend the Juilliard summer dance intensive twice, Complexions Summer and Winter intensives, as well as LINES Summer dance intensive. He is beyond excited to dance with Complexions Contemporary Ballet for his first season (2024).