THE NORTH AMERICAN FAMILY INSTITUTE
+
ANNA MYER AND DANCERS
The hoop Suite Project

Creative Exchange for Social Change

Hoop Suite is a new work by Anna Myer, noted choreographer, dancer, and teacher at Anna Myer and Dancers (AMD) that has grown from a unique partnership with the North American Family Institute (NAFI), one of the country’s most innovative human services organizations. Ms. Myer’s new vision has evolved from her stirring “rap opera,” Street Talk, Suite Talk (STST), which audaciously paired classically-trained dancers with urban rap and spoken word artists, set to an original score for violin and organ by acclaimed composer Jakov Jakoulov.

Inspired by the critical and practical success of STST, The Hoop Suite Project (THSP) is taking a giant step farther, adding to its production teen hip hop dancers, drummers and poets, and behind the scenes tech staff and videographers—many from public housing developments. The performance aspect of the project is built on a long-term educational plan designed to engender literacy, responsibility, and opportunity for inner city teens, and forge a common bond within and between diverse communities in the Boston area and urban centers across the nation and beyond.

To create The Hoop Suite Project, AMD has partnered with NAFI’s Youth Link division, whose stellar record of creating positive communication between teens and police has reduced violence and brought greater understanding, harmony and hope to inner cities. Always seeking paths to “innovate, motivate, and celebrate,” Youth Link Director Jay Paris saw that a project like Street Talk, Suite Talk could allow the voices within his community to be heard artistically.

Through workshops and cultural exchanges, and the joys and rigors of performing on stage with seasoned professionals—both locally and in urban centers throughout the US—THSP will serve as a catalyst for young poets, dancers, musicians, filmmakers and stage hands to tell their stories, express their artistry, and develop a sense of community and optimism that will serve their lives and inspire others, whether or not they choose to embark on a life in the arts.

But The Hoop Suite Project will not perform on stages alone. This mountain will come to Mohammed—to the inner city basketball courts in the kids’ own neighborhoods that play a central role in their lives—for recreation, haven, and sparring—arenas familiar to the entire community where drama unfolds daily. Symbolically, the “hoop” in the title also infers the cyclical nature of the project—performers becoming teachers begetting performers who become teachers. It is also an emblem of peace and community—the heart and soul of the project.

The Hoop Suite Project is grateful to its anchor sponsors, Adidas and the Pearson Foundation.

For information about Hoop Suite or about bringing the program to your community, call 617.513.9314 or visit: www.annamyeranddancers.org annamyerdancers@gmail.com

The Hoop Suite Project: http://vimeo.com/37005097
Hoop Suite Vimeo: http://vimeo.com/38332248
YOUTH LINK
A VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION INITIATIVE

Youth Link is an initiative of the North American Family Institute (NAFI) that began seven years ago as a violence prevention and early intervention initiative to help youth and police find ways to communicate and break down negative stereotypes and build sustainable relationships based upon trust. Its key programs include the Youth & Police Initiative Training and follow-up Youth Leadership Academy services which are now thriving in over a dozen US cities, as well as Bermuda and Belize. Throughout its rapid expansion, the Youth Link mission has remained solid -- to engage youth and communities in positive social leadership.

Youth & Police Initiative (YPI)
By facilitating honest and frank dialogue between adolescents and patrol officers, YPI cultivates understanding, enhances mutual respect and eliminates stereotypes and biases in an intensive month-long program that helps to reduce crime and violence in poverty-stricken neighborhoods. As the program has evolved, documented benefits and outcomes have been noteworthy:
- Increase in police officers’ understanding of adolescent development and urban socialization issues
- Increase in youth knowledge and understanding of police challenges
- Reduction of negative contacts between youth participants and police
- Improvement in the use of effective communication strategies involving de-escalation, crisis intervention,
- and problem-solving skills
- Increase in youth trust in our laws and those responsible for enforcing them
- Reduction in youth crime and violence in neighborhoods where we have operated YPI consistently

YPI’s achievements have been featured in The New York Times, The Boston Herald, the Providence Journal and many other publications.

The Youth Leadership Academy (YLA)
The Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) is a follow-up program for graduates of YPI that offers a cutting-edge curriculum based on best practices to help young people develop the critical life skills they need to have a positive presence in their communities and schools. Through exercises and assignments in civic engagement, job readiness, conflict resolution and leader demonstration projects, they learn the importance of gaining respect for themselves and others while building the right foundation to reach personal goals. Core facets of the program include mentoring, college tours, educational field trips, green project development, team-building and leadership, group dynamics, communication and presentation skills, entrepreneurship, job site visits and speakers’ bureaus. The Youth Leadership Academy emphasizes the positive power each young person possesses, and encourages leadership through the principles of confidence, courage, commitment and community.

Leadership Projects
Through partnerships and collaborations with local organizations whose missions align with Youth Link’s, we have been established culinary arts and catering programs in multiple cities, a 3-on-3 basketball tournament, summer internships, college preparatory programs. With a new focus on artistic expression, YL has partnered with Boston’s Anna Myer and Dancers and Kat Tatlock Productions to give young people a unique opportunity to tell their stories in workshops and performances with professionals, combining dance, poetry, spoken word, rap and classical music to tell the stories on stages and neighborhood basketball courts, and record them on film.

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THE HOOP SUITE PROJECT

BIOGRAPHIES OF KEY PROJECT PERSONNEL

ANNA MYER - ANNA MYER and DANCERS
Choreographer & Artistic Director

Since Anna Myer founded Anna Myer and Dancers (AMD) in 1992, her company has performed her innovative choreography to a steadily growing audience throughout the Northeast, most notably in Boston, New York City, and the 2009 Fringe Festival in Scotland. Ms. Myer and her company have received high praise from many of the country’s most prominent dance critics, including a 1999 feature article in the Sunday New York Times Arts and Leisure section. Ms. Myer’s unique language of movement is a fusion of her classical, modern, and postmodern background, emotionally charged and infused with a keen formal intelligence. Her highly acclaimed “rap opera,” Street Talk, Suite Talk inspired her current work, The Hoop Suite Project (a collaboration with Youth Link, an organization supporting inner city teens, and Kat Tatlock Productions, a media production company), and speaks to her commitment to embrace and emanate a philosophy of “creative exchange for social change.”

Anna Myer began her dance training on a 1962 Ford Foundation Scholarship with Esther Brooks at the Cambridge School of Ballet, followed by scholarships at the Joffrey Ballet, The School of American Ballet, and American Ballet Theatre. She then joined the Boston Ballet, and later studied and performed with Ane Roje.

Ms. Myer also performed in works by contemporary choreographers, including Zeve Cohen, Caitlin Corbett, Marguerite Mathews, and Pauline Koner.

Throughout its history of unique artistic collaboration, Anna Myer and Dancers has made its mark by combining live music, original scores, and performers of various ages and backgrounds. In 2007 Ms. Myer came together with neon sculptors Alejandro and Moira Sin to create Penumbra, and in 2005 created All At Once for 9 dancers and 12 musicians, conducted by Susan Davenny Wyner. Since then, it has been performed by various groups, including the Julliard Student Ensemble. In 2010 her stirring work, Street Talk, Suite Talk was presented by Boston Mayor Thomas Menino’s Office of Arts and Tourism at the reopening of the historic Strand Theater, receiving a televised preview on WGBH-TV and rave reviews. AMD was touted as: “Ten Best Dance Events of 2001” (Christine Temin of The Boston Globe), “Best of Arts and Dance” (2003, 2005, The Boston Phoenix), and Jennifer Dunning of The New York Times wrote: “Ms. Myer is a master weaver.” Thea Singer (The Boston Globe, 2008) wrote: “...a moving confluence of music, rap, and dance sends a message,” and reviewing STST, boldly stated: “Anna Myer may be the gutsiest choreographer on either side of the Charles River these days.”

Ms. Myer’s new works promise to be equally “gutsy.” In Hindsight Now, 9 dancers will move to an original score by contemporary Venezuelan composer, Paul Desenne performed by 4 on-stage cellists. In Hoop Suite, company dancers will be joined by teen hip-hop dancers, rappers, spoken word artists, violinists, cellists and drummers, to a score by STST composer, Jakov Jakoulov, with a rousing movement to the beat of...basketballs! In June/July of 2012, Hoop Suite will be performed on basketball courts in the neighborhoods of performing teens as part of the ongoing Hoop Suite Project. The two new works will premiere in October of 2012 at Boston’s Institute of Contemporary Art.

Funding for AMD has been provided by: Massachusetts Cultural Council, Cambridge Arts Council, The Foley Hoag Foundation, Turner Family Foundation, and New England Foundation for the Arts. AMD has been presented by Dance

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Umbrella’s Boston Moves (1999), Fleet Bank Celebrity Series (2003), Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival (2002, 2003), and CRASHarts at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston. The company performed at the 2005 Performing Arts Exchange Conference in Memphis TN. In 2010, Myer was a finalist for the Massachusetts Cultural Council artist Fellowship, and in 2011, AMD received a Choreographic Fellowship from the Boston Dance Alliance.

Highlights from acclaimed AMD productions, and original works currently in development can be seen on the AMD website: www.annamyeranddancers.org.

**JAY PARIS**  
**Director of Program Development, NAFI; Director Youth Link; Master NST Trainer**

Jay Paris has served in many roles at NAFI (North American Family Institute), including operations, training and program development. Currently, he is a member of the Executive Team that governs NAFI’s six regions and 1600 employees, overseeing Program Development and Services, marketing, training and IT. In 2006, Mr. Paris developed Youth Link, NAFI’s prevention initiative that operates trainings for youth and police in 16 cities, as well as follow-up Youth Leadership Academies.

A former teacher and school administrator, he has also taken a lead role in adapting NAFI’s Normative Process to school environments, launching the Normative School Transformation (NST) Initiative that helps school leaders build pro-social cultures of learning. He is also a member of NAFI’s Training and Consulting Team, which offers training to organizations around the country.

**KATHERINE DEUTCH TATLOCK**  
**Filmmaker & Creative Consultant**

Kat Tatlock has written, produced, and directed dozens of award-winning films, featuring art and literature, social issues, wellness, and personal stories. While earning a Masters in Film at Boston University, she created her first documentary, *Pista—The Many Faces of Stephen Deutch*, a portrait of her noted photographer/sculptor father, which helped win her an invitation to the Sundance Institute where she developed her first screenplay, directing Peter Coyote and Christine Lahti in leading roles. Ms. Tatlock went on to work with other film greats, including John Savage, Richard Jenkins, Tracy Pollan, Ed Asner, Cliff Robertson, RipTorn, and Conchata Ferrell, and wrote, produced and directed the home video series, *Martha Stewart’s Secrets for Entertaining*.

A champion of independent film, Ms. Tatlock was Founding VP of Women in Film & Video New England, and is a member of Filmmakers Collaborative and the Massachusetts Production Coalition. Known as an “actor’s director,” her writing and directing skills extend to youth of all ages and backgrounds, as seen in *Jailbrake: A Day in the Life*, and Janey Junkfood’s *Fresh Adventure*, which won multiple awards. She recently directed the innovative radio “comic strip” series, *11Central Ave*, for NPR, which also won top awards, as did her award-winning documentary, *Outside In*—www.outsideintehfilm.com—which is in distribution with Icarus Films.


**JAKOV JAKOLOV**  
**Composer**

Jakov Jakoulov was born in Moscow, where he studied at the Gnesin Music Academy and Moscow Conservatory as pianist and composer. In 1987 Mr. Jakoulov left Moscow to begin to work in Europe, and moved to Boston in 1990. Since beginning his professional career at age twelve, he has gained considerable experience as both composer and pianist. He is the author of three ballets, five concertos, five string quartets, scores for over 20 theatrical, TV and cinema productions, as well as numerous symphonic, chamber, and choral works. In recent years his work has been presented by, among others, the London’s New European Strings Orchestra, the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s Tanglewood Contemporary Music Festival, the Dallas Symphony Orchestra’s “Future Classics” Series, Boston Symphony Chamber Concerts, the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, and the New England String Ensemble.
Mr. Jakoulov holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from Boston University, and among his many awards are six Annual Awards from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, and membership in the National Honor Music Society. His composition Black Snow was included on a CD that was chosen as one of the “Top Five Classical Recordings of 1999” by Fanfare Magazine. His collaboration with Anna Myer and Dancers includes composing the score for her recent work, Street Talk, Suite Talk.

BRUCE PETSCHEK
Director of Photography/Editor

Bruce Petschek studied at the Orson Wells Film School, and for the past 30 years, he has provided media services to artists, musicians, choreographers and educators. Mr. Petschek has undertaken projects throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and Central and South America. He has filmed noted dancers and companies such as Bill T. Jones, Concord Academy Summer Stages, Boston Ballet, David Parker and the Bang Group and major media works such as The Banjo Project and The Refuge Media Project.


SUSAN DAVENNY WYNER
Conductor

Susan Davenny Wyner, choral conductor, has conducted the Los Angeles Philharmonic, The Boston Lyric Opera, special benefit performances with members of the Cleveland Orchestra, as well as concerts at the Hollywood Bowl, in the Czech Republic, at the Tanglewood and Aspen Music Festivals, and in Chicago’s Orchestra Hall. André Previn, Lynn Harrell, Peter Serkin, Emanuel Ax and Richard Stoltzman have been among her guest soloists. Called “a galvanizing presence” by The Cleveland Plain Dealer, she has garnered praise for conducting a wide range of repertoire—orchestral, oratorio, operatic and choral—from the 13th to 21st century. The Library of Congress featured her in its 2003 “Women Who Dare” Engagement Calendar, and The Boston Globe selected her performances as “best musical events of the year” four years running.

Trained initially as a violinist and violist, Susan Davenny Wyner then had an international career as a soprano soloist, performing with the Metropolitan Opera and major orchestras throughout the United States and Europe. Since 1999, she has served as music director and conductor of two orchestras: The New England String Ensemble in Boston, and The Warren Philharmonic Orchestra near Cleveland, Ohio.
DANCER & POET BIOS

**Adriane Brayton**
Boston native Adriane Brayton began dancing as a youth with Anna Myer, and Boston Dance Company. She later attended the Boston Arts Academy where she performed works of Jose Limon, Pedro Ruiz, and Nathan Trice. A graduate of Connecticut College, Adriane studied with faculty David Dorfman, Lisa Race, Heidi Henderson, Shani Collins, and Derrick Yanford, and performed the works of Paul Taylor, Twyla Tharp, Nicholas Leichter, Colleen Thomas, Laura Dean and Kyle Abraham. Her own work, And Then There Were Two, was selected for the American College Dance Festival in 2009 and was also performed at the This/That show in Boston 2009. After graduating in 2011, Adriane returned to Boston and is currently working with Anna Myer and Dancers and Weberdance.

**Karina Davis**
First inspired by tap dancer Gregory Hines, Karina started hoofing at Ruth Williams Dance Studio in Harlem, NY. She later trained in the Alvin Ailey School’s Junior Division, where she studied dance forms ranging from West African to classical ballet. While attending Williams College, she solidified her love of hip-hop by joining the resident dance troupe, Nothin’ But Cuties, and was elected president for the 2004-2005 season. In addition to performing student choreography, she studied modern technique under the tutelage of Sandra Burton and Holly Silva and participated in workshops led by Ron K. Brown, Philadanco, HT Chen & Dancers, and Delfos Danza Contemporanea. Karina performs with Unyted Stylz and Rainbow Tribe’s Embrace, and is an active member of Anna Myer and Dancers, performing a principal role in the company’s acclaimed Street Talk, Suite Talk, and its new works, Hindsight Now and Hoop Suite, as both principal dancer, teacher, and assistant to Anna Myer.

**Joe Gonzalez**
Born and raised in Boston, Joe began dancing at the age of 13 at the Roxbury Center for the Performing Arts, going on to become an honorale academics dance major at the Boston Arts Academy, participating in the National and Regional High School Dance Festival. Having discovered diverse styles from hip-hop to ballet, Joe began to develop his own choreographic style. On scholarship, he attended Boston Conservatory’s Summer Intensive, American Dance Festival, SpringBoard Montreal, and Bates Dance Festival, and has performed master works of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, Anna Sokolow, Ronald K. Brown, Paul Taylor, Sean Curran, Nathan Trice, Jose Limon, RubberBand Dance Group, Pedro Ruiz Jr., Alwin Nikolas and others. While completing his BFA at the Boston Conservatory, Joe has participated in Conservatory performances, as well as with Anna Myer and Dancers and other companies in the US, Canada, and Scotland. His many original works have been performed on national stages. Currently Joe is Co-Director of the hip-hop dance company, Golden Kidz, Co-Director and Lead Choreographer of the One Luv Dance Company, and teaches at community centers and dance schools. He is a principal dancer with the “A” Major Dance Company, Prometheus Dance, BalletRox, and Anna Myer and Dancers, where he was featured in the acclaimed “rap opera” Street Talk, Suite Talk, and new works, Hindsight Now and Hoop Suite.

**Jeremy Ruth Howes**
Jeremy graduated from the University of Hartford’s Hartt School with a BFA in Dance Performance, where she soloed in La Bayadere, Guernsey Fields, Martha Graham’s Steps in the Street and numerous contemporary ballet and modern pieces. After studying in Atlanta, Georgia, she continued in Portsmouth, New Hampshire with Mihailo Djuric and Susan Duffy, and then with Ballet New England and Ballet Theatre Workshop, performing principal roles in both classical and contemporary pieces. Jeremy also trained at the Boston Ballet School, the Martha Graham School in New York City on scholarship, and danced professionally with Northern Ballet Theatre and Virginia Ballet Theatre, performing soloist roles. She is a guest artist of Northeast Youth Ballet, performing principal and soloist roles, and is on the faculty of Northeast School of Ballet in Melrose, Walker’s Dance in Lowell, and Dean College. Jeremy choreographs for the noted Walker’s continued on back...
Dance Troupe and the Dean Dance Company, has won numerous choreography awards, and has created roles for Anna Myer and Dancers, where she has been a member for the past eight years.

**Marissa Molinar**
In Texas at the age of 6, Marissa began her dance studies with Mexican folklorico with her mother. When she moved to Boston at 13, she took up Bharatanatyam (South Indian dance) with Aparna Sindhoor, and was introduced to modern dance in high school, studying and performing with Daniel McCusker. Since graduating from Brown University in 2007 with a BS in environmental science, Marissa has performed in works by Sara Smith, Nell Breyer, and Yo-el Cassell, among others. She is currently a member of Danza Orgánica and Anna Myer and Dancers, where she is helping develop the new works, Hindsight Now and Hoop Suite. When she is not dancing, Marissa works at the fantastic office of Boston Dance Alliance.

**Wayne Ong**
[origins – Singapore? When immigrated?] In high school at the age of 17 Wayne fell in love with dance. Later, while serving as a military conscript in Singapore, he danced at a pre-professional level with the Singapore Armed Forces Music and Drama Company. Wayne then enrolled in the Connecticut College Dance Department where he trained in the disciplines of ballet and modern dance with distinguished faculty members David Dorfman, Lisa Race, Adele Myers, Heidi Henderson, Shani Collins, and guest artists including Nicholas Leichter and Kyle Abraham. During the course of his education, he has performed in repertory works including Paul Taylor’s Aureole and Daniel Nagrin’s Strange Hero. He is happy to be performing with Anna Myer and Dancers, contributing to the company’s new works, Hindsight Now and Hoop Suite.

**Lindsey Ridgeway**
Lindsey Ridgeway received her dance education from Atlanta Ballet School and Boston Ballet School, studying with Carol Roderick, Kathleen Mitchell and Franco De Vita. Upon graduating she danced with Tulsa Ballet as a trainee and later joined Jose Mateo’s Ballet Theatre for their 2006 season. Returning to dance after a two year hiatus she has worked with Marcus Schulkind, Egoart.Inc, Audra Carabetta, and Contrapose Dance, and currently with Anna Myer and Dancers.

**Henoch Spinola**
A native of Cape Verde Islands, Henoch began his classical dance training with Jose Mateo’s Ballet Theatre, graduating from the Young Dancers Program in 2006, to become a full company member in 2007. During a year at the Harttt School, he danced with Full Force Dance Company, a local contemporary dance company run by Katie Stevenson-Nolet. Henoch has also received training in traditional Malian dance with Sedo Coulibaly of Mali and modern technique with Lacina Coulibaly of Burkina Faso. In 2010, he left Jose Mateo’s company to dance with Teatrul de Sibiu of Romania for one season. Henoch is currently a member of Anna Myer and Dancers, having performed principal roles in her acclaimed “rap opera,” Street Talk, Suite Talk and current original works, Hindsight Now and Hoop Suite.

**Jessie Stinnett**
Upon graduating from The Boston Conservatory in 2009, Jessie Stinnett moved to Paris, France where she danced for the Artistic Director of the National Ballet of Chile, Gigi Caciuleanu. In the summer of 2010 she acted as the International Liaison for Kazuko Hirabayashi’s Dance New York International where she worked with Wilfried Romoli (former star of The Paris Opera), and Koji Minato (The Cunningham Company). She then joined Dansgroep Amsterdam, home to choreographers Krisztina de Chatel and Itzik Galili. Jessie is currently dancing for Anna Myer and Dancers, Prometheus Dance, and Rebecca Rice Dance Company.

**POET BIOS**

**Tu Phan**
Tu Phan comes from a loving Vietnamese immigrant family and was born and raised in Dorchester. Currently studying Cultural Anthropology at Northeastern University, Tu also highly enjoys hip-hop, poetry, childhood flashbacks, good food, and traveling. As a poet and rapper, Tu was featured in the Anna Myer and Dancers acclaimed “rap opera,” Street Talk, Suite Talk, and went on to teach poetry in workshops for at-risk teens at Youth Link’s Franklin Field Drop-In Center, where he imparts his values of family, culture, Buddhism, and “always peace and one love.” Tu is currently participating in The Hoop Suite Project, a new Anna Myer and Dancers/ Youth Link production and educational program.
THE HOOP SUITE PROJECT

HOOP SUITE PROJECT CREDITS

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Anthony Marshall
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Spoken Word Artists
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Ti Ella Grimes
Moira Pirsch
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Jasmine Cadet
Kheylia Serrano

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Aristides Rivas  Cellist
Hyun Min Lee  Cellist
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