



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 17, 2020

## **Citadel + Compagnie announces launch of its new Residency Program alongside its move to digital and shift in artistic structure**

TORONTO, ON – Citadel + Compagnie is pleased to announce the launch of its new Residency Program, developed to redistribute resources and support the work of seven local artists and organizations. Expanding on its existing values of inclusion, collaboration, accessibility and trust, Citadel + Compagnie is furthering its impact by creating more space for more artists at its home, The Citadel: Ross Centre for Dance. In response to calls for social justice, along with the realities of adapting performance art during a global pandemic, Citadel + Compagnie is building on relationships that have been cultivated with artists and organizations within the dance community to reallocate resources and provide artistic and administrative support through this new program.

“In a time of great uncertainty, urgently vibrating with the need for systemic change, our Residency Program offers an opportunity for meaningful connection and collaboration between artists and arts organizations,” says Citadel + Compagnie artistic director, Laurence Lemieux.

Over the course of the season, Citadel + Compagnie will also be investing in adapting and equipping The Citadel for the filming and livestreaming of dance. A project made possible with the support of the Government of Canada. This investment aims to extend The Citadel’s role as a creative hub to the digital realm, integral to the preservation of dance in this moment, as limitations on gathering continue to disproportionately affect the live performing arts. Citadel + Compagnie’s annual event *Night Shift* (Sept. 30 – Oct. 9, 2020) will be the company’s first venture into the digital world.

The 2020/21 season also marks a notable shift for Citadel + Compagnie. After twelve distinguished years, James Kudelka will complete his tenure as Resident Choreographer, a position that began in 2008, shortly after the company’s purchase of The Citadel. Kudelka was instrumental in positioning Citadel + Compagnie on the local and international scene, contributing such extraordinary works as *From the House of Mirth*, *Against Nature*, *Malcolm*, and *Four Old Legs*, as well as making iconic repertoire accessible to the Toronto dance community through countless remounts of some of his greatest classics, including *In Paradisum*, *Fifteen Heterosexual Duets*, and *The Man in Black*. This change will still allow Kudelka to continue to complete *The Machine Stops*, the third instalment of his music/dance/theatre salon trilogy initiated in 2012.

Institutional support for artists and organizations is more important than ever in the wake of the pandemic. In acknowledgement of the current times, Citadel + Compagnie will continue to elevate artists through its existing presentation platforms *Bright Nights* and *Night Shift*, and foster creative practice through its new Residency Program. Citadel + Compagnie is excited by the program’s potential for the interlocking of communities to create an expanding network of artistic exchange within Toronto. The program is articulated through the following four pillars of engagement:

**The Creative Incubator Pilot Project:** Through this pilot project, four artists and organizations— Syreeta Hector, Naishi Wang, adelheid and Nova Dance—have been invited to explore and expand their artistic projects at The Citadel. This two-year pilot project will allow Citadel + Compagnie to formalize the program and create a permanent system of artistic support for the ongoing growth and development of Toronto dance artists and organizations. These artists and organizations were selected for their alignment with Citadel + Compagnie’s core values of collaboration and exceptional artistry. Following the two-year pilot, the creative incubator will open up to the dance community at large through an application process that will be announced at the end of year one.

**Company-in-Residence:** After making The Citadel its home since 2017, KasheDance will officially become company-in-residence. Embodying artistic diversity in technique and choreography, KasheDance echoes in a new genealogy of Afro contemporary dance supported by presentation, outreach initiatives in communities and in education. Artistic Director Kevin A. Ormsby, is a leader within the community, activating, engaging and facilitating many urgent conversations around equity and solidarity in the arts.

**Presenter-in-Residence:** Initiated in 2019, wind in the leaves collective will continue the presentation of its original series, *allies and friends*. Led by charles c. smith, wind in the leaves collective is a dynamic and diverse group of accomplished, passionate artists who come together to create rich and evocative multi-disciplinary performances and engage artists and audiences from diverse backgrounds and artistic practices.

**Lead Community Partner:** Citadel + Compagnie will reaffirm its relationship with its neighbour Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre as lead community partner by continuing to provide free studio access to support their youth dance program First Fire, as well as giving access to film and livestream equipment for their community dance and music programming.

“The Citadel has always felt to me like a centre for dance artists, like a home. Six months since this field was suspended by the pandemic, it feels hard to comprehend being in a space again, and surreal to imagine having a creative home at all, much less one that is providing a long overdue intersection for artistic exchange between Toronto artists. As I look ahead to the Creative Incubator opportunity, I recognize how in this moment of global shift, being included in the revisioning of The Citadel as it commits to supporting systemic change in our sector, comes with a responsibility to be a part of that change,” says Heidi Strauss of adelheid.

Citadel + Compagnie will also continue to cultivate dance within its immediate neighbourhood through its Citadel Dance Program, delivering free dance education to local children and youth online. This year, the program will extend to facilitate special workshops and outreach activities with artists from the Creative Incubator Pilot Project.

“The invitation to instigate long-term change, to collaborate on creating new possibilities for future generations, and to share passionate love for dance inspires and assists us during these challenging times,” says Nova Bhattacharya of Nova Dance.

Citadel + Compagnie is proud to be finding innovative ways to continue to support dancers and choreographers in these uncertain times and looks forward to this next chapter in its trajectory.



Artwork by Isaac Roberts

## LISTINGS

### ***NIGHT SHIFT 2020: Sept. 30-Oct. 9, 2020***

Curated by Nova Bhattacharya, Jon Drops Reid and Santee Smith

Works submitted by: Daniel Gomez, Kalaisan Kalaichelvan, Newton Moraes, Natasha Poon Woo, Swadhi Ranganee, and Irma Villafuerte

Livestream directed by Barbara Willis Sweete

*All livestreams begin at 9pm at <https://www.citadelcie.com/nightshift/> and are free. Recordings of each livestream will be available the day following the live performance until October 18, 2020. For more info including high-res photos, bios, and head shots, please visit the Night Shift 2020 media page: <https://www.citadelcie.com/media-page-night-shift-2020/>*

*Night Shift is produced with the support of the City of Toronto through Toronto Arts Council, and made possible (in part) by the Government of Canada. Night Shift is co-presented with Fall for Dance North.*

## BIOS: RESIDENCY PROGRAM

### **Syreeta Hector**

Syreeta Hector is a dance artist and educator in Toronto, Ontario. As a highly accomplished performer, Syreeta has worked for internationally recognized companies like Adelheid Dance Projects, Danny Grossman Dance Company, Political Movement, and Toronto Dance Theatre. She is a proud graduate of The National Ballet School's Teacher Training Program, The School of Toronto Dance Theatre, and has achieved her Master of Arts in Dance Studies from York University.

Her work called "Black Ballerina" focuses on the dualities within one's identity, along with Syreeta's blackness and indigeneity in relationship to classical ballet. The short work in progress solo gained recognition at the SummerWorks Festival in 2019. Here, the piece won the Stratford Festival Lab Award for Research and Creation. The condensed version of the piece was also performed as part of Citadel Dance Mix 2019. Here, the performance was nominated for a Dora Mavor Moore Award.

The development of the full-length version of "Black Ballerina" is taking place through the support of the Citadel + Compagnie, Canadian Stage, and the Kaaitheatre. <https://www.syreetahector.com/>

### **Naishi Wang**

Born in Changchun, China, Naishi Wang began with Chinese Classical dance and Chinese Folk dances training at Jilin College of Art. In 2004, he moved to Canada to attend The School of TDT. Subsequently, Naishi became a company member of Toronto Dance Theatre for nine years. In 2015, the award-winning performer was inspired to develop as an independent choreographer with a belief that the performing arts offer an imaginary perspective for the future. In 2018, he premiered his solo "Taking Breath" at The Citadel in Toronto, followed by a tour to Montréal, arts interculturels, and a German premiere at Monsun Theater (Hamburg, Germany). In 2019, Naishi was commissioned to create a work entitled "Free Steps" for Nostos Collective. Currently, Naishi is an artist in residency at La Serre - arts vivants in Montreal and is in collaboration with UK based artist Jean Abreu, supported by the Visiting Dance Artist program by the NAC. <http://www.naishi.dance/>

### **adelheid**

adelheid creates dance and performance works centring on relationships: relationships between people, relationships with space, place and the environment, and our relationship with the current moment – the world we navigate together. We are interested in the questions dance inherently asks around human behaviour, and the potential performance has to shift perspectives, and allow for reflection. Collaborating with artists, considering audience experience, animating public space and integrating different media allows us to be constantly learning, and evolving our thinking and approach. Important to us is supporting others in our programming; we do this through Cohort (for makers integrating smartphones into creation) and re:research (for emerging dance creators).

adelheid is grateful to have had support of residencies at the Factory Theatre (2008-2012), The Theatre Centre (2013-2016), and Harbourfront Centre (2019). These opportunities gave space for Dora Award winning works like *'this time'*, and *'what it's like'* to be created. <https://adelheid.ca/>

### **Nova Dance**

Nova Dance brings new ideas to stages and sites, re-inventing the possibilities of the artform. The company breaks down conventions, encourages new talent and works with artists from many art forms and a multitude of backgrounds to create a community that celebrates the life-force of art in our lives.

The company presents critically acclaimed works and arts events, creating a context for an array of dance artists to take space with their art. Equity is in the DNA of Nova Dance, and we believe that bringing differences together always leads to greater things. The company is dedicated to creating meaningful points of intersection for dance and audiences; supporting artists; and celebrating the role of the arts in a vital society.

Founded by Nova Bhattacharya in 2008 the company has established a body of work that has garnered awards, international recognition, and most importantly made connections with audiences and communities. <https://www.novadance.ca/>

### **Company-in-Residence: KasheDance**

Embodying artistic diversity in technique and choreography, KasheDance echoes in a new genealogy of Afro contemporary dance supported by presentation, outreach initiatives in communities and in education. The company creates within a three-pronged CRP model where Creative / Research / Presentation, is supported by further creative inquiry with the Critical Response Process pioneered by Liz Lerman and grounded in Collaboration, Representation and Partnerships.

KasheDance finds inspiration from visual arts, music, mixed media and spoken word and is creatively and socially curious about how dance can fuel focused and progressive conversations around our practice while situating people and audiences in cross-cultural engagement. KasheDance's production *FACING Home: Love and Redemption* was voted in Top 10 2015 performance in Madison, Wisconsin, in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin Madison Dance Department and has toured to ten cities in US, Canada and the Caribbean. The work was the featured performance event of the USVI, St. Croix Pride 2019. <http://www.kashedance.com/>

### **Presenter-in-Residence: wind in the leaves collective**

The wind in the leaves collective has developed a significant body of work over the past decade. Our unique approach to multi-disciplinary performance takes its lead from the artistic director's poetry which is explored and choreographed by dancers, musicians and video artists. This collaboration across disciplines has been successful in engaging audiences and building a profile for this type of performance. The collective is now staging performances with other artists that involve similar elements, i.e., connecting poetry with dance and music in creation and performance.

As the Presenter-in-Residence at The Citadel, selected artists will share the stage and advance the notion of poetry and dance as a seamless art form practiced by racialized and Indigenous artists and drawing from historic pre-colonial practices made contemporary.

<https://windintheleavescollective.com/>

### **Lead Community Partner: Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre**

Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre is an autonomous, vibrant cultural agency that involves and serves the Indigenous community with confidence for and commitment to their well-being. Council Fire's mandate is to provide counselling, material assistance and other direct services to First Nations people as well as to encourage and enhance spiritual and personal growth. <http://www.councilfire.ca/>

### **Citadel + Compagnie**

Citadel + Compagnie is a dance organization with its home, The Citadel: Ross Centre for Dance, embedded within the Regent Park community of downtown Toronto. Through its creation, curation and cultivation of contemporary dance, Citadel + Compagnie's mission is to make a significant and lasting contribution to dance in Canada. Led by Artistic Director, Laurence Lemieux, the company's vision is for exceptional dance to reach diverse communities and audiences and foster ongoing dialogue between artists and the public.

The organization supports the artistic activities of its dance company; its performing arts series, Bright Nights; its dance fest, Night Shift; its training program, the Citadel Dance Program; and its residency program.

Citadel + Compagnie's curated performing arts series, Bright Nights, cultivates Canadian contemporary dance, showcasing artists from diverse backgrounds, including emerging, Francophone and Indigenous choreographers. Night Shift, Citadel + Compagnie's late-night dance fest, furthers this cultivation by making space for the work of boundary pushing artists exploring and practicing within all forms of dance.

Under Lemieux's leadership, Citadel + Compagnie has had a marked impact on its immediate community and fosters creative practice through its new umbrella Residency Program. Through its Creative Incubator Pilot Project, four artists and organizations—Syreeta Hector, Naishi Wang, adelheid and Nova Dance—have been invited to explore and expand their artistic projects at The Citadel. Additionally, The Citadel hosts KasheDance as its company-in-residence, wind in the leaves collective as its presenter-in-residence, and Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre as its lead community partner.

The Citadel Dance Program cultivates dance within Citadel + Compagnie's immediate neighbourhood, delivering free dance education to local youth, making dance both accessible and visible to those living within Regent Park, and increasing awareness of the art form. <https://www.citadelcie.com/>