

Cowles Visiting Artists and Scholars

Since 1987, through the generosity of Sage and John Cowles, University of Minnesota Dance has annually hosted four to six dance professionals of international renown in residencies ranging from one to ten weeks. The guests teach, choreograph new dance work, rehearse repertory, and lecture in the Department of Theatre Arts and Dance, and the twin cities community at large.

The Cowles Land Grant Chair connects nationally and internationally recognized artists and scholars with the Dance Program community, exposing them to contemporary artistry, masterwork and new thinking in dance studies. University of Minnesota Dance is unique for its extensive use of renowned professional artists in the education and training of students.

Cowles Visiting Artist and Scholar Selection Process

The Cowles Land Grant Chair program supports four to seven visiting artists, scholars, and/or teachers each academic year to interact with students and faculty in the Dance Program, Department of Theatre Arts and Dance, University of Minnesota, and community at large. Selections are made on a variety of factors, including reputation, quality of artistic work, teaching ability, and the range of experience the artist or scholar will bring to the program. The program selects visiting artists that balance or enhance the breadth of training and experiences already covered by tenured and affiliate faculty at the University. Artists of international reputation are considered, as well as emerging and established artists from the local, upper Midwest, or national dance communities. The Dance Program actively embraces difference while considering guests, including artists ranging in racial or ethnic backgrounds, sexual identities, abilities, as well as choreographers working in a range of contemporary dance forms.

Artistic work may be selected for the University Dance Theatre performance scheduled for the mainstage season each academic year and/or additional performance projects and symposia. Faculty work may be considered, in addition to two to five pieces by visiting artists. Typically one historical piece, masterwork or reconstruction will be selected each year. Often one to two artists may be selected to create newly commissioned work on student dancers in the rehearsal process. In addition to work for the University Dance Theatre concert or Spring Concert, artists are also considered for teaching intensives in various areas of the curriculum, workshops and/or collaborative performance opportunities. Scholars are selected to intersect with classroom work, give public presentations, or to provide context for performances and events such as symposia.

The core faculty committee makes decisions collectively as organized by the Cowles Coordinator. The Coordinator collects inquiries from artists, suggestions from students, faculty and the community, and requests press and video materials from those in consideration by the committee. The Dance Program works with Theatre Arts to select artists for joint workshop opportunities. University of Minnesota Dance may also collaborate with artistic partners in the community including the Walker Art Center, Northrop Dance Series and Southern Theater.

<https://theatre.umn.edu/dance/cowles>

