

Next Reflex Dance Collective



Soft Landing

Next Reflex Dance Collective

Artistic Director

Roxann Morgan Rowley

Lighting Design

Christina Giles

Stage Manager

Meagan Morrison - Crabill

Supported by the City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts
Part of Spotlight on the Arts for Fairfax City

Soft Landing

An Immersive Experience of Sound and Movement

Direction and Choreography

Roxann Morgan Rowley

Musical Direction and Composition

Nova Ren

Costume Design

Roxann Morgan Rowley

Mother Earth

Jonathon Faircloth

Next Reflex Dance Collective Dancers

Virginia Driggers, Sara Goldman, Sara Grace, Grace Mayer,
Zena Nguon and Roxann Morgan Rowley

I. **Overture Opening**
Performance by Nova Ren

II. **Mother Earth -**

“Move eastward, happy earth, and leave
Your orange sunset waning slow;
From fringes of the faded eve,
O, happy planet, eastward go;
Till over thy dark shoulder glow
Thy silver sister-world, and rise
To glass herself in dewy eyes
That watch me from the glen below.

Ah, bear me with thee, smoothly born,
Dip forward under starry light,
And move me to my marriage-morn,
And round again to happy night.”

Move Eastward Happy Earth, and Leave by Tennyson

“And so
The Mother Trees,
Majestic hubs at the center of the forest
Pass their wisdom to their kin
Nurturing providing food and water to their children

Twisting their trunks
Shifting their branches
Protecting below
Communicating through soft low hums
Only heard if listening close enough”
Quote from

III. **Twisted Bark**

Dance Performance by Roxann Morgan Rowley
Original Musical composition by Nova Ren
Projection by Roxann Morgan Rowley

IV. **Mother Earth**

“There are many stories of how the three sisters came to be, but they all share the understanding of these plants as women, sisters.
The lessons of reciprocity are written clearly in the Three Sisters Garden.
Together their stems inscribe what looks like a blueprint for the world, a map of balance and harmony.
The corn stands eight feet tall; rippling green ribbons of leaf curl away from the stem in every direction to catch the sun.
The bean twines around the corn stalk, weaving itself between the leaves of corn, never interfering with their work.
Spread around the feet of the corn and beans is a carpet of big broad squash leaves that intercept the light that falls amount the pillars of corn.
Their layered spacing use the light, a gift from the sun, efficiently, with no waste.
The organic symmetry of forms belongs together;
the placement of every leaf,
the harmony of shapes speak their message.
Respect one another,
support one another,
bring your gift to the world and receive the gifts of others and there will be enough for all.

What if you had no language at all and yet there was something to needed to say? Wouldn't you dance it? "

From Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer

V. **"Sisters"**

Danced by Virginia Driggers, Sara Grace and Grace Mayer
Choreography by Roxann Morgan Rowley and Dancers
Music by Jessie Montgomery, "Strum"

VI. **Mother Earth –**

"The flocks came from the south,
dense layers of small bodies that undulated and folded into themselves,
creating sheets,
splitting into tendrils,
forming separate tributaries that reunited into great rivers of wings,
all moving with tremendous speed.
The first washed over and around us within seconds,
thousands of small,
fleet bodies sweeping past in a rush of thin,
whispery sound very different –
higher, more urgent –
than the wind.
I spun with them, turning on my heel like a weathervane buffeted by a changing gust,
but they were already past me,
receding even as the next waves flashed to my right and left.
Glancing back I saw, miles away,
dense clouds of birds lifting off from wherever they had been sitting,
invisible below the subtle curve of the horizon,
forming amoebic masses that billowed and contracted,
joined together, and then stretched out like bulbous fingers toward us. "

Quote from A World on the Wing by Scott Weidensaul

VII. **Flyway**

Danced by Next Reflex Dance Collective
Choreography by Roxann Morgan Rowley
Music by Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber, "Violin Sonatas"

VIII. **Mother Earth**

"Rivers? Streams? Creeks?
These are all names for water flowing on the Earth's surface.
Rivers flow through valleys in the landscape with ridges of higher land separating the valleys.
Rain falls on the land, seeping into the ground or becomes runoff flowing downhill into rivers
and lakes, on its journey towards the seas.

Fluid, Moving , Stretching, Flowing, Connecting, Exploring

In my first sleep
I came to the river
And looked down
Through the clear water -
Only in dream
Water so pure,
Laced and undulant
Lines of flow
On its rocky bed
Water of life
Streaming forever."

The River Poem by Kathleen Jessie Raine

IX. "Water"

Danced by Next Reflex Dance Collective
Choreography by Roxann Morgan Rowley
Music by Claude Debussy, "La Mer"

X. Mother Earth

"It's late summer ,
And the forest is in a strange mood.
The trees have exchanged the lush green in their crowns for a washed- out version verging on yellow.
It seems as though they are getting increasingly tired.
Exhaustion is setting in,
And the trees are waiting for the stressful season to end.
They feel just like we do after a busy day at work
Ready for a well earned rest.

Quote from *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Wohlleben

Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
Lengthen night and shorten day;
Every leaf speaks bliss to me
Fluttering from the autumn tree.
I shall smile when wreaths of snow
Blossom where the rose should grow;
I shall sing when night's decay
Ushers in a drearier day."

From *Fall, Leave, Fall*— Emily Brontë

XI. "fall"

Danced by Next Reflex Dance Collective
Choreography by Roxann Morgan Rowley
Music by Tchaikovsky, "The Seasons: 10 October: Autumns Song"

XII. Mother Earth

"Remember the sky that you were born under,
Know each of the star's stories.
Remember the moon, know who she is.
Remember the sun's birth at dawn, that is the strongest point of time.
Remember sundown and the giving away to night
Remember your birth, how your mother struggled to give you form and breath. You are evidence of her life, and her mother's, and hers.
Remember your father. He is your life, also.
Remember the earth whose skin you are: red earth, black earth, yellow earth, white earth, brown earth, we are earth.
Remember the plants, trees, animal life who all have their tribes, their families, their histories, too. Talk to them, listen to them. They are alive poems.
Remember the wind. Remember her voice. She knows the origin of this universe.
Remember you are all people and all people are you
Remember you are this universe and this universe is you.
Remember all is in motion, is growing, is you.
Remember language comes from this.
Remember the dance language is, that life is.
Remember."

Poem *Remember* by Joy Harjo

XIII. "Stars"

Danced by Next Reflex Dance Collective
Choreography by NRDC Dancers
Original Composition and Music by Nova Ren and Bennet

Biographies

Next Reflex Dance Collective

Next Reflex Dance Collective is an award-winning modern dance company based in Northern Virginia. It was founded by Roxann Morgan Rowley and Erika Surma in 2007 and has been presented throughout the region by multiple venues and festivals including the John F. Kennedy Center, The DC Dance Festival, The Charlotte Dance Festival, The DUMBO Dance Festival, The Cool NY Dance Festival, The Goose Route Dance Festival, The Howard Community Festival, Mason/Rhynes Productions "Late Night Series", The Carter Barron Amphitheater, The Workhouse Arts Center, Dance Place, The Harman Center for the Arts, The 2010 Metro DC Dance Awards, and The National Theater. NRDC's programs include en Route! A Touring Dance Project, A Late Night Series, and an Artist-in-residency program.

NRDC has received support from the Puffin Foundation, the Arts Council of the Valley, the DC Commission for the Arts and Humanities, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, and the Arts Council of Fairfax County. In 2009, NRDC was the proud recipient of the Metro DC Dance Awards' "Founders Award" for innovation in dance and was a finalist in multiple award categories. NRDC has formerly been in residency at American Dance Institute and The Workhouse Arts Center. www.nextreflex.org

Roxann Morgan Rowley- Artistic Director for Next Reflex Dance Collective

Roxann Morgan Rowley is the artistic director for Next Reflex Dance Collective. Since 2006 she has been producing dance work in the DC Metro Region. Her work has been showcased in productions at Dance Place and Joy of Motion, Dancing Across the Virginias, the Charlotte Dance Festival, The Goose Route Dance Festival, White Wave CoolNYC Festival, The Velocity DC Dance Festival, John F. Kennedy Center, and the Harman Shakespeare Theater. She has choreographed for The American Century Theater. Her work has also been presented at James Madison University, George Mason University, and The University of Mary Washington.

An artist and performer, she has had the opportunity to work artists and companies including MansurDance, Clancy Works, Steven Mazolla, Daniel Burkholder and the Playground, Dakshina Dance Company, Anomosmotion, Peter DiMuro, Jane Jerardi, Jane Franklin Dance Company and Human Landscape Dance. Ms. Morgan Rowley holds an MFA from George Mason University and a BA from George Washington University studying under national and international faculty members.

Outside of NRDC Ms. Morgan Rowley has taught for James Madison University, University of Mary Washington, Northern Virginia Community College and Fairfax County Public Schools Institute for the Arts and Joy of Motion. Currently Ms. Morgan Rowley teaches for George Mason University and Fairfax City Parks and Recreation.

Virginia Driggers' dance education began at the age of 8 in the genres of Ballet, Pointe, Lyrical, Contemporary, Jazz, Tap, and Hip Hop. She went on to dance in events such as the DC Cherry Blossom Parade, and college bowl halftime shows as a back up performer for artists, Jake Owens and Nico&Vinz. She also choreographed for numerous high school choral and musical theatre productions. She graduated from James Madison University in 2020 with a BA in Dance. Since graduating she has began teaching a variety of dance styles at Dance Etc. School of the Arts in Woodbridge, VA. She has also choreographed for PWC events. She feels very blessed to be a company dancer in both Next Reflex Dance Collective and the Claytor Company.

Jonathan Faircloth - Jonathan is thoroughly excited to be working with NRDC again on another beautiful piece! Some of Jonathan's credits include , Little Shop of Horrors (Choreographer), Hairspray (Motormouth ensemble, WATCH recipient of Best Musical), Zombie Prom (Ramona Merengue, Choreographer), Fiddler On The Roof (Avram), The Producers (Carmen Ghia), Avenue Q (Gary Coleman),

and Adventures of Alice (Queen Of Hearts) Dragalicious/One Night Only Cabaret Series (director, choreographer, performer), . Jonathan is very grateful to have been given the opportunity to perform with such a wonderful group of artists. Enjoy the show!

Sara Goldman began her dance career at Ballet Academy of Warrenton, near her hometown in Culpeper, Virginia. She graduated from Radford University with a B.F.A. with highest honors in both Dance and English in May 2016. As a student at Radford, Sara performed choreography created by both students and faculty and danced in the American College Dance Association's 2016 National College Dance Festival at the John F. Kennedy Center. She also choreographed and set a full length show for her senior capstone project. After graduating, Sara worked as a trainee and an apprentice with Roanoke City Ballet in Roanoke, Virginia, where she danced roles in ballets including Sleeping Beauty, The Nutcracker, Dracula, Don Quixote, and Cinderella. When she returned to Northern Virginia, she danced for several years as a company member with Nomadic Artist in Fairfax, Virginia, before joining Next Reflex Dance Collective. She recently earned a Master of Library Science degree from Appalachian State University; outside of her dance commitments, she works for the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Sara is now in her sixth season with Next Reflex Dance Collective and is so grateful to have found such an incredible and welcoming company to call home

Sarah Grace recently graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University with a BFA in Dance and Choreography. Her dance journey started at the young age of 3 and has danced at a few different studios in rural northern Virginia. Since graduating from college Sarah has been teaching at the Lasley Centre for the Performing Arts where she teaches multiple genres of dance and has won a couple of awards for her choreography. She began performing with NRDC in the spring of 2023 and looks forward to what the future holds with the company.

Nova Ren Masters is a multi-instrumentalist, composer, and educator based in Richmond, where she lives with her amazing wife Amanda, her talented daughter Bennett, and a dragon named Charlie Cactusaurus.

Grace Mayer graduated from James Madison University with a BA in dance and geographic science in 2020, where she was part of the Virginia Repertory Dance Company and the Contemporary Dance Ensemble. Since then Grace has worked with Dance Matrix and Fredericksburg Ballet Center, and has been dancing with NRDC since the spring of 2021.

Zena Nguon has been dancing since the age of 6, training in Ballet, Jazz, Modern, and Tap. She graduated James Madison University with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Dance and a Teaching Licensure in Dance Education. Zena performed with Music City Drum and Bugle Corps' color guard for the summer of 2017 and 2019 seasons. During the 2019 season, her choreography received first place at the "Drum Corps International: Individual and Ensemble" competition. She is currently the Studio Manager at C4 Performing Arts and teaches dance classes throughout the DMV area. In 2021, she started a Music & Movement class at Inquisiminds' Academic and Enrichment program as well as a dance company for grades K-8th. Her latest choreography projects include a dance film with Claytor Company and Luther Jackson Middle School's musical production of "Matilda Jr." Zena is thrilled to be a part of Next Reflex Dance Collective and is honored to be working with such talented artists of the DMV area.