

**DRIEHAUS MUSEUM ANNOUNCES SPRING ACTIVATION DATES
FOR *BRENDAN FERNANDES: IN THE ROUND*
APRIL 10 & 11 AND MAY 6–9, 2026**



CHICAGO (March 9, 2026) – The **Driehaus Museum** announces the Spring activation dates for ***Brendan Fernandes: In the Round***. As the Museum’s first artist-in-residence, Fernandes transforms the Museum’s 1926 Murphy Auditorium into a dynamic site for dance, movement, sound, and sculptural installation. The highly anticipated April and May programming includes the World Premiere of Fernandes’ new performance commission ***Score for the Murphy Auditorium***, and ***Concerts of Dance***, which spotlights performers within Fernandes’ ensemble and emerging work from Chicago’s independent dance community. Conceived as an evolving, episodic residency, *In the Round* will return in Fall 2026 with additional performance dates and public programs.

Organized by guest curator **Stephanie Cristello**, *Brendan Fernandes: In the Round* is part of the Museum’s ***A Tale of Today*** series that places contemporary art in dialogue with the art, architecture, and design of the Museum.

Executive Director of the Driehaus Museum **Lisa M. Key** says, “*A Tale of Today* reflects a main tenet of the Driehaus Museum mission: sparking dialogue between contemporary art and ideas, and the art,

architecture, and design of Chicago's Gilded Age. We are delighted to welcome Brendan Fernandes to be the Museum's first artist-in-residence, where history and the present come full circle."

Brendan Fernandes: In the Round programs are free with Museum admission and reservations are encouraged at driehausmuseum.org. The Spring 2026 schedule is as follows:

Performance: *World Premiere of Brendan Fernandes: Score for the Murphy Auditorium*

Friday, April 10 | 6:00–9:00pm

In this newly commissioned durational work choreographed by Brendan Fernandes, the first artist-in-residence to activate the Driehaus Museum's newly restored 1926 Murphy Auditorium, an ensemble of performers from across Chicago's vibrant independent dance community gather to create a dynamic site for sculptural installation, movement, and sound. Inspired by the pioneering spirit of New York City's Judson Dance Theater, each performance is improvisational in nature, with no prescribed beginning or end. *Brendan Fernandes: Score for the Murphy Auditorium* features a rotating cast of dancers that interact with minimalist site-specific installations designed by AIM Architecture (Antwerp, Shanghai, Chicago) alongside textiles developed in collaboration with The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, and a sound installation by Chicago-based experimental musician Alex Inglizian. *Presented in partnership with EXPO ART WEEK's Art After Hours.*

Artist & Curator Talk: *Brendan Fernandes and Stephanie Cristello*

Saturday, April 11 | 1:00pm

Charting the influence of the Judson Dance Theater, a pioneering collective of choreographers, composers, filmmakers, and artists who revolutionized contemporary dance in the 1960s, Fernandes and Cristello will present how this exhibition expands upon legacies for open collaboration and collective creation. Dissolving the boundary between audience and performer, both will discuss these themes alongside dancers from the cast of the newly-commissioned performance work *Scores for the Murphy Auditorium*—inviting visitors to experience history, performance, and space from multiple perspectives. *Presented in partnership with EXPO ART WEEK.*

Performance: *Brendan Fernandes: Score for the Murphy Auditorium*

Wednesday, May 6 | 5:00–7:00pm

In this newly commissioned durational work choreographed by Brendan Fernandes, the first artist-in-residence to activate the Driehaus Museum's 1926 Murphy Auditorium, an ensemble of performers from across Chicago's vibrant independent dance community gather to create a dynamic site for sculptural installation, movement, and sound.

Open Rehearsal

Wednesday, May 6 and Friday, May 8 | 12:00-4:00 PM

An open rehearsal with the performers offering audiences a rare, behind-the-curtains glimpse of the new work by Laura Baumeister and Jenna Weatherbie, *Inosculate*, which will premiere May 9.

Solo Improvisation

Thursday, May 7 | 12:00-4:00 PM

Ensemble dancer Laura Baumeister will create a long form solo improvisation inspired Fernandes' installation, guided by choreography that engages self-expression, instinct, and individual interpretation.

Performance: *Concerts of Dance: Laura Baumeister*

Saturday, May 9 | 1:00pm

Evolving from a process spanning nearly two years, Laura Baumeister is joined by their collaborator Jenna Weatherbie to present a freshly finalized work, *Inosculate*. Described as the act of joining as one by intertwining, the term ‘inosculate’ is most used to recognize the process in trees that, over the span of years, may knock into one another as they grow and are moved by the wind. By rare chance, they fuse at their exposed wounds before healing to become one interconnected organism. Born from a series of long-form improvisational sessions and rooted in trust and relational intimacy, this project examines closeness formed by necessity versus choice, and the quiet tenderness embedded in everyday acts of care—buttoning clothing, braiding hair, tying ribbons, and holding one another. *Baumeister will hold open rehearsals and improvisational performances in the Murphy Auditorium Wednesday, May 6–Friday May 8, leading up to the final performance.*

MORE ABOUT BRENDAN FERNANDES: IN THE ROUND

Inspired by the pioneering spirit of New York City’s Judson Dance Theater and their *Concerts for Dance*, Fernandes debuts a new commission, *Score for the Murphy Auditorium*, and *Concerts of Dance*, in which Fernandes invites Chicago’s independent dance community to create new works throughout the residency.

The Judson Dance Theater was an influential collective of choreographers, composers, filmmakers, and artists in 1960s New York who revolutionized dance by rejecting classical technique in favor of everyday gesture and shared experimentation. Initially staged in the sanctuary of Judson Memorial Church between 1962 and 1966, the group’s early performances offered a radical blueprint for creative freedom. Decades later, Fernandes reimagines this legacy for the present, re-situating its spirit in the Driehaus Museum’s 1926 Murphy Auditorium, which was modeled after a church in Paris. *Brendan Fernandes: In the Round* collapses past and present, revealing a shared lineage of artists transforming unconventional spaces into places of expression, experimentation, and community.

“*In the Round* invites us to experience contemporary art and dance as a shared architectural and social space—one shaped by bodies moving together through history,” says Guest Curator **Stephanie Cristello**. “Reactivating the radical spirit of the Judson Dance Theater within the Murphy Auditorium, Brendan Fernandes asks us to see history itself as something lived, collective, and continually re-made.”

Dancers interact with minimalist site-specific installations developed in collaboration with **AIM Architecture** (Antwerp, Shanghai, Chicago) and textile-based works by **The Fabric Workshop and Museum** (Philadelphia), echoing the multidisciplinary ethos of Judson Dance Theater. The installation places modern minimalism in dialogue with the Museum’s Gilded Age ornamentation, creating an interactive stage setting for visitors to experience history, performance, and space from multiple perspectives.

Lead support for *Brendan Fernandes: In the Round* is provided by Cari and Michael J. Sacks. Major support is provided by the Driehaus Trust Company, LLC, Anne L. Kaplan, and Gary Metzner and Scott Johnson. Generous support is provided by Elizabeth Liebman. Additional support is provided by *Friends of Brendan Fernandes*.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Brendan Fernandes (b. 1979, Nairobi, Kenya) is an internationally recognized Canadian artist working at the intersection of dance and visual arts. Currently based in Chicago, his practice addresses issues of race, queer culture, migration, protest, and other forms of collective movement. Constantly seeking to create new spaces and forms of agency, Fernandes' work often takes on hybrid forms: part ballet, part queer dance party, part political protest always rooted in collaboration and fostering solidarity. Fernandes is a graduate of the Whitney Independent Study Program (2007) and has been the recipient of numerous awards, including a Robert Rauschenberg Residency Fellowship (2014), a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship (2020), an Artadia Award (2019), a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Grant (2019), and most recently, the Platform Award (2024). In 2024, he was also honored with the Creative Voice Award by Arts Alliance Illinois. His work has been presented at prestigious venues such as the 2019 Whitney Biennial at the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York), the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (Chicago), the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York), the Museum of Modern Art (New York), the J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles), the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), and the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal (MAC), among many others. Fernandes is an Associate Professor in the Department of Art, Theory, and Practice at Northwestern University. He is represented by Monique Meloche Gallery in Chicago and Susan Inglett Gallery in New York. Recent and upcoming projects include performances and solo presentations at the Pulitzer Arts Foundation (St. Louis, MO), the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver (Denver, CO), the Fabric Workshop and Museum (Philadelphia, PA), and Prospect.6 (New Orleans, LA).

ABOUT THE GUEST CURATOR

Stephanie Cristello is a contemporary art critic, curator, and author based in Chicago, IL. She has worked internationally across a variety of platforms, including exhibitions, panels and symposia, editorial, and publishing. Cristello was previously the Senior Editor US for *ArtSlant* (2012–18) and the founding Editor-in-Chief of *THE SEEN, Chicago's International Journal of Contemporary & Modern Art* (2013–20). Her writing has been published in *ArtReview*, *BOMB Magazine*, *Elephant Magazine*, *Frieze Magazine*, *Mousse Magazine*, and *OSMOS*, as well as *Portable Gray* published by the University of Chicago Press, where she serves as Editor-at-Large since 2025. She graduated from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2013 with a Liberal Arts Thesis in Visual Critical Studies. She served as the Artistic Director of EXPO CHICAGO (2013–2020) and is currently the Director / Curator at Chicago Manual Style. From 2020–21 she was as a Guest Curator at Kunsthall Aarhus (Denmark) and the Malmö Art Museum (Sweden), as well as a Curatorial Advisor to the 2020 Busan Biennale (South Korea). She is the author of *Theodora Allen: Saturnine* (Motto / Kunsthall Aarhus, 2021), *Sustainable Societies for the Future* (Motto / Malmö Art Museum, 2021), *Barbara Kasten: Architecture and Film 2015–2020* (Skira, 2022), and *Uffe Isolotto: Milk Eye* (Holstebro Kunstmuseum, 2025). In 2020, she was awarded a publication grant by the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Laura Baumeister (they / she) is a freelance movement artist, with a BFA in Modern Dance. They have dedicated much of their independent work to long form improvisational studies in composing movement from a base of imagery, sound scores, environment, and deep feeling. Baumeister has found that disentangling the brain and personality from how we innately move is a delightfully impossible feat; thus letting them inform and inspire one another lets us explore ourselves and others in an inexplicable profound way. Their most recent projects include *GRIT* by Maggie Vannucci, an evening length work

created for the Steppenwolf Lookout Series, as well as performing as part of an improvisational multi-disciplinary exhibition with movement partner Katlin Bourgeois, *The Rite* created by Brendan Fernandes at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago for the exhibition *City in a Garden*, from July 2025–March 2026. She also participated as a performer and choreographer for Little Fire Artist Collective in November of 2025. Baumeister has been part of work for Brendan Fernandes at The Driehaus Museum, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Oxbow School of Art and Artists' residency, and The Raclin Murphy Museum. They have also performed in works by Jessi Stegall, Noelle Kayser, Robyn Mineko Williams, Sophie Allen, Chih-Jou Cheng for the Chicago Cultural Center Artist Residency, Rebecca Aneloski (And Artists Company), and Fever Dream Dance Company. They are currently coming to the end of a two-year long process creating an evening length work with their close friend and collaborator Jenna Weatherbie; a premiere of the work in the process of being finalized.

Hanna DiLorenzo is a multidisciplinary freelance dance artist originally from Rochester, NY. She began her formal training at The Draper Center for Dance Education, formerly the school of the Rochester City Ballet. Later, she attended the University of North Carolina School of the Arts where she earned her BFA in Contemporary Dance and completed her academics early before moving to Chicago to join the Hubbard Street Dance Chicago Professional Training Program (HS Pro). There, she completed her degree while performing alongside the main company and was honored with the 2019 HS Pro Emerging Choreographer Award. Now based in Chicago, DiLorenzo moves fluidly between roles as a performer, choreographer, rehearsal director, and collaborator. She is a company member with Boykin Dance Project, a founding member of Little Fire Artist Collective, and dancer, choreographer, and rehearsal director for Niko8 Performance. Her freelance work has led her to perform pieces by artists including Braeden Barnes, Brendan Fernandes, Abdiel Figueroa Reyes, FLOCKWORKS, Alicia Johnson, Brian Martinez, Jessi Stegall, and Justin Rapaport, and she was also a cover for Robyn Mineko Williams' *Echo Mine*. DiLorenzo's choreographic voice is grounded in a desire to challenge convention—crafting work that moves with cinematic clarity while using staging and lighting as expressive tools. Her choreography has been presented by Chicago Live, Highland Park High School, HS Pro, Little Fire Artist Collective, New Dances 2025, Niko8, See Chicago Dance, and various film festivals. Choreographic residencies on the horizon include the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and Symbiosis Arts.

Kara Hunsinger is a Chicago-based dance artist whose movement lives at the intersection of athleticism, emotional depth, and storytelling. Her work is rooted in presence, curiosity, and the belief that the body holds both memory and meaning. She received her BFA in Dance from the University of Arizona School of Dance, where she deepened her understanding of the body as both instrument and narrator. Her training has taken her across the U.S. and internationally, including time with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Alonzo King LINES Ballet, Ate9 Dance Company, SALT Contemporary Dance, San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, and Share Dance Intensive Berlin. Hunsinger is currently a company member with Boykin Dance Project and has previously performed with multiple Chicago based dance companies. Her performance repertoire spans contemporary and ballet-based works by Helene Simoneau, Noelle Kayser, Mike Tyus, Robert Battle, James Gregg, Nacho Duato, Christopher Wheeldon, Alexei Ratmansky, and Ohad Naharin. In addition to performing, Kara is an emerging choreographic voice. She served as Choreographic Assistant with Boykin Dance Project from 2022–2024, contributing to works such as *Nonsense!* and *Smart Mouth*. Her own choreography, including *Can You Hear Me Now?* and *Let The River Answer*, reflects her interest in physical storytelling, human connection, and the emotional

undercurrents that shape modern life. This is her third collaboration with Brendan Fernandes, following his installation *Skin in the Game* (2024), and the immersive performance *72 Seasons* (2021) at Lurie Garden.

Nick Kearns, originally from Williamsburg, VA, began dancing at age 15 under the direction of Shelly Isler at SI Dance. A graduate of James Madison University, Kearns performed with the Virginia Repertory Dance Company, a select ensemble that provided him the opportunity to collaborate with renowned companies such as the Ballet Hispánico, DanceWorks Chicago, and Eisenhower Dance Detroit. He had the privilege of working with acclaimed choreographers Lucinda Childs, Norbert De La Cruz III, Rubén Graciani, Monique Haley, and Jessica Hendricks while at JMU. Following graduation, Kearns joined DanceWorks Chicago (under the direction of Julie Nakagawa) in 2024, where he had the opportunity to collaborate with choreographers/works by Joshua Manculich, Charissa Lee Barton, Hanna Bricston, Jessi Stegall, Demis Volpi, and more. In addition, Kearns performed with the New Dances 2025 company, a collaboration between Thodos Dance Chicago and DanceWorks Chicago, where he performed works by Hanna DiLorenzo and Xenia Mansour. Nick currently dances with Symbiosis Arts, under the direction of Braeden Barnes.

Princess Reid grew up in Jacksonville, Florida, and began dancing at age seven at The Florida Ballet under the direction of Laurie Picinich-Byrd and Linda Jenkins. At age 18, Reid left Jacksonville to join Orlando Ballet's second company where she studied for three years. Reid attended USA IBC in 2018 and was offered a contract with The Joffrey Ballet in Chicago. During her time at the Joffrey Ballet she had the opportunity to work with Chanel DaSilva, Yuri Possokhov, Christopher Wheeldon, Cathy Marston and John Neumeier, among others. She was also honored to perform the role of cupid in Possokhov's *Don Quixote*. In 2021, she was given the opportunity to attend USA IBC's gala where she performed a variation from Gerald Arpino's *Kettentanz*. Reid left the Joffrey Ballet in 2024 to pursue freelance dance endeavors and is a frequent collaborator of Brendan Fernandes.

Brian Josiah Martinez is a Colombian-American choreographer, movement director, and the founder and artistic director of Boykin Dance Project, a Chicago-based contemporary dance company. His choreographic practice centers collaboration, dancer autonomy, and cinematic storytelling, often exploring themes of intimacy, presence, and human connection. Martinez approaches creation as a facilitator rather than sole author, building work through dialogue, shared authorship, and deep engagement with the communities he works within. Through Boykin Dance Project, he is committed to expanding access to contemporary dance by pairing live performance with education, digital resources, and community outreach initiatives.

Xenia Mansour is a movement-based performer, director, and coach. She holds a BFA in Dance from NYU Tisch School of the Arts and has performed with NYC-based choreographers and collectives, including HIVEWILD, HOLDTIGHT, Sikora + Dance, and Rashaun Mitchell + Silas Riener. Most recently, she has performed in Brendan Fernandes' "In Two" at the Pulitzer Arts Museum and choreographed and performed in Grammy-nominated musician Nico Segal's "Welcome Home" at Steppenwolf Theatre. Her work has been presented by Thodos Dance Chicago/DanceWorks Chicago for New Dances 2025 at The Ruth Page Center for the Arts, and has also been commissioned by Grammy-winner Kalia Vandever and MOMENTA Dance Company. Through her company, Philoxenia Movement LLC, Mansour also works as a

movement director and coach, collaborating with Chicago-based musicians, photographers, models, and visual artists. Her movement direction spans live performance, music projects, and fashion and editorial contexts, including ongoing collaboration with Greek-American pop artist Tommy Bravos and leading model movement workshops with photographer Anna Blank. Her work is guided by curiosity, play, and intentionality, using movement as a tool for dialogue, presence, and honest exchange between performers, collaborators, and audiences.

Alex Inglizian is a dynamic force within Chicago’s creative landscape, seamlessly blending roles as an artist, composer, musician, engineer, and educator. His music transcends conventional boundaries, embracing the interplay of noise, harmony, silence, and space while championing the art of performance and improvisation. A graduate of The School of The Art Institute of Chicago, Inglizian currently serves as co-director and chief recording engineer at Experimental Sound Studio, a nonprofit dedicated to sound art. At Northwestern University, he shares his expertise as a professor of sound for film sound design, synthesis, music production, and audio technology. An integral figure in Chicago’s vibrant experimental music scene, Inglizian’s collaborations with filmmakers showcase his versatility and innovation. Rooted in the avant-garde traditions of experimental electronic music and improvisation, his artistry is a testament to both historical legacies and contemporary influences, shaping a narrative that evolves with each collaboration and creative endeavor.

ABOUT THE DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

The Driehaus Museum engages and inspires the global community through exploration and ongoing conversations in art, architecture, and design of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Its permanent collection and temporary exhibitions are presented in an immersive experience within the restored 1883 Nickerson Mansion, and the 1926 Murphy Auditorium. The Museum’s collection reflects and is inspired by the collecting interests, vision, and focus of its founder, the late Richard H. Driehaus. For more information, visit driehausmuseum.org and connect with the Museum on [Facebook](#), [TikTok](#), and [Instagram](#).

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Photo: *Brendan Fernandes: In the Round*, Driehaus Museum, 2026. Photo by Robert Chase Heishman for Bob. Dancers: Hanna DiLorenzo, Nick Kearns, Xenia Mansour. Courtesy of the artist, Monique Meloche Gallery (Chicago), and Susan Inglett Gallery (New York).

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