

VCU DANCE TIMELINE

The Mission of the Virginia Commonwealth University Department of Dance and Choreography is to create an invigorating educational environment in which the student experiences the demands and challenges of a professional career as an artist in the field of dance. The program provides the student with numerous opportunities for individual artistic growth in a community setting where communication, mutual respect and self motivation are encouraged. The following timeline highlights steps taken to promote this journey.

- 2005-2006 Guest artists for the academic year include Martha Myers, Gerri Houlihan, Martin Keogh, Robert Battle, and his dance company Battleworks, dubbed a "frenetic and electrifying, a terse, powerful explosion of transformative energy" by *The New York Times*.
- 2005-2006 VCU Dance receives funding for it's guest artist and presenting program from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation; VCUarts; Virginia Commission for the Arts; and The National College Choreography Initiative (NCCI), a Leadership Initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts, administered by Dance/USA, the national service organization for professional dance.
- June 2005 VCU Dance faculty Scott Putman and Adam Chamberlin establish a Choreography and Automated Lighting International Study Program in Costa Rica bringing emerging technologies, students, engineers, artists and working professionals together to collaborate and explore new approaches to performing arts. Four VCU Dance majors are currently attending the program.
- June 2005 Five VCU Dance majors; Niall Jones, Courtney Cooke, Hunter Carter, Travis Sisk, and Jasmine Sanker, attend the American Dance Festival on scholarship and are selected by international choreographers for repertory work.
- May 2005 VCU Dance Associate Professor Melanie Richards invited to perform *Posie*, a witty and highly entertaining solo created for Richards by dance luminary Donald McKayle, in the Gala Concert of the American Dance Legacy Institute's National Conference 2005: Dancing Rebels in Saratoga Springs, New York, August 10-14, 2005.
- May 2005 VCU Dance Assistant Professor Scott Putman receives a National Choreography Plan Award for exceptional choreography from Regional Dance America (RDA), Pacific chapter for his work *Reciprocal Reverse* performed by Pasadena Dance Theatre from Pasadena, California.

- May 2005 VCU Dance Associate Professor Judith Steel awarded a \$7,500 PALANTINE grant to research Laban Movement analysis in teaching movement. Ms. Steel will concentrate on her research during a fall 2005 sabbatical in Edinburgh, Scotland.
- May 2005 VCU Dance Assistant Professor Katrina Clemans works in partnership with VCUarts, Merge Interactive, the American College Dance Festival and Florida State University to undertake the second testing of a web-enabled conference management system designed by Clemans and Merge Interactive to streamline conference planning and hosting for the American College Dance Festival Association.
- April 2005 A cast of seven male VCU Dance Majors performed *Suspect Seven* choreographed by Assistant Professor James Frazier in three nationally visible venues: the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage, American Dance Institute in Rockville, Maryland and the Black College Dance Exchange at Grambling State University, Grambling Louisiana. VCU Dance majors performing in *Suspect Seven* were Hunter Carter, Tony Colden, Calvin Cooper, Tyrone Cooper, Richard Freeman, Niall Jones, and Alexander Miguel.
- March 2005 VCU Dance presents Claire Porter in *Namely, Muscles* – part of the *Portable* series – at Grace Street Theater
- March 2005 Bill T. Jones / Arnie Zane Dance Company is presented by VCU Dance. The group performs *Blauvelt Mountain (A Fiction)*, *Floating the Tongue* and *Mercy 10 x 8 on a Circle* held in conjunction with the Mid-Atlantic Region American College Dance Festival when over 500 students and faculty from 35 institutions in 10 different states visited VCU for four days of master classes, workshops, and adjudicated performances.
- October 2005 VCU Dance Chair Martha Curtis elected President of Council of Dance Administrators (CODA), October 2004. CODA is an invited group of 25 leading university dance programs whose executive attends an annual forum to discuss issues in dance in higher education
- 2004-2005 Guest artists for the academic year include Gerri Houlihan, Gesel Mason and Claire Porter.
- 2004 VCU Dance is awarded funding by The Carpenter Foundation, Altria Group, Inc., Virginia Commission for the Arts and The National College Choreography Initiative (NCCI), a Leadership Initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts with additional support by the Dana Foundation, administered by Dance/USA, the national service organization for professional dance.
- June 2004 VCU Dance students are selected to perform excerpts from *A Choreographic Offering* at the Kennedy Center as part of the National College Choreography Initiative program.
- April 2004 JoAnna Mendl Shaw and Dancing with Horses perform.

- Spring 2004 Gerri Houlihan completes a semester long residency.
- Oct 2003 Clay Taliferro, Carla Maxwell, Ann Vachon, and the Limón Dance Company are in residency at VCU Dance setting excerpts from *A Choreographic Offering*, conducting community outreach, presenting a dance film documentary and performing for the Richmond community.
- Sept 2003 Donald McKayle completes a three week teaching residency.
2003 VCU Dance is awarded funding by The Carpenter Foundation, Altria Group, Inc., Virginia Commission for the Arts and The National College Choreography Initiative (NCCI), a Leadership Initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts with additional support by the Dana Foundation, administered by Dance/USA, the national service organization for professional dance.
- 2002 Tere O'Connor and his company complete a four week teaching residency with performances at VCU Dance.
- 2002 VCU Dance presents its Twentieth Anniversary Gala – Peak Performance Plus! hosted by alumnus Richard Move to a sold out audience.
- 2001 David Dorfman Dance completes a teaching residency with performances at VCU Dance.
- 2001 VCU Dance begins the Oates Scholars program designed to focus energies and resources on students who intend to include teaching as a significant part of their professional careers.
- Sept. 2001 The Department's visibility draws students from all over the country. VCU Dance major enrollment is 30% out of state, giving our Virginia students the opportunity to work with a diverse group of some of the most talented dance students in the country.
- Jan. 2001 Dance Magazine features two VCU Dance Alumni as among the *Top 25 to Watch*: Richard Move and Paule Turner.
- Fall 2001 VCU Dance major enrollment grows and holds at 80
- 2000 VCU Dance acquires an additional large dance studio, costume shop, computer lab and classroom space in renovation of Dance Center Basement.
- March 2000 VCU Dance is featured in Dance Teacher Magazine with an article entitled *Dancing on Common Ground, Virginia Commonwealth University brings the best of the city to a southern campus.*
- March 2000 VCU Dance presents the Joe Goode Performance Group at the Carpenter Center.
- Sept. 1999 VCU Dance is the first BFA dance program in Virginia to become an accredited member of the National Association of Schools of Dance.
- 1998 A photo of VCU students is featured on the cover of Dance Magazine

College Guide and College Guide web-site.

- Jan. 1998 VCU Dance presents *Peak Performance, A Celebration of Modern Dance with Nationally Recognized Guest Artists* at the Carpenter Center.
- 1997 VCU Dance initiates the Bryan Whitfield Fund for Dance which provides young dance artists at VCU with substantial support as they develop their careers.
- March 1997 VCU Dance presents the Paul Taylor Dance Company at the Carpenter Center.
- Oct. 1996 VCU Dance presents Gala Opening of the Grace Street Theater.
- July 1996 Richard Toscan becomes Dean of VCU School of the Arts.
Martha Curtis becomes Chair of VCU Dance.
Major enrollment climbs to 74.
- Feb. 1996 Renovation of the Grace Street Theater is completed. The Grace Street Theater becomes a primary venue for VCU Dance productions and a popular venue for dance companies in Richmond and surrounding area communities.
- Nov. 1995 VCU Dance presents Martha Graham Dance Company at the Carpenter Center. Included on the program is "Panorama Project" featuring 33 Dance majors.
- Sept. 1994 VCU Dance presents Doug Varone and Dancers at the Carpenter Center.
- Jan. 1994 VCU Dance Faculty Gala, "On Line * Off Edge" is presented at the Carpenter Center.
- March 1993 VCU Dance hosts the Mid-Atlantic American College Dance Festival. 600+ participants from 30+ schools attended.
- 1992 Doug Varone is in residency at VCU Dance for the first of three yearly 7-week residencies.
- 1991 VCU Dance receives funding from a major donor. This enabled VCU Dance to initiate a guest artist and presenting program which has brought numerous nationally known dance artists to the Richmond community.
- July 1991 Chris Burnside becomes chair of the department.
- 1990 VCU Dance produces "VCU Cultural Heritage Dance Series 1990: Stepping, Tapping, Hoofing."
- Oct. 1989 VCU Dance produces "The Cultural Heritage Dance Series: African/American Dance Experience."
- Feb. 1989 VCU Dance Faculty concert, "Unexpected Images" is presented at the Carpenter Center.

- Fall 1988 62 majors are enrolled in the BFA program
- 1988 VCU Dance initiates the Frances Wessells Scholarship Fund.
- July 1986 Audrey Jung becomes the chair of the department.
- Spring 1985 VCU Dance graduates 7 BFA students. These students are the first ones to have completed the four year program.
- March 1984 VCU Dance hosts the Mid-Atlantic American College Dance Festival.
- 1982 VCU Dance moves from the Franklin Street Gym to the Dance Center on 10 N. Brunswick Street.
- Fall 1981 25 freshman begin the new major in the fall of 1981
- July 1981 Anne Anderson becomes the first chair of VCU Dance.
- 1981 After visionary planning & action by Frances Wessells and Dean Murry DePillars, VCU's dance program is moved from the Health and Physical Education Department to the School of the Arts. It officially becomes the Department of Dance and Choreography, also known as VCU Dance.

Over the years VCU Dance has had a commitment to bringing breadth and depth to the curriculum. The curriculum now includes extensive education in modern dance and choreography with additional curriculum in ballet, dance history, pedagogy, somatics, African dance, jazz, tap, contact improvisation, video/choreography, dance management, kinesology, and yoga. We also offer weekly workshops in a variety of dance areas not covered in the regular curriculum. Guest artist have included Tere O'Connor, Doug Varone and the Doug Varone Dance Company, The Martha Graham Dance Company, Paul Taylor, Garth Fagan Dance Company, Joe Goode and The Joe Goode Performance Company, David Dorfman and David Dorfman Dance, Ralph Lemon, and Bebe Miller.