

DANIEL GWIRTZMAN DANCE COMPANY

25TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR COMMEMORATIVE BOOKLET

Press for Intersections

Natalie Rine, OnStageBlog:

“Intersections, Daniel Gwirtzman Dance Company’s 20th Anniversary New York season and newest dance, sifts through twenty years of repertory to weld together twelve dances into one magnetic whole. The resulting piece explores the intersections of lives, bodies, time, and the dances themselves, existing in a sort of suspended time and universal setting, free from the restraints of costumes, scenery, or spectacle. From the opening moments, the company extends their arms piercing through the air like the relentless hands of time, inviting the audience from the start to ponder the weight and fluidity of our hour with them.”



The Company in the opening section of *Intersections*, from the 1999 dance *Plasma Field*. Photo: Kevin Suttlehan

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“What is remarkable about the company is the ability to breathe and connect with each other in simple gestures as much as grand displays of technical prowess. In a few of the opening dances, intersections amongst couples prevailed thematically, but there was no cliché in sight. In fact, many of the women were doing traditional partnering work, supporting their male counterparts physically around their backs and limbs. Almost parasitic, the men desperate to place a hand, meet a gaze, or connect in general became an interesting mirror to today’s Me Too counteraction toward entitlement of female bodies and spaces.”



Jason Garcia Ignacio and Stacy Martorana in *Coupling*, from 2002. Photo: Steven Pisano

“Further in the show, the piece “Timebomb” displayed the company’s further versatility in an expressive, almost at the drop of a hat mood change between “I love you and I hate you,” with company members lunging for each other’s very essences it seemed, desperate for connection. At times, just the urgency and power conveyed in the dancers’ glances deserved applause; as they circle and vulture each other in life or death moments, quiet expressions sometimes told just as much as their cascading and crumpling bodies. Of particular note, Daniel Gwirtzman and Vanessa Martínez de Baños. Their eyes and bodies told sprawling stories of the human desire to rise above (or leap out of) their emotions while being trapped in these grasping, yearning human bodies piece after piece.”

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Oren Barnoy and Daniel Gwirtzman in *Tribe*, from 2009. Photo: Steven Pisano

“They conclude the evening with energetic pieces (they truly are all energetic, pushing the dancers to extreme stamina limits I’d imagine), with one bustling city soundscape set against a riveting almost primitive and instinctual piece with fancy footwork to rival the Indian style of kathak. The pulsing urgency with hops and stomps spoke of intersections with gravity and the earth that became almost electric. The company shoots energy through every limb and glance the entire evening, and Gwirtzman’s choreography shines through in every piece as an ultimate force of nature.” February 2019, *OnStageBlog.com*. [Read The Full Review](#)

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R. Pikser in TheatreScene.com

"This 20th anniversary concert of Daniel Gwirtzman's was a retrospective of pieces created between 1999 and 2018. The pieces were extracted from their original ballets and put together for this hour and a half concert, and were restaged for presentation in the round in Bittenwieser Hall, the large open second floor dance space of the 92nd Street Y, with an intricately painted beamed ceiling hung with chandeliers. The audience was placed on two rows of seats on all four sides of the space. The result was at once elegant and intimate."



Jason Garcia Ignacio, Simone Stevens, Derek Crescenti, Lauren Kravitz, Simon Phillips and Frances Samson in *The Oracle*, which premiered at Brooklyn Academy of Music's BAM Fisher Theater in 2015. Photo: Kevin Suttlehan

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“The evening’s pieces included unison works and duets, trios and quartets, the smaller group pieces often developing the movements of the unison pieces into inventive lifts, with bodies counterbalancing each other and intertwining, the sculptured shapes appearing to sprout new body parts or to eliminate them. The imagination shown in the lifts provided a stimulating contrast to the similarity of the vocabulary.”



“The choreography used different levels, from floor to air, and was mostly concerned with cleanness of execution, in which aspect Jason Garcia Ignacio excelled. However, watching both Christian von Howard, one of Mr. Gwirtzman’s original company members, and Simone Stevens, formerly a student of Mr. Gwirtzman, one could see that there exists the possibility of using these same movements to express texture and even emotional subtext. Both of these dancers infused their every movement with an awareness, a sensuality, and a presence in the moment that made each of them riveting in their own way.”

Top: Derek Crescenti, Vanessa Martinez de Banos, Jason Garcia Ignacio in *Puzzle* (2002).

Right: Derek Crescenti and Simone Stevens in *The Oracle* (2015).
Photos: Steven Pisano



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"Dance, because it depends on the body, partakes of sensuality by its very nature. Sensuality suggests a certain surrender of oneself, implies a certain danger, the danger of losing control. The play of sensuality is the play between that surrender, that possible loss of control, and at what moment one gives in, maybe to lose oneself, or pulls back, once again taking control. It is for that moment we wait with bated breath. It is the moment spoken of by Martha Graham when she likens dancers to an acrobat on a high wire, living at the instant of danger. These two dancers recalled that sensuality to us, and reminded us of why we go to see dance and why it pulls at our souls." <http://theaterscene.com/GWIRTZMAN.html>



Christian von Howard and Daniel in *Getting Together* (2002). They have been dancing together the entire 20 years.
Simone Stevens and Simon Phillips in *Museum* (2011). Photos: Steven Pisano



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A History: Who We Are



Simon Phillips and Simone Stevens in Daniel Gwirtzman's *Obsession*, 2015, Bryant Park Presents Modern Dance. Photo: Darial Sneed

The Company has always prioritized diversity and inclusion. The diversity of our bodies -- ethnically, racially, geographically, physically -- has long been noted. Dancers from underrepresented groups, and gender, have had prominence and parity since the beginning. Women lifted men; men partnered men, since 1999. We have worked with a diversity of populations: the very young ranging to our oldest adults; underserved populations, communities in need, veterans, people with different abilities and special needs.

The non-profit organization was "founded upon a philosophy that dance should celebrate human achievement through a combination of discipline and unbound optimism" (*The New York Sun*). The Company has received praise for its exemplary dancers (Michael Novak, Jamie Scott, Jonathan Alsberry) and inventive choreography over two decades. Highlights include performances at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Festival (Scotland), Gdański Festiwal Tanca (Poland), The Kennedy Center, Bryant Park, The Studios of Key West, and Jazz at Lincoln Center. Residencies by: The Joyce Theater Foundation (NYC), The Yard (MA), Raumars Artist-in-Residence Program (Finland), Sacatar Foundation (Brazil), Djerassi Resident Artists Program (CA), CUNY Dance Initiative, Inception to Exhibition, La MaMa, Queens Museum of Art, Skafiotes Residency (Greece), Maison Dora Maar, (France), Aktuelle Architektur der Kultur (Spain), and Ucross Foundation (Wyoming).

In 2014 the Company premiered the evening-length dance *The Oracle* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's BAM Fisher. After touring to Atlanta, the critical site [Arts/ATL](#) included the dance on its Best of the Year list (2015). Cynthia Bond Perry wrote the piece "offered fresh perspective on modern dance's formal values with sparkling sweep and joyful physicality. Dancers gave form to space with mathematical elegance and human warmth. Their outstretched limbs arced and criss-crossed as they leaned in and sprang off of one another, weaving ever-changing configurations in a vision that vibrated on a frequency of harmony and brilliance."

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Notable Press

December 2018: *Dance Magazine* visits DGDC in the studio, streaming [11 minutes of rehearsal live to Dance Magazine's Facebook Page](#). Featuring Stacy Martorana and Daniel in *Shifting*. Eva Yaa Asantewaa, reviewing the dance at the time of its premiere during the Company's *New Territory* season at Joyce SoHo (2002), wrote: "perhaps the most convincing, unaffected tenderness I've seen in postmodern dance." *The Village Voice*



Photo of Stacy and Daniel during *Intersections* at the 92nd Street Y. Photo: Steven Pisano

Encore

September 2018: At the Rochester KeyBank Fringe Festival, longtime Gannett newspaper arts critic Jack Garner singled out the Company's production of *Encore* at Geva Theatre, the critical "cream of the crop." This is a link to the [review](#).

"We also found a new delight — the Daniel Gwirtzman Dance Company, through their wonderful program-long piece, *Encore*. It's a highly theatrical staging of dance, making the audience feel they're watching a company rehearsal, as the performers work their informal but precise way to a WOW finish! (It's a bit like a modern dance variation of *A Chorus Line*.) There's lots of artful and energetic dance, choreographed by Gwirtzman. He's a Rochester native who once worked with Garth Fagan's company before heading to Manhattan. Check out his work if you ever get the chance, in New York or another Fringe, or wherever. It's fabulous. "

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The ensemble in the show's finale, *Indiana*, to music by The Dorsey Brothers. Photo: Erich Camping

The Company's highly acclaimed dance [Encore](#) premiered in 2007 to terrific acclaim at Joyce SoHo and has never fallen out of the repertory. In 2009 it was an official selection of the New York Musical Theater Festival in where it enjoyed a sold-out run. In 2017 [The Encore Project](#), a yearlong tour of performances, commemorated the 10th Anniversary of *Encore*. a. The acclaimed dance has always remained active in the repertory and has been licensed by numerous other professional companies, and college and university dance departments.

"It's great to see imaginative dancing to music like this."

Deborah Jowitt, *The Village Voice*

"Encore is both the title of Gwirtzman's new dance suite and the response it's likely to inspire. The name refers to the repetitions of rehearsal, as a fictional troupe of Broadway dancers prepares to go on the road, but there's little tedium in Gwirtzman's choreography, set to classic jazz recordings. Executing his tricky syncopations and intricate patterns at breakneck tempos, the dancers can't help but smile."

Brian Seibert, *The New Yorker*

The Daniel Gwirtzman Dance Company pulled out all the stops with its performance of *Encore*, a riotous new full-evening piece of razzle-dazzle entertainment."

Lisa Jo Sagolla, *BackStage*

"Gwirtzman has made a spring fling, showing us the underside of the dancer's world, letting us feel the sensuality of the studio and glory in the music of the first half of the 20th century."

Elizabeth Zimmer, *Gay City News*

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From the section *Lazy, Hazy, Crazy Days of Summer* from *The Summertime Suite*. Photo: Lauren O'Brien

August 2018: The performance of our quintessential summer-themed *Summertime Suite* at Battery Dance Festival was enthusiastically documented and received. We were on the cover of [Downtown Express](#).

The Summertime Suite

This suite of dances, held together by a narrative arc and a range of popular music, contains a few of the numbers from the hit-show *Encore*, re-contextualized to exist outside the script of that show. It is a stand-alone piece that grows from a solo, to a duet, to another solo, to three ensemble pieces for a cast of twelve. The story follows a girl who is spending her first summer away from home.

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The Company at Jacob's Pillow in 2012, *In The Summertime*, part of *The Summertime Suite*. Photo: Chris Duggan



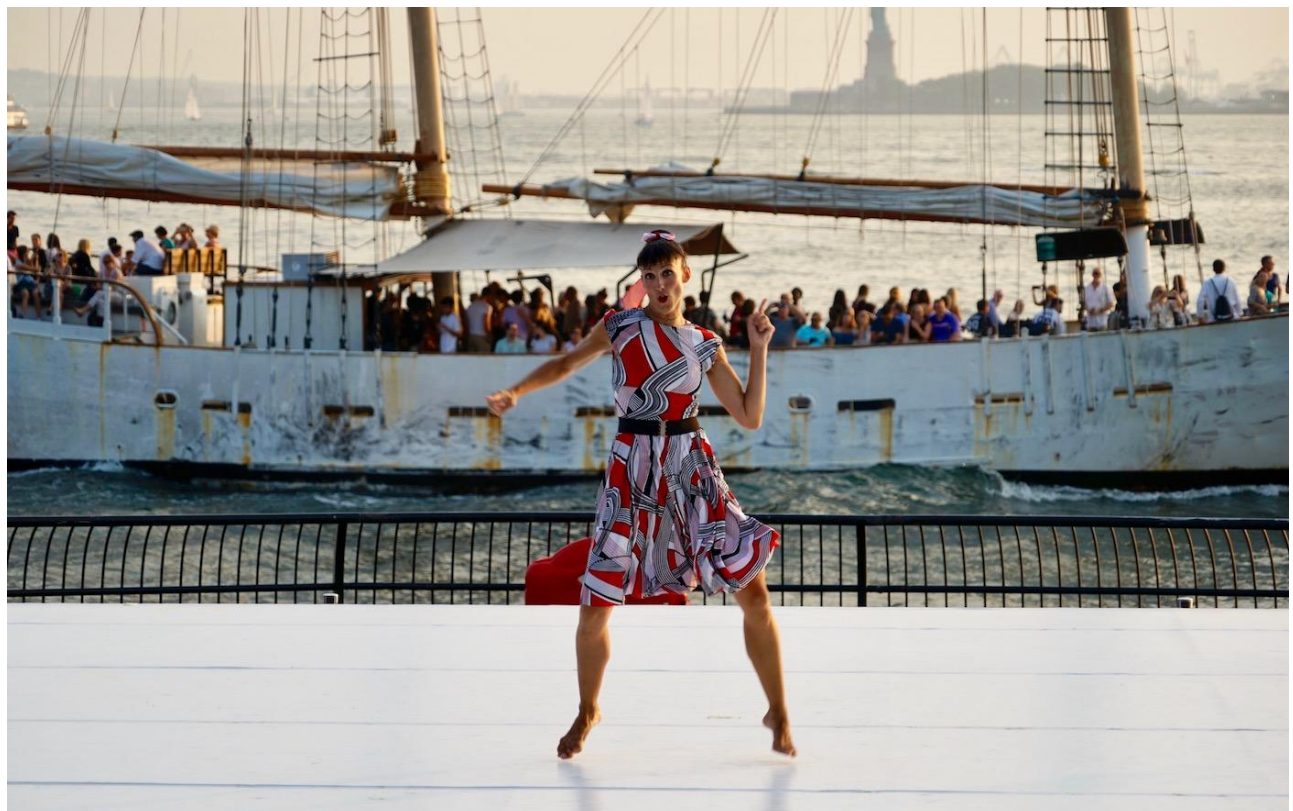
The Company at Bryant Park in 2015, *In The Summertime*, part of *The Summertime Suite*. Photo: Darial Sneed

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The Company at Battery Dance Festival in 2018, *In The Summertime*, part of *The Summertime Suite*. Photo: Milo Hess



Company dancer Vanessa Martinez de Banos in *Ticket* from *Encore*, Battery Dance Festival. Photo: Lauren O'Brien

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Daniel Gwirtzman, A History of Character



Daniel Gwirtzman in his signature solo *Character* at the Battery Dance Festival, 2018. Photo: Marc De George

Daniel, from Rochester, New York, grew up performing Israeli folk dancing from one of the pioneers of the field, Molly Rutzen Shafer. After graduating from the University of Michigan with a BFA in Dance he joined Garth Fagan Dance. He co-founded Artichoke Dance Company in 1995, a troupe he co-directed, choreographed and performed with until 1999: "A welcome addition to the New York dance scene." reviewed *The New York Times*.

Daniel toured internationally as a guest artist with the Mark Morris Dance Group in *L'Allegro* and *The Hard Nut*.

Dance Films: numerous national & international film festival credits; Theater: selected by the DanceBreak Foundation supporting the "next generation of great Broadway choreographers."

Professor and Guest Choreographer at numerous institutions nationally and internationally. Daniel holds a Master's Degree in Dance from The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Dance at Ithaca College's renown Department of Theatre Arts. Read this [interview](#) in *The Ithacan*.

Character

A signature solo from *Encore*, *Character*, choreographed in 2005, depicts the complex emotions of an entertainer, the attraction to and separation from an audience, questioning the boundaries between performing and not performing.

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Daniel premiering the solo in New York during the premiere of *Encore*, Joyce SoHo, 2007. Photo: James Washburn

"Mr. Gwirtzman does know that in dance less can be more. And that's a good thing for any choreographer to know. He can evoke strong feelings with a few gestures." *The New York Times*

"A choreographer of high spirits and skill." *The New Yorker*

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Signature portrait of the choreographer and dancer in *Character* by celebrated dance photographer Lois Greenfield, 2005

“With an eye for beauty and an exacting attention to detail,
Gwirtzman takes good care of his audience and his performers.” *Show Business*

“An abundantly inventive artist with a subtle but sure defiance of gender roles. As a dancer he’s a beauty too—lithe, sensual, playful, a rag doll, whose strength and control of form surprise.” *The Village Voice*

“Unusually supple, and one who moves like the wind.” *WQXR, The New York Times*

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Daniel in Character at Bryant Park in 2015. Photo: Darial Sneed

Battery Dance Festival Performance of Character (2018)

<https://vimeo.com/291297250>

Bryant Park Performance of Character (2015)

<https://vimeo.com/188483475>

Jacob's Pillow Performance of Character (2012)

<https://vimeo.com/149184571> Cue to 2:30

New York Musical Theater Festival Performance of Character (2009)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PwnG8MLnhYM>

Joyce SoHo Premiere of Character (2007)

<https://youtu.be/KwH2H5KHQmU>



Daniel at Jacob's Pillow, 2012. Photo: Christopher Duggan

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Daniel performing Character at Battery Dance Festival, 2018. Photo: Claudio Rodriguez

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THE DANCE WITH US PLATFORM




Dance With Us is a library of films designed to teach ways to view, think, and communicate about dance with comfort. The platform is a place for people to engage with dance on multiple levels, through watching, listening, and connecting with dance. The mission is dedicated to demystifying concert dance through an immersive experience. Introducing viewers to the language, perspectives, and essential concepts of dance, the highly-interactive platform explores and explains how dances can be made, discussed, and read.

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Dance

So You Think You Can't Dance?

Daniel Gwirtzman's *Dance With Us* takes a deep online dive with instructional videos and dance films for all.

By [Christopher Atamian](#)



"Daniel Gwirtzman with Hat," Self Portrait in Key West.

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Ryan Pliss, Vanessa Martinez de Banos, Daniel and Chris Medina in *Affront*, part of *Intersections*. Photo: Steven Pisano

With a trademark blend of humor, drama, musicality and inventiveness,
Daniel Gwirtzman Dance Company provokes and entertains.

As the Company enters this milestone season we celebrate twenty-five years of superlative dance
performed by casts of exemplary dancers.

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