

Teaching Artist: Penn Live Arts Student Discovery Program (Black Grace)

Penn Live Arts seeks an experienced teaching artist to lead pre-performance visits to K-12 schools prior to a performance by Black Grace dance company on Friday, February 19, 2027. Visits will take place during the weeks of February 8 and February 15.

About Penn Live Arts

As the University of Pennsylvania's home for the performing arts, Penn Live Arts connects diverse audiences with visionary artists and innovative ideas, engaging both the University and the greater Philadelphia community in transformative artistic experiences.

For over 50 years, the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts has been a leading presenter of innovative and transformative performing arts experiences in the Philadelphia region and a vital resource for the performing arts at the University of Pennsylvania. In June 2021, the Annenberg Center launched a new brand identity, Penn Live Arts, to reflect a deeper integration with the University and an expanded canvas for presenting performances. Penn Live Arts, headquartered at the Annenberg Center, is an artistic crossroads joining Penn and the greater Philadelphia region through world-class music, dance, theatre and film on campus and at venues throughout the city.

Penn Live Arts serves as a key asset for the University's students and faculty by enhancing curriculum through artist residencies and masterclasses, supporting student performing arts and providing career development opportunities. For younger audiences, Penn Live Arts' Student Discovery series offers weekday matinees and the annual Philadelphia Children's Festival, established in 1985 as the first event of its kind in the nation, serves children and families in the region with a range of interactive arts experiences.

About the production and the pre-performance visits program

On Friday, February 19, Penn Live Arts will present Black Grace in a matinee performance at the Annenberg Center as part of the Student Discovery Series. Masterfully blending contemporary and Samoan dance, the company embodies "incredible speed and stamina, and exhilarating, seemingly inexhaustible energy" (*The New York Times*). The program features two Philadelphia premieres—abridged versions of *If Ever There Was A Time* and *Paradise Rumour*—highly physical works rooted in the rich storytelling traditions of the South Pacific and performed with raw finesse, beauty and power.

Prior to select Student Discovery performances, Penn Live Arts engages local teaching artists to visit classes that have planned to attend the matinee program. Teaching artists prepare and deliver developmentally appropriate curriculum that prepares students for the themes, techniques, and influences of the performance they will see. Up to five classes may book pre-performance visits. Classes may be at the same school or different schools.

Teaching artist responsibilities

For Black Grace, the teaching artist will

- Familiarize themselves with the company's history and planned repertoire.

- Review complementary materials that may inform their classroom plans (provided by PLA's Education team).
- Work with PLA Education staff to develop developmentally appropriate classroom plans and activities that engage students creatively and analytically around themes, questions, and techniques suggested by the company's history and repertory.
- Student outputs may include dance activities, discussion, visual art, or writing activities. Teaching artists may be asked to prepare plans that can be adapted to a range of grade levels.
- Present a 45 min to 1-hour classroom visit for up to five classes that plan to attend the student matinee. All visits will take place during the two weeks leading up to the performance. (Note: classes may be at five different schools or multiple classes may be at the same school. Priority is given to schools within the Philadelphia School District).
- Assist in preparing post-show reflection questions and activities that build upon the classroom visit and that teachers and students can respond to independently.

Qualifications

- Background as a dancer and/or dance instructor, with a focus on modern dance.
- 3-5 + years of experience working with K-12 students, especially older elementary through middle school students (grades 5-8) or high school students.
- Dynamic classroom presence; ability to locate key creative and academic connections in source material and to connect quickly with students through their existing experiences and interests.
- Professional and courteous manner; punctual, communicative, and organized.
- Familiarity with Samoan culture and dance a plus.
- High School diploma.

Compensation: \$60-75/hour, depending on experience. This engagement is expected to take between 5 hours (including 2 hours prep and 1 hour of classroom time) and 15 hours (5 hours classroom time with up to 10 hours of prep, including meetings with PLA staff). Teaching artists will also receive a \$20 travel stipend per assigned school. Other than classroom visits, all other work can be performed remotely.

As a condition of hiring, teaching artists are subject to a three-part background check.

To apply: complete the application process via [Workday](#), including a cover letter and resume.

Application deadline: **November 16, 2026.**