

# RENNIE HARRIS PUREMOVEMENT AMERICAN STREET DANCE THEATER *LOSING MY RELIGION*

**CHOREOGRAPHER, FOUNDER & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR** Rennie Harris  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** Rodney Hill

**DANCERS** Marguerite Waller, Rachel Snider, Angel Anderson, Joshua Archibald, Zakhele Grabowski, Miyeko Urvashi Rennie Harris, Roukijah Rooks, Tyreis Hunte, Taylor Madgett, Genesis Castaneda, Alexis Curiel, Michael Manson, Lisa Engelken

**SOUND DESIGNER, COMPOSER & ENGINEER** Darrin M. Ross  
**LIGHTING DESIGN** Julie Ballard  
**ORIGINAL LIGHTING DESIGN** James Clotfelter

**COMPANY MANAGER** Marguerite Waller  
**REHEARSAL DIRECTOR** Rachel Snider  
**RH ARCHIVAL DIRECTOR** Angelina P. Labate  
**EDUCATION COORDINATOR** Alexandra James

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Zellerbach Theatre

Friday, March 20 @ 7:30 PM  
Saturday, March 21 @ 2 PM  
Saturday, March 21 @ 7:30 PM

There will be no intermission.



Rennie Harris in Residence has been supported by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage.

Penn Live Arts is the artistic home of Rennie Harris Puremovement. *Losing My Religion* is a commission of Penn Live Arts made possible in part with support provided by the Penn Live Arts Accelerator Program.

Originally commissioned by The Hermitage Greenfield Prize; The Hermitage Artist Retreat Sarasota County, Florida, 2023.

The 25/26 season dance series is co-sponsored by Arthur Kaplan, C'67 and Duane Perry alongside Lynn Jerath, W'95 and Kunal Jerath.

## PROGRAM NOTES

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*Losing My Religion* is a new creation by Rennie Harris—a retrospective inspired by Harris' life, the human experience and today's current political and socioeconomic theatre. *Losing My Religion* is an abstract work inspired by Harris' personal journey and thoughts on the world's collective dilemmas. From war to social, economic and political injustices, humanity is forever caught in a perpetual loop of turmoil, grief and despair.

Harris challenges both what has come to be expected of street dance and hip-hop culture and degenerative social norms/beliefs with his reconstructionist philosophy and approach to artmaking. Set to a chilling soundscape created in collaboration with sound designer Darrin Ross, *Losing My Religion* incorporates a visual landscape montage of video, slides and graphics by visual artist and lighting designer James Clotfelter, with whom Harris collaboratively creates and publicly debuts his own visual artwork, acrylic and collage.

*Losing My Religion* examines languages of protest, resilience and power, while the choreography and forms invite audiences to imagine the ways in which they can use their bodies as resistance.

*Losing My Religion* is a haunting narrative symbolic of an awakening, reminding us of our humanity.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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Rennie Harris has chosen not to include a printed biography. For more information, we encourage you to visit [rhpm.org](http://rhpm.org) and [rennieharrisamericanstreetdancearchive.org](http://rennieharrisamericanstreetdancearchive.org).

### **Marguerite Waller** (Principal Dancer, Company Manager)

Waller is a dancer, choreographer and teaching artist born and raised in Phoenix, Arizona. Heavily involved in the local hip hop community, she pulls from various dance forms such as waacking, house, locking, breaking, hip hop, postmodern contemporary and tap in her performance work, choreography and freestyle/battle practice. She is a graduate of Arizona State University with a BFA in dance, a minor in justice studies, and two certificates in arts entrepreneurship and socially engaged practice in design and the arts. In addition, Waller is a Fulbright Summer Institute Participant, a recipient of the Joan Frazer Memorial Award for Judaism and the Arts and a published writer through the National Dance Education Organization's *Journal of Dance Education in Practice*. She recently became an FY25 Queens Arts Fund recipient through the New York Foundation for the Arts and is currently working as a teaching artist with Dancewave Community Programs and Creative Network. She lives in NYC, dancing, making and writing. Waller is deeply honored to be a principal dancer of Rennie Harris Puremovement, as well as Company Manager.

### **Rachel "Hungry Ray" Snider** (Principal Dancer, Rehearsal Director)

Snider is a Chambersburg, PA native who relocated to Philadelphia in 2016. She started dancing at the age of three, training in ballet and modern, and competed in multiple dance competitions. Snider began learning hip hop at the age of twelve with Jason Reed in REACH! Hip Hop based in Carlisle, PA. She discovered her true passion for dance through Moncell Durden and his company, Keystone Dance Project, learning styles such as hip hop, locking, house and breaking. Through Durden, Snider met her biggest dance inspiration and mentor, Marcus Tucker. She has trained under the direction of Tucker and The Hood Lockers for eight years and has become a core member of The Hood Lockers and Hood Nation. She is an alumna at Jacob's Pillow for Social Dances - Jazz to Hip Hop. Snider has performed in shows across college campuses, teaching workshops at Ursinus College and York College, and assisted Tucker's teaching residency at Eastern University. She has been teaching in Philadelphia for six years at Vince Johnson's Movemakers Philly, as well as Lisa Welsch's First Position Dance Arts. Snider has been a core member of Rennie Harris Puremovement since 2022 and is eager to continue her journey with the company.

### **Angel Anderson** (Principal Dancer)

Anderson is a black female-identifying interdisciplinary artist, scholar and aspiring archivist hailing from the south suburbs of Chicago. Her movement encompasses street and club dance forms alongside contemporary Africanist expressions, with her work weaving together poetry, movement and Black-American methods of storytelling. A principal dancer in Rennie Harris Puremovement, Anderson has assisted Harris in setting works on Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, students at The Juilliard School, and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. In RHPM, she has performed works such as *Jim Has Crowed*, *Nuttin' but a Word*, *LIFTED* and *Rome & Jewels* in venues such as the Joyce Theater, ICA Boston and the New Victory

Theater. Anderson is a second-year MFA student in theatre and dance and a 2025 CAAAS Fellow at the University of Colorado, where she is delving into archival work for the preservation of contemporary Black matriarchs in African Diasporic dance.

**Joshua “Butterfly.God” Archibald** (Principal Dancer)

Jamaican-born and Miami-based, Archibald is a multidisciplinary artist with a focus on spiritual and esoteric material. He was brought up in a firm, Christian household and draws inspiration from both the teachings of his youth and the consequent spiritual journey of adulthood. Having a music producer for a father and raised as a percussionist from childhood throughout high school, he comes from a musically inclined background. He was a drummer for his church as well as his high school jazz ensemble. During the later years of his education, he became an engineering student and simultaneously found interest in theatre. Although dance is his medium of choice, his education and training in these different areas aid to inform his creative process and ultimate expression as an individual and artist. As a dance major, he received most of his ballet and contemporary training at Miami-Dade College under Michelle Grant-Murray. In addition to his participation in the dance program, he independently trained in hip hop and other street styles with different crews and leaders in the community. Lately, Archibald has focused on developing his own movement to lay the foundation for future works.

**Zakhele “Swazi” Grabowski** (Principal Dancer)

Grabowski is a competitive breaker, tap dancer and musician. Originally from Eswatini, he is now based in NYC. Grabowski is a Dynamic Rocker, a member of Olympic Teen Team USA, and will be representing the USA in Slovenia in May at the Kidz World Breaking Championships. He is delighted and honored to be performing with Rennie Harris Puremovement.

**Miyeko Urvashi Rennie Harris** (Apprentice Dancer)

Born in Philadelphia, Harris began training in Austin, Texas, at the age of eight. She later returned to Philadelphia and began her pre-professional training at the Koresh School of Dance, where she trained under Melissa Rector, Roni Koresh and Eva Szabo. Harris performed with the Koresh Youth Ensemble for three years. Most recently, she performed with Maura Townsend Dance in the Los Angeles Dance Festival at the Luckman Theatre. Harris is in her second year of college at California State University Los Angeles. She is excited to be performing with RHPM and looks forward to this next chapter in her life.

**Roukijah “NutellaK” Rooks** (Associate Dancer)

Rooks is an interdisciplinary dance artist and educator. She graduated from the University of the Arts, receiving her BFA in dance with an associate in business. Rooks is trained in dance styles including hip hop, African, ballet, contemporary and modern dance. She has worked with artists such as Ronald K Brown, Kim Bears-Bailey, Tommie-Waheed Evans, Marguerite Hemmings and Sidra Bell. Rooks has choreographed for dance organizations, including National Dance Institute, Bella Ballerina Dance Academy, Arts East New York and El Puente. Independently, Rooks has also choreographed works for herself and other emerging artists, severing the idea of societal norms. Her works have been premiered throughout Philadelphia and New York City in both proscenium and experimental settings.

**Tyreis Hunte** (Associate Dancer)

Hunte is a Creole Amazônido world creator born in Guyana, South America and raised as a global artistic nomad. Hunte is keen on the historic as well as contemporary contributions of street culture in global societies and the integrity of consuming/producing the contemporary Black. They are a Davis World Scholar and alum of the United World College, Changshu China, receiving their BA in dance and Asian studies with focus on movement therapy from St. Olaf College. This influenced their participation and work in joining the inaugural cohort of Rennie Harris University Hip Hop Certification Program and receiving certification in men's and women's design from Istituto di Moda Burgo in Milan, Italy. Some of Hunte's collaborators include Lloyd N D'Arts Production Company, Animation Dance Crew, Giada Negroni (DueDa), Arneshia Williams, Cudjoe Emmanuel, Heather Klopchin, CompanyDance, Melissa Teodoro (Palenque Dance Company), BRKFST Dance Crew, Afoutayi Dmaco Dance Company, Marciano Dos Santos (Contempo Dance Company), Mathew Janczewski (Arena Dance Company), Samba Colorado and Raw Groove Presents. Hunte is grateful to have exchanged with communities and audiences throughout the globe including the National Cultural Center and the National Theatre Guild Georgetown, The Royal Family of Norway, Suzhou Industrial District, San Vittore Milano, The Cowles Center of Performing Arts Minneapolis, Macky Auditorium, Atlas B2 Space, American College Dance Association and The Carpenter Performing Arts Center, Long Beach. They are a 2024 CAAAS research fellow whilst completing their MFA in dance at University of Colorado Boulder. Hunte is also reigning Samba King Colorado.

### **Taylor "Tay-Tay" Madgett** (Associate Dancer)

Madgett received her MFA in dance with a certificate in hip-hop studies from the University of Colorado Boulder in 2020 under the mentorship of Rennie Harris. She was born in Atlanta, Georgia and received her BA in history from Emory University. Madgett specializes in hip-hop, house, Afro and twerk dance styles and recently co-founded the dance company, Raw Groove. Raw Groove is a dynamic duo consisting of Constance Harris and Madgett that was created in 2021 after the two women met and formed a creative partnership during their time in graduate school. Raw Groove performs, choreographs, teaches and creates productions in the Denver, Aurora and Boulder metro areas. As a dancer, teacher and scholar, Madgett plans to intersect all that she learns within each realm and apply it to her formation as both an artist and human being. Through self-expression, dance has been completely conducive to her personal awareness and discovery. She looks forward to her ultimate transformation as an artist through dance research, scholarship, pedagogy and artistic expression.

### **Genesis Castaneda** (Apprentice Dancer)

Castaneda is a Cuban-American dancer born and raised in Miami, Florida. Her dance journey began under the guidance of Michelle Grant-Murray at Miami Dade College, where she cultivated a strong foundation in dance. Castaneda continued her education, earning a BFA in dance from the University of the Arts. Castaneda specializes in street dance forms and social dances, drawing inspiration from her diverse cultural background. Castaneda is an active member of the dance community, performing with acclaimed choreographer Rennie Harris and contributing her talents to Carne Viva Dance Theatre. Her performances blend tradition with contemporary expression, reflecting her dedication to artistic innovation and cultural storytelling.

**Alexis Roberto Curiel** (Apprentice Dancer)

Curiel is an Afro-Latino Dominican American multidisciplinary dance artist and choreographer born and raised in Miami, based in Philadelphia. He received a BFA in dance from the University of the Arts (UArts) in 2021 and began his full-time dance career in 2022. He's had the opportunity to collaborate with faculty at UArts, choreograph for various schools and programs in the U.S., and present/perform work nationally and internationally. Currently, Curiel is a member of Rennie Harris Awe-Inspiring Works (RHAW), MOV3 Dance Collective (directed by Jameel Hendricks), and an instructor at Urban Movement Arts for adults and youth, in addition to collaborating with fellow dance artists within his community. With versatility and virtuosity, Curiel embraces his love for commercial, concert and street dance throughout his journey, exchanging with those in his community and beyond.

**Michael "Mike Manson" Manson, Jr.** (Associate Dancer)

Manson is a dancer, choreographer and educator, specializing in the form of Detroit Jit, the city's most iconic dance style. He has been a featured dancer on the television program *So You Think You Can Dance* and serves as a dancer and choreographer for the Detroit Pistons. He is the founder of the dance company House of Jit. He tours with the acclaimed street dance company Rennie Harris Puremovement and has been an invited teaching artist for the Rennie Harris Illadelph Legends Festival, teaching Detroit Jit. In 2020, he was awarded the Kresge Artist Fellowship grant, and was one of five winners from across the Midwest of the 2022 Joyce Awards. In 2022, he was also honored with the Spirit of Detroit award for his dance accomplishments. In 2024, he won the Seed and Bloom Detroit Grant from the Gilbert Family Foundation. He is deeply committed to educating the next generation of Detroit dancers and frequently teaches workshops and classes in Jit and hip hop. His teaching credits also include master classes at Arizona State University, the Columbia College Chicago Dance Center and Broadway Dance Center. He has taught workshops and performed internationally in France, Bolivia and Canada.

**Lisa "Lisa Li" Engelken** (Associate Dancer)

Engelken is a movement artist, party starter, community builder and creative director. She holds a degree in social action through the arts and has dedicated her life work to the liberation of all oppressed people, especially through dance. Her choreographic works have been featured by Breakin' Convention, San Francisco International Hip Hop Festival and the Getty Museum in Los Angeles. She has established artistic residencies in Colorado, including Backyard Sessions, In the Lab and Breaking Barriers. Her work as a Cultural Ambassador of Hip Hop with the U.S. State Department and her community activism on a local level was recently celebrated with the Denver Mayor's Award for Innovation in the Arts. As a lifetime student and alumna of Cleo Parker Robinson, she would like to thank Mama Cleo for the labor of love and building the house way back when in small town Denver—the city has never been the same!

**Darrin M. Ross** (Musical Director)

Ross has been producing and engineering songs since 1984 with Jam On Productions. He has recently completed the score for Suzan Lori Parks' *Top Dog/Underdog*. He is also the recipient of a 2001 New York Dance & Performance Award (BESSIE) for his music composition for *Rome & Jewels*. Ross has worked with and established many artists in the industry, such as PM Dawn, Newcleus, Aphillyation,

Ram Squad, Tuff Crew, Doug E. Fresh, King Britt, ZHANE, Helen Bruner, Jungle Brothers, Kim Waters, Todd Terry, The Roots, Bahamadia, Dee Dee Sharp Gamble, No Question, AZ YET, Victor Duplaix, Bowser, Rampage, Brother Peace, Major Figgas, Grisha Coleman, Leon Evans, Mike Knox and more. In 1992, he formed I.Q. Records and directs his own production company, KIA-TIFF. Past collaborations with Rennie Harris include the 1990 co-production of television segments for *Dance Party USA* and *One House Street*, scoring and composition efforts for works set on the Pennsylvania Ballet (now Philadelphia Ballet) and the Memphis Ballet and various movies.

### **James Clotfelter** (Original Lighting Design)

Clotfelter is committed to the creation of collaborative and socially conscious work for the built environment, live performance and public space. Working broadly as a designer with a specialization in light, he articulates design sensibilities that nurture a shared experience, inspire thoughtfulness and curiosity, and awaken us to our surroundings. With over 20 years of design experience, Clotfelter situates a design as an evolving narrative that is time-based, empathetic and distinctly relevant.

Clotfelter works across the fields of architecture, performance and design. In 2017, he established an architectural lighting practice that would commit the insights and experience gleaned from on-your-feet live performance to the rapidly growing and shifting field of architectural design. In 2018, Clotfelter co-founded Studio C Projects, a performance-based, collaborative research studio in Durham, NC that investigates the intersections of movement, design, and architecture that inform our shared experience.

Clotfelter has an MFA in transdisciplinary design and lighting design from Parsons School of Design in NYC. His graduate thesis, "Engaging Public Light," was awarded the Thesis Prize by the Illumination Engineering Society New York City chapter for its commitment to socially engaged design research. He maintains academic pursuits teaching design at the graduate level and leading workshops for institutions such as Parsons School of Design, Duke University and the Wharton School of Business.

His extensive work in live performance has been presented throughout the U.S. and internationally in a myriad of venues ranging from Lincoln Center and the Cairo Opera House to an abandoned Rite Aid and the rural Pennsylvania forest. He has developed collaborative visual designs with established musicians and composers including Pete Wyer, Eighth Blackbird, Prism Quartet and Spektral Quartet and has realized custom installations for retail companies such as Muji, Pas de Calais and Eddie Bauer. From 2007 to 2012, Clotfelter was an Artistic Associate with the Pig Iron Theatre Company in Philadelphia where he designed several significant productions including the 2009 OBIE Award-winning *Chekhov Lizardbrain*. In 2018, Clotfelter designed the lighting for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's first full-evening length ballet, *Lazarus*, by acclaimed hip-hop choreographer, Rennie Harris.

Beyond his independent practice, Clotfelter regularly collaborates with Derek Porter Studio and previously worked with the lighting group at Buro Happold Engineering from 2015 to 2020. Clotfelter has managed projects of varying sizes and typologies and brings his passion for performance and placemaking throughout all phases of design development and construction. Clotfelter is a member of the Illumination Engineering Society of North America.

### **Julie Ballard** (Lighting Design)

Ballard, USA829, is a professional lighting designer, ETCP-certified electrician and theatrical technician. She is affiliated with IATSE Local 2 and the Actors' Equity Association. Additionally, Ballard is the owner/operator of OverlapLighting Productions, LLC, a freelance production company specializing in lighting design, production/stage management and photography. She has designed for the Charlotte Ballet, Giordano Dance Chicago, Ballet West and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. Ballard has freelanced for two decades in and around the Midwest, touring regionally, nationally and internationally with Hubbard Street, Pilobolus, Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, The Seldoms and David Dorfman Dance. Theatre audiences have seen her designs in the U.S. and across Europe, Siberia and South Africa. Ballard holds degrees in theatre (BA, 1999) and lighting design (MFA, 2004) from Kent State University and the University of Florida, respectively. [overlaplighting.com](http://overlaplighting.com)

### **Rodney Hill** (Executive Director)

For more than a decade, Hill has blazed the stages in venues, nationally and abroad. He has been featured in many videos for such artists as Boys II Men, Will Smith and Musiq Soulchild. He has also performed on TV shows such as *R&B Divas: Los Angeles*, *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*, *Soul Train*, NBC's *NFL Under the Helmet* and BET's *Teen Summit*. In addition, he has toured and performed with Rennie Harris Puremovement, R&B singer Brave Williams, Julian King, R&B group AAries, Mad Skillz, rapper Eve, R&B legend Teddy Pendergrass, Janet Jackson's DJ Active, R&B singer Shanice Wilson, Mary J. Blige, 50 Cent and Philly's own The Roots. An accomplished dancer, choreographer and teacher, Hill has performed and taught at universities and dance studios locally, nationally and internationally in London, Santiago (Chile), Toronto, Bermuda, Monaco, Bogotá, Democratic Republic of Congo, East Asia, Egypt, England, Israel and Palestine. In 2020, Hill graduated from Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, with an MFA in choreography. Hill's inspiration for dance comes from his community and family. In January 2022, Hill was sworn in as Councilman for Sharon Hill, Pennsylvania.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** The Greenfield family is sincerely thanked for their support of this work, as well as for their commitment to the arts, hospitality and graciousness. Special appreciation is also extended to Joan Myers Brown and the Philadelphia Dance Company for supporting the creation of works by Rennie Harris for Rennie Harris Puremovement.

