UNLV Dance has a longstanding collaborative tradition of dance and music. This is made evident in the fact that the department has Professor Beth Mehocic in the position of Composer-In-Residence and Music Director. There are only a few such positions in the nation and they are found only in dance departments that understand and respect the intimate and profound relationship that dance and music have.

In Spring of 2017, Mehocic had the idea of composing a musical work for College of Fine Arts Dean Nancy Uscher who is a consummate viola player. Uscher agreed to play the work and the two felt that it would be wonderful to have the work choreographed by UNLV Dance Department chair Louis Kavouras. This series of events proved to be the catalyst for a dance concert of original music and dance.

On March 2nd and 3rd in the Judy Bayley Theatre, the Department of Dance presented In Composition, a concert of six original works of music and dance.

Dolly Kelepecz-Momot and Diego Vega collaborated to create Mountains to Sea, a work that explores, celebrates and deconstructs styles of the Colombian music from Vega’s homeland. Kelepecz-Momot created topographical landscapes rendered in the language of ballet with partnering coached by Sean Cronin.

Choreographer Cathy Allen and composer Charles Hulka collaborated to produce Falling From The Curve, a formalist contemporary dance work to Hulka’s immediate and abstract composition. This work explored elements of abstraction and timing.

Choreographer Richard Havey and Composer Jeniffer Bellor paired to bring Bellor’s delightful score Chase the Stars to the stage. An atmospheric work that brought together Havey’s contemporary, Jazz and Tap style of dance with Bellor’s otherworldly soprano voice.
Louis Kavouras worked with Beth Mehocic’s music to produce Resonant String, a contemporary dance work that explores string theory, which sees the universe as a fabric of tiny strings that resonate to produce all that we see and experience. Resonant String features the virtuosic performance of College of Fine Arts Dean Nancy Uscher.

Professor Emeritus of Dance, Margot Mink Colbert paired with composer Cynthia Wong to create Three Short Pieces. An exploration and development of movement motivated by the sound and structure of the musical work and rendered in Colbert’s distinctive post-Modern Ballet style.

The final work of the evening was Vikki Baltimore Dale’s choreography to Beth Mehocic’s composition Flight of the African Grey, a work inspired by Mehocic’s African Grey Parrot, who dreams of flying but is unable to fly. A dynamic and intense contemporary jazz dance work, one can hear the fluttering of wings in the sound of the strings and the reaching, dreaming and soaring in the movements of the dancers.

Concerts like In Composition reveal the passion and commitment to choreography, music, production, design and collaboration that lives within the department.

Making an Impact in Dance: Louis Kavouras’ performance of Hawkins’ 8 Clear Places Listed on Top Ten List in Austin

Louis Kavouras’ performance with the Erick Hawkins Dance Company revival of Hawkins’ work 8 Clear Places has been selected by the Austin Chronicle, as one of the Top Ten Dance Performances of 2017. Hawkins began choreographing Pine Tree in 1958. Over the next year, 7 more dances including They Snowing, were added and the entire series was premiered in NYC in 1960. Music was composed by Hawkins longtime collaborator, experimental composer Lucia Dlugoszewski.

Shortly before Hawkins died in 1994 he said he wanted to be remembered for 8 Clear Places. In the years before Dlugoszewski’s death in 2000, she wanted to revive the work, but circumstances never allowed for it. In 2017, Katherine Duke, current Hawkins Company Artistic Director, initiating the resurrection of these two profound sections of the work.

“There are 6 more dances to resurrect. Lucky for us Hawkins felt such brilliant notes that live and thrive at the US Library of Congress,” states Kavouras. “This coupled with the scenic and costume elements in the Hawkins Collection at UNLV allowed us to resurrect these classic historic works of the modern dance. It just goes to prove that the classic modern dance is as poignant and relevant as ever.”
International Association of Blacks in Dance: UNLV Dance Students and Faculty on the Move

UNLV Department of Dance professors are always providing students with spectacular opportunities to learn, grow, and network around the world. One of those occasions occurred in late January, as Professor Victoria Baltimore-Dale traveled with a group of 10 students to represent UNLV at the 30th Annual International Conference and Festival of Blacks in Dance, hosted by Lula Washington Dance Theatre in Los Angeles, CA.

The conference consisted of numerous workshops and events, as well as two concerts. The first concert was dedicated to the youth and pre-professional programs at the conference. It was on this night that Dale and her 10 students performed their piece #VegasDanceStrong. "The piece was unlike anything else performed there," Dale states. "I wanted to do something different. It started off as a science fiction inspired work, but then we had the craziness of the Las Vegas tragedy. This series of events forced me to think about the Vegas identity, and do something that would celebrate the dance in Las Vegas and showcase the different elements of Las Vegas dance."

On the second day of the conference, all festival participants attended a luncheon to honor the prestigious LaVerne Ligon, Donald McKayle, Debbie Allen, and Norma Miller. Dale stated, "The students were very excited they got to see such incredible icon of dance." The second concert featured numerous professional dance companies from across the nation, including the Alvin Ailey Dance Company, Dance Theater of Harlem, and many others.

UNLV Dance is so proud of Dale’s involvement in this incredible association and for the opportunities she continually provides our students! Bravo Victoria!

BFA Dance Major Keanna Corley and Carolyn Lajara-Rodriguez in #VegasDanceStrong.

BFA Dance Majors Kalie McLaughlin (front) and Alissa Kuhn (back) high-heeling it in #VegasDanceStrong.

BFA Dance Major Malik Gry in #VegasDanceStrong.
Miguel Perez
Dance Artist-In-Residence Spotlight

Education:
• BFA University of Arizona
• Studied with some of the most influential names in concert and commercial dance including: Jamie King, Vincent Peterson, Mia Michaels, Brian Friedman, Tabitha and Napoleon, Mandy Moore, Stacey Toochie, Bonnie Story, Tyce Diorio, Hofesh Schecter, Kyle Abraham, Victor Quijada, Richard Siegel and Sidra Bell.

Career Highlights:
• River North Dance Company
• Hubbard Street 2 Chicago
• Celine Dion “A New Day” Caesars Palace
• Celine Dion World Tour “Taking Chances”
• Cirque Du Soleil “Viva Elvis”
• Steve Wynn “Showstoppers”
• Shania Twain at Caesar’s Palace
• Currently at The Donny and Marie Show, Las Vegas Flamingo where he is Dance Captain
• TV and Film work include appearances and dance in America’s Got Talent, So You Think You Can Dance, Dancing with the Stars.

Upcoming Show:
Join the IN crowd for our 2017-2018 IN Season
Tickets on sale now at the Performing Arts Center Box Office!

IN Stride
Thu, April 26, 2018 - Sun, April 29, 2018
Dance Studio 1 (HFA 111)