

# LayeRhYthm
# SWITCH

WEDNESDAY

## OCT. 16, 2024
## 7:30 PM

GLORYA KAUFMAN
INTERNATIONAL
DANCE CENTER

USC Visions & Voices

USC Kaufman
Glorya Kaufman School of Dance

LayeRhythm at Lincoln Center. Photo: Lauriane Ogay
Chrybaby Cozie. Photo: Lauriane Ogay
Mai Lê Hô at 92Y. Photo: Still1
Osyris at Performance Mix Festival. Photo: Elyse Mertz

# PROGRAM

**7:00PM Doors open, DJ set begins**

**7:30PM LayeRhythm**

- Intro
- Brick Layer
- Time Bender
- Me, Myself and I

**8:30PM DJ**

**8:45PM LayeRhythm**

- Cupid
- Dance Upon a Rhyme
- Rhythm Conductor

**10:00PM Evening concludes**

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# CREDIT

Artistic Direction: Mai Lê Hồ

Improvised dance: Chrybaby Cozie, Jada Chanell, Mai Lê Hồ, Spectacular Slicc, joined by USC Kaufman School of Dance students Andrea Rodriguez, Leeann Ross, Xavier Williams

Improvised music/lyrics: Axel Tosca (keys), Rodney Harrison (drums), Osyris Antham (MC), William “Matty” Taylor (bass)

DJ sets: Tiffstarr

Lighting design: Mai Lê Hô & Derek Keifer

Company Manager: Bailey McFaden

Production Manager: Derek Keifer

Video documentation: RYBG

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# BIOGRAPHIES

**Axel Tosca, *keyboard***

Axel Tosca is a Cuban-born pianist, a dynamic performer known for his genre-bending mix of Jazz, Latin, and Timba music. Born in Cuba in 1983, Tosca grew up in a prestigious musical family. His mother is renowned Trova singer Xiomara Laugart and his father, folk singer-guitarist Alberto Tosca. One of his teachers was Miriam Valdez, the daughter of Cuban piano legends Bebo Valdez and sister of Chucho Valdez. With this first-class education, it enabled him to gain a wide range of experiences playing with groups like Dennis & Swing, the Afro-Cuban All-Stars, Bobby Carcases, Teresa Garcia Caturla, Jose Miguel Crego, and more. In addition to classical music, jazz, and Latin traditions, he has also performed with iconic hip-hop and house acts, including The Roots and Louie Vega.

@axeltoscaofficial

**Bailey McFaden, *company manager***

Bailey McFaden is a freelance company manager based out of New York City. She received her masters degree in International Arts Management from HEC Montréal, SMU Dallas, and SDA Bocconi in 2021 and holds a B.A. in Arts Management and Dance with a minor in Spanish from the College of Charleston. Bailey has extensive experience working with artists and cultural organizations in New York City, Denver, Raleigh, Charleston, Atlanta, Montréal, Dublin, London, and Rome. She was most recently the Artist Services Manager at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and is currently the acting Events Manager for Dance Media Publications. Bailey's deepest passions in life include traveling, dancing, performing, and advising artists and arts organizations as they pursue their unique voices in the field.

@bailey_mcfaden

**Chrybaby Cozie, *dancer***

Chrybaby Cozie, from Harlem, NY, is a founding figure of the Lite Feet Hip Hop genre. Growing up in Harlem in the late '80s shaped his passion for dance, music, and uplifting his

community. For over a decade, Chrybaby has been teaching Lite Feet and Hip Hop, currently at the Peridance Center in NYC, while also working to preserve the culture among NYC youth. In 2005, he founded The Breakfast Club (E.A.T—Earning All Together), offering a platform for young dancers to grow and showcase their talents. He later launched The Lite Feet Nation, connecting early pioneers of the style with the younger generation. Chrybaby has collaborated with artists like Chris Brown ("Kiss Kiss"), ASAP Ferg ("Dope Walk"), and Ron Browz ("Pop Champagne"). His performances include The Bad Boy Reunion Tour, Hot 97's Summer Jam, and the NY Times Best of Dance 2021.

His mission is to empower youth with self-awareness and elevate Lite Feet culture. His mantra: "Leveling up is my way of life. Level Up Amongst The Greatest."

@chrybaby_cozie

**Derek Keifer*, production manager***

Derek Keifer is a freelance lighting designer based out of Western Massachusetts. He received his MFA in Design and Technology from Ohio University in 2018 and has since worked in several cities in the Northeast and Midwest, notably New York City and Philadelphia as well as regional theaters including Indiana Repertory Theater, Cincinnati Shakespeare Company, and Barrington Stage Company. Aside from designing and assisting, Derek serves as the Lighting Supervisor for the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in Becket, Massachusetts.

@dirkpine

**Derick "Spectacular Slicc" Murreld, *dancer***

A street dancer born and raised In Brooklyn, Slicc is one of the pioneers of the Brooklyn dance style "FlexN". His style is a blend of two elements, out of six in FlexN, which are "Bone breaking" and "Get Lo". This blend of elements allows Slicc to tell any story.

For 11 Years and counting, FlexN has taken Slicc to numerous countries and cities such as London, Germany, Paris, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, Romania, and many more, and granted him features in brand campaigns and music videos. He says that "As long as his body remains groovy & healthy, he'll forever be FLEXN".

@maineventt_slicc

**Jada Chanell, *dancer***

Jada Brown, stage name "Jada Chanell", is a leading street dancer from the Bronx, New York. She is known for her mastery of the Harlem Shake and Litefeet. She is the captain of the street dance team, "Team 2crafty". Jada is a former recording artist and dancer for the Artist label group "Shake Nation", a label owned and run by Ron Browz (World renowned producer of the song 'Ether' by Nas). Jada has been in music videos and performed with artists like Papoose, Lil Wayne, Ron Browz, Fatman Scoop, Capella Grey, Jim Jones, Young B, King Combs, Lucky Banks, and Doug E. Fresh. Jada has worked with brands like Red Bull, Nike, Caffeine,

Essence festival, and Billboard. Aside from her performance work, Jada is a social services worker, having worked for the company University Settlement for 2 years. In her time as a social services worker, she has trained local New Yorkers, ran multiple dance sessions and events, ran professional development workshops, and has made an overall positive impact on hundreds of local New York dancers of all ages. Jada also frequently teaches at Peridance Studio and Campos Plaza community center. When she dances, she plans to carry the legacy of her mentors, Hype Girl, Chrybaby Cozie, E solo, and K Shakes.

@iamjadachanell

**Mai Lê Hô, *artistic director + dancer***

Mai Lê is a French-Vietnamese street/club dance artist & educator, and the founder of LayeRhythm Productions INC, a NYC-based non-profit organization dedicated to amplifying freestyle voices in the performing arts. Her House journey began at 18 under the guidance of her first house dance teacher, Baba (aka Babson), and has since led her to perform widely across the USA, and to tour Europe with Detroit music producer Theo Parrish and his live band. Mai Lê has won 1st place in various international house dance competitions such as Ladies of Hip-Hop (NYC, 2015), Universole (Detroit, 2015), Step Ya Game Up (NYC, 2013) and has served as judge for House Dance UK (London, 2015), Slick City (Chicago, 2015), The Blueprint (Houston, 2013). She currently teaches at Hunter College.

@mailegrooves

**Osyris Antham, *MC***

Osyris Antham is a 2-time world Champion MC who's performed in 4+ countries and dozens of cities. Brooklyn-bred, he began his music career as a teenage steel pan player, became a poet during college & landed in his home of Hip-Hop as an adult. Osyris has performed at the Guggenheim & the Brooklyn Museum, led Hip-Hop classes at MIT and won rap championships in The U.S., Paris & Prague.

@maroonwaters

**Rodney Harrison, *drums***

Born and raised in Queens NY and the son of a drummer and a singer, Rodney has been playing professionally since age 8. As a student at Hampton University, Rodney held the drum chair for the university's jazz ensemble and gospel choir and led his own Jazz combo that would play in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. Rodney has played for a number of different artists, including Melba Moore, Andrew White and Peter Gunz. Rodney continues to use his gifts at churches, in wedding bands, and as an active member of the LayeRhythm family.

@gvthdrmmrsm

# LA-BASED ARTISTS BIOGRAPHIES

**TiffStarr, DJ**

Born and raised in Southern California, DJ TiffStarr began her career in New York City. With residencies at the Ladies of Hip Hop Festival NYC since 2016 and B-Girl City in Houston, TX, since 2017, she's continued on to play at some of the best Hip Hop events around the U.S. She is currently a DJ at USC Glorya Kaufman School of Dance and all around different venues and event spaces in Los Angeles. Through passion & dedication, TiffStarr has quickly gained her respect, proving to be a force and rightfully claiming her spot in the game. You can follow DJ TiffStarr on all social media platforms.

@djtiffstarr

**William Taylor, *bass***

Matty Taylor is a bassist/producer living in the Los Angeles area. He moved here from the east coast and has been a touring/recording musician since 2009 playing with artists like: Lupe Fiasco, Xzibit, Tyrese, The Game, Eric Benet, Usher, and Robin Thicke. He is currently writing music for TV and recently produced music ("Song about You"–Matthew Jared) for the BET Network movie "Twice Bitten" and working on music for future projects. He is still currently performing with Eric Benet, Robin, and various other artists across varying genres.

@diisko.is.here

**Slimboogie, *dancer***

Slimboogie, a professional dancer hailing from Los Angeles, California, boasts over 20 years of experience in the dynamic world of dance. His passion and innate talent have taken him across the globe, where he has mesmerized audiences in every major country with his powerful and electrifying moves. Throughout his illustrious career, Slimboogie has collaborated with some of the entertainment industry's biggest stars, including Usher, Chris Brown, and Wiz. He has also contributed to significant projects with renowned companies such as Disney, Facebook, and Netflix, solidifying his reputation as a versatile artist. Beyond his achievements as a dancer, Slimboogie is a visionary and innovator. He founded the Battle Games, one of Los Angeles's premier dance events, and initiated a cultural gathering in downtown LA, fostering connections through food and meaningful conversation. Slimboogie's mission transcends dance; he aims to become the best version of himself while inspiring others on their journeys. Through his art, he seeks to make a profound impact, demonstrating that everyone has the potential to achieve greatness. With his unwavering dedication and passion, Slimboogie is poised to remain a powerful force in the dance community for years to come.

@slimboogie777

## LAYERHYTHM BIOGRAPHY

LayeRhythm Productions, Inc. (LPI) amplifies the voices of freestyle/improv dancers, musicians, emcees often under-recognized in mainstream performing arts. Through its work, LPI provides entertainment, fosters community through play, educates audiences on cultural history, preserves the legacy of street and club dance forms, transforms people's relationship to music and dance, and supports emotional and social well-being. LayeRhythm is committed to risk-taking improvisation and engaging audiences through interactive performances and educational events. James Thomas, writing for the *New York Times,* describes LayeRhythm as "[a] brew of partying and performing that unfolds as a series of interactive sessions in which suggestions from the crowd beget songs and steps. Imagine an improv comedy show where dancing, not laughs, is the currency. Then imagine a musicians' jam session where the band is compelled to keep the dancers' pace instead of the other way around. [...] [W]hat's distinct about LayeRhythm is the way it bridges the two groups with crowd participation" (*The New York Times*).

Since 2015, under the leadership of Founder and Artistic Director Mai Lê Hô, LayeRhythm has hosted monthly interactive, improvisational street/club dance and music events in NYC at venues like Meridian 23, Nublu, and 275ParkBK. Its performances have been featured at venues and festivals such as Jacob's Pillow (MA), Bridge Street Theater, 92NY Harkness Dance Center, Harris Theater (IL), Movement Research at Judson Church, Abrons Arts Center, The National Jazz Museum in Harlem, Bard College, and was presented by Works & Process at the Guggenheim Museum, Lincoln Center, SummerStage, NY Public Library for the Performing Arts, Gibney, The Church Sag Harbor, and Manhattan West Plaza. LayeRhythm has also been selected for multiple residencies, including with the CUNY Dance Initiative and National Dance Institute's Helen Stambler Neuberger Artist-in-Residence programs. LR has partnered w/ 92NY, Ladies of Hip-Hop, 36 Chambaz of Stylz, Downtown Brooklyn Partnership, Hook Arts Media, Queens County Farm Museum, PotaY, Teatro Yerbabruja, Hi-ARTS, Rolling Stone. Its educational and professional development programs have been hosted at Hunter College, Fordham High School for the Performing Arts, NDI, Harris Theater, Ladies of Hip-Hop x Snipes studio and the Brooklyn Arts Council.

LPI became a nonprofit in 2020 and has since garnered support from organizations such as the New York State Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, and New Music USA.

LayeRhythm continues to feature a rotating roster of top-tier street/club dancers, emcees, singers, and musicians, with artistic influences spanning hip hop, funk, soul, house music, and styles such as popping, locking, lite feet, Detroit jit, Chicago footwork, krump, flexN, house dance and more.

With over 115 performances, LayeRhythm has provided a platform for more than 500 local and international artists, including African American, Latinx, Asian, LGBTQ+, and immigrant

communities. Its diverse audience, from club-goers to festival patrons, has reached over 40,000 people in person and over 2 million online.

@layerhythm / www.layerhythm.org

# ARTIST STATEMENT

LayeRhythm is a fusion of street dance, live music and club culture that transcends mainstream boundaries and challenges the status quo. Rooted in the raw energy and creative brilliance of freestyle movements like house dance, lite feet, flexn, breaking, locking, and more, our art defies conventional structures and norms, shining a light on BIPOC creatives and historically underrepresented artists, and showcasing the dynamic power of improvisational music and dance pioneered by Black & Latinx folks, to produce rewarding experiences for all.

In essence, LayeRhythm is a celebration of the pulse of the city—where gritty, vibrant heartbeats foster thriving creativity and innovation. It's an homage to the dancers, musicians, emcees, and vocalists who contribute their talents with fearless authenticity, carving out their own spaces and inscribing their own stories within the cultural fabric.

Drawing inspiration from the genius of freestyle artists, we weave together a tapestry of movement and sound that defies categorization. Each piece is a testament to the power of improvisation and spontaneity, a reflection of the ever-evolving nature of artistic expression.

Yet LayeRhythm goes beyond simply celebrating dance and music—it's a heartfelt vision for a different way of existing, a world where creativity is valued above all else and where art has the power to disrupt, dismantle, and rebuild. Through immersive and collaborative performances, our aim is to create spaces where artists are empowered to thrive, where economic barriers are met with innovative solutions, and where hierarchies are leveled.

At the heart of our artistic narrative lies a fervent conviction: live dance and music serve as powerful agents of healing, not only on a physical plane but also emotionally, traversing the boundaries of social, economic, and cultural divides. By bringing together artists from diverse backgrounds and disciplines, we endeavor to create a community that is inclusive, supportive, and fiercely independent.

In each show, the audience becomes an integral part of the artistic creation, transforming into our muse, their energy and participation shaping the very outcome of the experience. Our performance design is akin to a game, blurring the lines between audience and performers, inviting everyone to co-create and interact within a shared space. Through this dynamic interaction, we forge bonds and cultivate an environment of creativity and joy.

At its core, LayeRhythm is a call to action—a rallying cry for artists to embrace their agency, for institutions to support creative and risk taking visions, and for communities to dance their way towards a future imbued with greater equity and understanding, fostering an ecosystem

where performers, presenters, and audiences collaborate in co-creating transformative experiences.

# THANK YOU

LayeRhythm Productions, Inc.'s 2024 programs are made possible in part by the New York State Council on the Arts with support from the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, the National Endowment for the Arts, public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, Hinge, New Music USA, and the Harkness Foundation for Dance.

We extend our sincere thanks to our funders and donors for supporting our art-making efforts.

To all the artists who have contributed to this platform, we are profoundly grateful for your existence, passion, and generosity. We also honor the many shoulders we stand on, in this realm and beyond, whose legacies continue to guide and inspire us. To the presenters who believed in our vision and took risks with us, and to our loyal audiences who have fueled nine years of magic and embraced the potential of this movement, thank you for walking alongside us.