



Sydnie L. Mosley Dances.
Feel human through dance.

Sydnie L. Mosley, Artistic Director
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Press Kit

About SLMDances

Sydnie L. Mosley Dances (SLMDances) is a New York City-based dance-theater collective that works in communities to organize for gender and racial justice through experiential dance performance. SLMDances' works engage audiences in the artistic process; our dances provoke a visceral reaction to the physicality on stage and incite conversation toward community action.

SLMDances' works reflect real life experiences central to our identities, and pulls focus to the stories of women and Black folks. The movement vocabulary fluidly integrates modern dance techniques and movement of the African Diaspora, while dancers frequently use their voice with spoken text and audible breath. Through dimensional compositions, specific, textured movement, humor and character development, choreographed works appeal to a sense of humanity.

In addition, SLMDances situates itself amongst the Harlem arts community by creating and presenting dance uptown; partnering with other Harlem artists and businesses; and focusing on community-based initiatives within Harlem.





SLMDances Core Values



Dreaming.

Dreams bring to our consciousness that which is outside of us. Dreaming is the first step to manifesting a better reality. As Zora Neale Hurston reminds us, "The dream is the truth." We live our dreams. Our imaginings are realities. Our actions make our imaginings so.

Transparency.

We value honesty in our movement, activism and organizational practices. It is the earnestness of actually falling, and getting back up again that creates the visceral nature of our work. We witness one another in this practice. We embody Aja Monet's understanding that when we witness each other and our mother's movements in this world, "it informs [our] own, their labor to love and live freely, their joy and their pain, their magic and madness."

Community.

adrienne maree brown teaches us that "Relationships are everything." SLMDances understands itself in relationship to the various communities of which we are a part, or are invited into. We are rooted in, nurture and remain accountable to each of those communities, from individuals in our local experience, to our city-wide, national, and global reach. Through collaboration, these communities are involved at every level of process. We believe that mutually beneficial partnerships are the mode to serve and uplift the needs and wants of all those involved.

Activism.

Dance is an agent of change. As an activist tool, dance uniquely positions human creativity and physicality as a catalyst for action. Movement of the body fuels cultural movement, one dance at a time. Eve Ensler states: "Dance is dangerous, joyous, sexual, holy, disruptive, and contagious and it breaks the rules. It can happen anywhere, at anytime, with anyone and everyone, and it's free. Dance joins us and pushes us to go further and that is why it's at the center..."

Humanity.

We honor the truth that every individual brings to the work. Each human has a unique experience to offer that is worthwhile and enriches the fabric of our dance. And to that extent, we believe that artists and other collaborators who contribute to the work should be acknowledged for that value. SLMDances embodies a "difference-celebrating culture," as suggested by Sonya Renee Taylor, and we celebrate you!

Learning.

Ntozake Shange writes that, "it is possible to start a phrase with a word and end with a gesture/ that's how i've lived my life/ that's how i continue to study/ produce black art." SLMDances understands that by devising dances of words and gestures, thoughts and actions, we are creating opportunity for peer learning, research, critical thinking, discussion, and reflection. SLMDances does not position itself as an expert on any topic it tackles, but as an entity that deeply listens and shares what it is continually discovering in every class, rehearsal and performance.



Artistic Director

About Sydnie

Sydnie L. Mosley is an artist-activist who is interested in creative work that is both artistically sound and socially aware. Sydnie earned her MFA in Dance with an emphasis on Choreography from the University of Iowa, and her BA in Dance and Africana Studies from Barnard College at Columbia University. Sydnie's creative and research interests lie at the intersections of modern dance, movement in the African Diaspora, spirituality, feminism, and literature. She was listed by TheRoot.com as one of twenty-five "Up and Coming: Young Minority Artists and Entrepreneurs."

In February 2017, Sydnie was recognized by NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio and First Lady Chirlane McCray for using her talents in dance to fuel social change. Sydnie is a part of the 2017 Bessie Award winning cast of the skeleton architecture, or the future of our worlds, curated by Eva Yaa Asantewaa. Other funding and recognitions include: Lincoln Center Education Manhattan Community Artist in Residence, LMCC Creative Engagement Grant, The Field Leadership Fund, CUNY Dance Initiative, Dancing While Black Artist Fellowship, The Performance Project @ University Settlement, Create Change Fellowship with The Laundromat Project, the Gibney Dance Institute for Community Action Training, and the inaugural Barnard Center for Research on Women Alumnae Fellow. She earned her MFA in Dance Choreography from the University of Iowa, and earned her BA in Dance and Africana Studies from Barnard College at Columbia University. Sydnie danced with Christal Brown's INSPIRIT (2010-2013) and continues to appear as a guest artist for Brooklyn Ballet. An advocate for the field, Sydnie sits on the Advisory Committee to Dance/NYC.

PURPLE (2020-2021)

Performance

PURPLE is a multi-project universe that illuminates the power of “deep sisterhood for social change” through storytelling and movement. This sisterhood is how we thrive: we invest in one another, we honor and celebrate each other's brilliance, and we hold ourselves accountable to experiencing radical joy.

Each project is its own galaxy with its own moving storytellers, but these galaxies are guided by a common set of stars. The works are multigenerational, iterative, based in oral & embodied herstories, center sacred ritual(s), honor feedback loops and collective decision-making, and are inspired by the work & processes of our beloved ancestor Ntozake Shange.

PURPLE research is based in archives and stars, bodies and stories. Each galaxy embodies sankofa as it literally and figuratively honors and adorns our backspace as we intentionally craft our way forward into the cosmos.



Book PURPLE
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PURPLE: SLMDances Ensemble Work

Performance

PURPLE dances sisterhood; it amplifies the ways we invest in one another, we honor and celebrate each other's brilliance, and how we capture our radical joy. Each of these interactions is a small miracle. That space between women is magic. It's PURPLE, just like Auntie Alice wrote to us so many years ago. That's where there is God. Spirit. True Love.

PURPLE: Solos

Performance

PURPLE Solos are as much about the process as they are performed work. Centering the feedback loop between a veteran movement artist and Sydnie as choreographer and facilitator, PURPLE solos align the stars to highlight the brilliance of the performing artist. Current work in development is with Dyane Harvey.

PURPLE

Community Engagement

PURPLE is a choreographic experience that captures the radical joy in a place -- public housing communities in New York City-- via the stories of its decades long residents to uncover strategies of resilience, to amplify cultural traditions, and to shift public discourse and policy. In partnership with Changing the Narrative, PURPLE's community engagements facilitate the collection of oral histories and making those stories visible with site specific performances. Current engagements are with Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center and Amsterdam Houses.

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BodyBusiness (2015)

Performance

The 2015 World Premiere of BodyBusiness was presented in marketing partnership with Dance/NYC, in creative collaboration with Our Goods, and as a part of The Performance Project at University Settlement's 2015-16 Artist in Residency Program.

BodyBusiness is an interactive production that re-envision the economic practices of the dance world and encourages greater transparency of the artist experience.

BodyBusiness occurs in three essential parts:

- Marketplace
- Live performance
- Resource-sharing

Each section of the production builds upon the next to make plain the needs of today's dance artists, create a sense of community and inspire us to think and act from a place of abundance, empathy and urgency.

Choreography devised + directed by Sydnie L. Mosley in collaboration with dancers Candace Thompson, Kimberly Mhoon, Rachel Russell, Kayla Hamilton, Katherine Bergstrom, Nehemoyia Young, Allegra Romita, Italy Welton, Kailey McCrudden, Julie Goldberg, Sarah Chien, A. Nia Austin-Edwards, Melanie Greene, Autumn Scoggan with movement and inspiration from 2013 Greenwich Academy Dance Corps and University Settlement senior ballroom dancers at 184 Allen St. Sound score by Ebonie Smith. Film by Damel Dieng. Costumes/visual design by Ferima Faye.

135 minutes (with Marketplace). 75 minutes (w/o Marketplace).

7 women and femme performers.



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BodyBusiness: Marketplace

Community Engagement

Connect with resources you need or desire for sustainability in your life! Each performance includes entrance to a themed marketplace where you can buy, learn about and sign up for what you need from our rotating roster of vendors. Past marketplace themes include: Artist Services + Advocacy Organizations, Health + Social Services, and Small Businesses (Co-Curated by Ladies Love Project).

Originally co-created by Sydnie L. Mosley Dances and University Settlement, each marketplace is constructed to provide deeper insight into the role community-based organizations play in the lives of artists.

BodyBusiness: Resource Sharing

Community Workshop (all ages)

Through a series of artist-guided activities, SLMDances will share practices that work towards a cooperative economy based on trust, value transparency and accountability, all while honoring individual voices. In school, in our jobs, in society, we are taught "resources are scarce" -- but what if the skills, goods, services, and/or opportunities we already possess becomes the central resource of worth instead of money?

Artists, cultural workers, makers: let's fully embody a vision of a community that has mastered the art of sharing in order to negotiate obstacles and achieve common goals! In this session, reflect on what you have & what you need, equitably distribute resources, experience how a cooperative economy operates, and together, find ways to shift the culture in our day-to-day.

This model was co-conceived with Our Goods and elevates a vision that values artists' creative labor and production while decentralizing money as the only source of real worth.

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#BBHMM: Understanding the Artist's Body as Business

Community Workshop (adult artists and arts supporters)

How can artists be paid a living wage for meaningful work? How do we transform places of lack in our lives to places of abundance? How do we re-imagine compensation?

This session is inspired by Sydnie L. Mosley Dances' BodyBusiness, an interactive production that re-envisions economic practices in the arts world and encourages greater transparency of the artist's experience.

The session will offer a framework and testing ground for compensation negotiations between artists and institutions. The negotiation strategy focuses on equitable agreements rooted in needs assessments and continuous, clear communication. Facilitators will guide a dialogue that engages artists, administrators, and all session attendees in a creative exploration of resources and responsibility through the Body Business process and practice supported by the values embodied in the work of Sydnie L. Mosley Dances, STooPS, and PURPOSE Productions. Participants will depart with strategies to deepen transactions between artists and their community in a way that sustains long-term, mutually beneficial partnerships.

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CAKE (2014)

Performance

This ensemble work interrogates sexuality, shame and respectability politics for women. CAKE points to the booty shaking childhood games we played while our mothers and grandmothers taught us what it is to be "lady-like." We consider how doing away with shame around our bodies can activate us to be constructive and create new, free realities.

Choreography devised + directed by Sydnie L. Mosley

Sound Score by Sydnie L. Mosley, edited by Ebonie Smith. Vocal direction by Autumn Scoggan.

15 min. 4 women of color performers.



<https://vimeo.com/120169867>



Book CAKE
by contacting
info@slmdances.com



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Discovering Our Future Bodies: Movement Making for the Liberation of Black Women

Community Workshop (ages 13 and up)

If our bodies are vehicles that help us move through the world, then we must agree that our bodies are the first to bear the marks of privilege, oppression, subordination, superiority, and ultimately, power, that society imposes on us. What is our future body? How do the freedom tools we have identified as radical ways of being and regenerating, lead us to this future body?

The workshop will interrogate respectability politics for black women through an interactive talk, story circles and a performance of Mosley's collaboratively-devised dance work, CAKE. Through the exploration of black women's physicality, participants will call forth practices and technologies we use for survival, regeneration, and the reclaiming of our bodily agency as a means of resistance and rejuvenation. Participants should feel comfortable sharing stories about coming into your own body.

By the end of this workshop, you can expect to:

- Identify and analyze the impact of respectability politics that shape the way that black women carry our present bodies.
- Learn some freedom tools that center, prioritize, and free the stories of black women and girls, and everyone who falls at the intersection.
- Implement the freedom tools for the liberation of those oppressed, and in so doing, ultimately free all human beings
- Use the freedom tools in an improvisational movement practice to identify their individual future body, how it moves and how it relates to others, and will have an opportunity to share this future body movement.

Book Discovering Our Future Bodies
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The Window Sex Project (2012)

Performance

The Window Sex Project addresses and tackles the every day practice in which women are "window shopped," that is forced to bear unsolicited verbal harassment from men while walking on the street.

The Window Sex Project gives voice to gender-based street harassment and restores agency to women by equipping them to manage harassment, celebrating their bodies and responding through public dance work.

Choreography devised by Sydnie L. Mosley in collaboration with dancers Sarah Chien, Shoccara Marcus, Tiffany Spearman, Alexandra Warren, Tara Willis, Allegra Romita, Carrie Plew, Denae Hannah, Candace Thompson with movement and inspiration from community participants: Kimberlynn Acevedo, Genesis Be, Nicola Briggs, Elizabeth Carmichael, Princess Dennis, Ferima Faye, Erica Frankel, Auzriel Hall, Alexis Harbour, Dash Harris, Monique Hazeur, Blair Hotchner, Leah King, Jamilah Lemeiux, Lucia Mattox, Monica Monfre, Maxine Montilus, Melissa Moschitto, Dawn Perry, Chloe Piazza, Meghan Sebold, Diondra Setorie, Kristin Simpson, Ebonie Smith, Ronethea Williams.

Original Sound Score by Ebonie Smith

Featuring excerpts from the one woman show "Can I Get A Smile?" by Leah King

60 min. 5 women performers.

Also performed in excerpts of 12-15 min. 3 women performers.

Note: Performances contain adult language and are meant for mature audiences, unless otherwise noted. Teen audience members should be accompanied by adults who can then discuss the work with them.

Performance work developed with the support of Barnard Center for Research on Women, Africana Studies program, and Dance Department. Additional support from community partners including Grosvenor House YMCA, Hollaback! NYC, RINY Media, The Best Yet Market Harlem, INSPIRIT, Land Yoga, and the Citizens Committee of NYC.

<https://vimeo.com/38299383>



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The Window Sex Project

Community Workshops (ages 12-17 OR 18 - 40)



We realize that kids begin to experience gender-based harassment as early as 11 or 12 years old (or earlier!) and we want them to be equipped to handle it. Bringing us to your community to facilitate workshops specifically for teenagers.

The intended audience for our public workshops is young adults who may not have a community of peers with whom to discuss issues of gender justice. 18-40 are not hard parameters (we would never card at the door!), but we do ask you to respect the general notion that the space is for adults, as opposed to youth or elders.

The Window Sex Project (TWSP) is ongoing community engaged work that SLMDances began in commitment to providing liberated spaces for young adults to voice their concerns, find agency, community support and take action in response to the violence against their bodies in public space.

Women and genderqueer folks ages 18-40 are invited to participate in a workshop rooted in movement, storytelling, discussion and healthy living. We spend the day investigating the way in which our bodies are perceived in our local spaces. We use our time together to:

- Celebrate our bodies.
- Use our voice and movement to respond to street harassment.
- Fellowship with our community.

Each of the movement sessions - yoga, dance, creative movement - are facilitated by SLMDances artists. Each day wraps with speakers active in the movement against street harassment.

Since 2011, we have facilitated workshops in partnership with Hollaback!, Stop Street Harassment, Girls for Gender Equity, and Barnard Center for Research on Women, and have conducted workshops at Harlem School of the Arts, Grosvenor YMCA, Barnard College, Brooklyn YWCA, Black Girl Project Sisterhood Summit, Center for Anti Violence Education and more.

Book The Window Sex Project
by contacting
info@slmdances.com



I Wished On the Moon (2012)

Performance

An audience favorite, this structured improvisation engages the audience to dance with performers. The choreography embodies trust and partnership, and builds an overall sense of community in the performance space.

Choreography devised + directed by Sydnie L. Mosley

Music by Billie Holiday.

7 min. 1-4 performers.

<https://vimeo.com/135284742>



Book I Wished On the Moon
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PRESS COVERAGE



PIX11 News
Aired: August 18, 2015.



The One Art Project.
2015.

"BodyBusiness by Sydnie L. Mosley gave dancers a venue to literally and artistically share their voice. Dancers so often tell the stories of others; here they finally told their own. The piece very appropriately premiered at University Settlement, America's first community center, where labor organizers gathered to demand a life worth living and jobs that wholly supported it. BodyBusiness was not just about the dancers, but the community that supported it." BWW Review: BODYBUSINESS by Sydnie L. Mosley Dances (Nov. 25, 2015)

"Her choreographic work with her company SLMDances actively engages audiences, and often reflects the experiences of black peoples and women. Her evening length dances The Window Sex Project and BodyBusiness, their creative processes and performance experiences are a model for dance-activism." SERIOUS MOONLIGHT podcast: Sydnie L. Mosley (September 27, 2016)

"I have the audacity to think that I can make a life, a living, as an artist...and there have been repercussions in my real life existence." SLMDANCES MOVES TOWARD ABUNDANCE IN 'BODY BUSINESS' (November 12, 2015)



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