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Bennington College Announces 2019 Master of Fine Arts in Dance Candidates

Bennington, VT: Bennington College is pleased to announce the 2019-20 candidates for its two-year [Master of Fine Arts in Dance](#) degree.

[Molly Lieber](#), a Brooklyn-based dancer and choreographer whose feminist experimental work responding to sexual trauma is developed in collaboration with Eleanor Smith, and [Mina Nishimura](#), a dance artist from Tokyo whose practice focuses on ever-changing relationships between internal landscapes and external forms, will begin their work at Bennington College starting in Fall 2019.

Bennington College's Master of Fine Arts in Dance Program is designed to give accomplished artists the time, space, and focus to develop new work.

MFA in Dance candidates have substantial professional experience in choreography, performance, or related disciplines, and continue their creative research through this MFA. In a supportive and challenging environment, candidates collaborate with expert faculty members, engage in cross-disciplinary projects, and further articulate their ideas and artistic processes.

"We are extremely pleased that both of these remarkable, award-winning artists will be joining us," said faculty member [Dana Reitz](#). "As Teaching Fellows, Molly Lieber and Mina Nishimura will bring their adventurous presence and expertise to the undergraduate students, not only through the courses they teach, but also through their full involvement in the Dance Program."

"We look forward to welcoming Molly and Mina to Bennington," said Provost and Dean of the College [Isabel Roche](#), who will become interim president in July. "Their presence and their work will enrich our community—in Dance and in other disciplines—as they push the boundaries of their own practice."

The curriculum for the MFA in Dance is largely self-directed: candidates work closely with faculty to design an education plan that best suits their individual strengths, interests, goals, and creative process. The schedule for each term includes both research and work in dance and other coursework. As a core requirement, candidates meet with faculty to discuss and show the development of new material, which becomes the basis of each individual's studies, and leads to performances in a variety of venues. For more information about upcoming events, [sign up](#) for the College's public events newsletter.

As integral members of the overall Dance Program, candidates contribute to all aspects, participating in weekly program meetings, attending workshops and performances, and helping to oversee the Works-in-Progress Concert held toward the end of each term. The MFA in Dance Program provides multiple opportunities for creating new work and encourages participation in an ongoing community dialogue fundamental to advancing one's artistic practice.

About the 2019-20 MFA in Dance Candidates

[Molly Lieber](#) is a dancer and choreographer based in Brooklyn. She has worked as a freelance dancer in New York for the past fifteen years, performing and touring in the works of many experimental choreographers, including luciana achugar, Oren Barnoy, Wally Cardona, Keely Garfield, Neil Greenberg, Maria Hassabi, Jennifer Lacey, Juliette Mapp, Melinda Ring, Brian Rogers, and Donna Uchizono. She received a 2016 New York Dance and Performance Bessie Award for her body of work as a performer, and was featured on the March 2016 cover of *Dance Magazine's* Issue on "New York's Freelance Dance Stars." Lieber has taught at Movement Research since 2015. She is currently performing and touring in projects for luciana achugar, Oren Barnoy, Wally Cardona, Brian Rogers, and Donna Uchizono. She has danced consistently in achugar's works since 2012.

Lieber and Eleanor Smith have been making experimental dances in New York since 2006. Their work is unique in that it is an equal collaboration between the two choreographers, always performed by Lieber and Smith. The works are feminist collaborations that respond to sexual trauma through improvisation, abstraction, and performance. Their most recent work, *Body Comes Apart*, premiered at New York Live Arts and was documented by the New York Public Library, Jerome Robbins Dance Division. It will be remounted at New York Live Arts in January 2020. Recent works include: *Basketball* (PS122 and Baryshnikov Arts Center for COIL 2017), *Rude World* (PS122 and The Chocolate Factory Theater for COIL 2015), *Tulip* (Roulette, 2013; Judson Now at Danspace Project, 2012), and *Beautiful Bone* (The Chocolate Factory Theater, 2012).

Lieber and Smith were Guest Artists at Connecticut College in 2015 and taught workshops together in New York through Movement Research and CLASSCLASSCLASS. They were guest artists and co-taught at Sarah Lawrence in the Spring of 2018. They are also curating a series of shared work in May at Roulette, in Brooklyn.

[Mina Nishimura](#) is a dance artist from Tokyo whose practice and research focus on ever-changing relationships between internal landscapes and external forms, as well as images and movements. Buddhism-influenced concepts and philosophies are reflected across her somatic, performance, and choreographic practices.

After graduating from Ochanomizu University in Tokyo where she was introduced to butoh and improvisational dance through Kota Yamazaki's teaching, Nishimura completed the international program at Merce Cunningham Studio in New York. Since then, she has been performing and collaborating with groundbreaking artists such as John Jasperse, Dean Moss, Rashaun Mitchell + Silas Riener, Vicky Shick, Kota Yamazaki, Nami Yamamoto, Ursula Eagly, RoseAnne Spradlin, David Gordon, DD Dorvillier, Neil Greenburg, Daria Fain, Trajal Harrel, Yoshiko Chuma, Mårten Spångberg, Cori Olinghouse, Moriah Evans, John Jesurun, Ellen Fisher, Chantal Yzermans and Satoshi Haga. In recent years, she has also performed with SIA on *Saturday Night Live*, in *PRADA/Miu Miu Women's Tales* directed by Celia Rowson-Hall and in *MV of Late Sea*. Upon her return from Senegal (2003-04) assisting cultural exchange dance

project, *FAGAALA*, choreographed by Germaine Acogny and Kota Yamazaki, Nishimura started making her own work. Her works have been commissioned and presented by NYU Skirball Center, Danspace Project, Gibney Dance, Mount Tremper Arts Center, UC Davis (CA), Dance Theater Workshop, Whenever Wherever Festival (Tokyo), The Kitchen/Dance and Process, among other dance organizations.

Nishimura has been the Artist-in-Residence at Brooklyn Arts Exchange in 2010-11, Chez Bushwick in 2013, Movement Research in 2013-15, Camargo Foundation (France) in 2017, and Topaz Arts Center in 2019, and also has been teaching at Sarah Lawrence College, UC Davis (CA), Ferris University (Japan), Movement Research and Brooklyn Studios for Dance during these years. Nishimura is also a 2019 recipient of Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grants to Artists award. Nishimura was a Guest Artist in Dance at Bennington College in spring 2008, 2009, 2011, and 2014.

BENNINGTON COLLEGE

Bennington College is a liberal arts college in southwestern Vermont that has distinguished itself as a vanguard institution within American higher education. It was the first to include the visual and performing arts in a liberal arts education, and [has produced](#) dozens of notable alumni in Dance. Bennington is also the only college to require that its students spend a term—every year—at work in the world. Bennington students work intensively with faculty to forge individual educational paths around their driving questions and interests.

Rooted in an abiding faith in the talent, imagination, and responsibility of the individual, Bennington invites students to pursue and shape their own intellectual inquiries, and in doing so to discover the profound interconnection of things. Learn more at bennington.edu.