



## Faculty Artistic Team for **AT THE EDGE OF PROXIMITY**



**MEREDITH  
KNIGHT TREMINIO**  
Associate Director



**AMANDA JACKSON**  
Artistic Director



**WHITNEY  
COLEMAN TALBOT**  
Associate Director

*Interviewed by Savannah Bohl, UTA Department of Theatre Arts Student Dramaturg*

Interviewer Savannah Bohl posed three fundamental questions to the faculty choreographers of the Maverick Dance Company's digital dance event, **AT THE EDGE OF PROXIMITY**.

- (1) What is the name of the piece you've choreographed, and what can you tell us about it regarding the style and nature of the piece?
- (2) What challenges have you faced trying to choreograph during a pandemic?
- (3) Name a choreographer who has been a source of inspiration for you as an artist and educator. Why has that person inspired you?

Here are the responses of our Maverick Dance Company's faculty artistic team.

### **AMANDA JACKSON, Department of Theatre Arts Assistant Professor of Instruction**

"An Abundance of Caution" is in the style of modern/contemporary dance. With the exciting addition of dance on film, I knew I could play up the visual component of my work. I created a web of caution tape on stage, and the dancers were only allowed to occupy three openings. The camera rotates around the entire dance as they navigate their tight spaces, often dropping beneath the tape and gaining a little more ground. The most challenging aspect of choreographing during a pandemic was working to ensure everyone's safety and properly distance ourselves. My choreography typically involves quite a bit of physical contact and dancing in close proximity. This was an entirely new way of working for me and forced me to unlock new areas of creativity. I allowed our circumstances to directly influence my work. The opening of my piece shows the web of caution tape from 13 feet in the air. As the dancers' curiosity moves them to a new opening in the tape, you see the ripple through space and how our simple actions affect others. I've been in awe of Canadian choreographer, Crystal Pite, for many years. Her work is visually and viscerally impactful, and I often find myself daydreaming about her choreography. I also appreciate her risk-taking, and encouraging risk in her performers, along with her ability to cross disciplines to create nuanced, memorable work.

### **MEREDITH KNIGHT TREMINIO, Department of Theatre Arts Assistant Professor of Instruction**

"We Billow" started as a short 1.5 minute dance phrase to Leon Bridges' "River." It is in the style of contemporary and really is a somber piece that depicts eight individuals occupying the same space while also remaining distant from one another. It begins in chaos and ends with dancers disappearing one by one until the space is empty. It is inspired by ever-changing relationships and the absence of connections in this time. My biggest challenge has been a lack of creativity. There are always ways to create in any space and in any configuration, but I have definitely struggled with finding inspiring ways to communicate a story about us right now. The dancers were a huge help, and I am so proud of the work we created together. Annabelle Lopez Ochoa is my favorite choreographer right now. (I think I have included her work in some way in every class this semester.) She is so versatile stylistically and creates works that are both beautiful to look at and are relatable to her audiences. I also admire the ways she develops distinct settings for each work through costuming, music, and movement.

### **WHITNEY COLEMAN TALBOT, Department of Theatre Arts Assistant Professor of Instruction**

"Beacon" is a modern dance utilizing four floodlights. The work includes four performers and they use the floodlights both as lighting instruments to illuminate one another, and as simple handheld props within their dance movements. The work was really built around our restrictions in space and proximity, due to social distancing, how the lights could be the dancers' "partner" (versus physically partnering with another person), and how the lights could also create a connection between each person in the space. I chose the title because the floodlights truly did become "beacons of light" to help guide the dancers through space and lead them through various unique spatial patterning. I typically like to set works that involve a good amount of physical touch and partnering, and definitely to include close proximity between the dancers to establish relationships. Creating a dance during a pandemic truly challenged the way I see and play with space, and how I construct relationships. I honestly believe that this dance would not have come to fruition or evolved the way that it did, if it had been created in typical non-pandemic conditions. Choreographer, Anouk Van Dijk (company: Chunky Move) has always inspired me in some sort of way. Whether it has to do with movement style, physicality, location/setting of a dance, lighting, sound, etc. She's incredibly innovative, really thinks outside the dance "box," and I always find her works captivating.