



ARTISTS OF LOCKDOWN

English Transcript

WELCOME /OPENING

Alex: Hello and welcome to the Artists of Lockdown Showcase for Young Choreographers Project. My name is Alex Floyd and I have been with YCP since it's first program in 2015, as a mentor, administrator and program director. I am so happy to welcome our Young Choreographers, Mentors, sponsors, volunteers, and all of you esteemed guests. Thank you for being here today to witness our very first virtual showcase. Here is our other program director, the lovely, Irene Watson

Irene: Lovely.. Alex, you flatter me, thank you.

Dance Choreography Intensive for Teens, is an 8 week online choreographic mentorship program. We provide each of the Young Choreographers with a Mentor to guide and support them through the choreographic process.

In addition to our usual curriculum, we've included learning about dancing for film and film editing. We also included a Career Week. The YCs got to chat with a panel of 14 professionals - all with unique perspectives and experiences in the Arts and entertainment industry from all over the world.

Dance Choreography Intensive for Teens was created out of necessity to accommodate for the times, but has become a wonderfully supportive home for all that are involved.

Our talented Young Choreographers are from Orlando, Chicago, LA and right here in my home town of Placentia. Our Mentors are experts in multiple forms of dance - from ballet to Bollywood, tap to tango, contemporary to krumping. And have experience in film editing, make-up, music video choreography, dance accessibility... and so much more. But most importantly, they are experts at guiding the YCs to greatness. You will get to know both the mentors and the Young Choreographers throughout the performance.

Alex: What you are about to see is the culmination of creativity, hard work, vulnerability, and a lot of mental and physical processing over the last 8 weeks. Each student has created a dance piece all on their own from start to finish, from concept to costume, each step their original creation

Alex- and with that, we present, Artists of Lockdown Showcase.

Bonnie QuaasBerryman

Pia Vinson: Hi everyone, my name is Pia Vinson. I am a dance artist and video editor and I was honored to join the Young Choreographers Project as a mentor. This is actually my fourth year working with Lila, Alex and Irene and it was such a pleasure to be back this year. And despite the odds, they did it again! They produced an amazing show and I'm just honored to be a part of it.

It was my pleasure to mentor Bonnie. Bonnie knows what she wants and she goes for it. Her confidence is so inspiring. She's so creative and I was so honored to witness her process, her talent, and I look forward to seeing more of her work in the future.

Hi, I'm Bonnie, I'm 18 and I'm a YC. I've been dancing pretty much since I was 3. Just taking like all different styles like ballet, and tap, and modern and everything. I went on a trip to New York in 2015. I was there for 5 weeks and we went and saw the Rockettes and just being able to watch them and see their passion for this, I was like, this is what I'm gonna do. This is what I'm doing and I looked at my mom and I said I'm coming to New York and this is where I'm going to make my life. So I plan on going to college and majoring in Dance and getting my masters in Dance Education. So I'm hoping to pursue being a professional dancer and a choreographer and a dance teacher all on the east coast.

I signed up to be a YC because my theater teacher who I've done a lot of choreography with um she saw an ad on facebook and she tagged my mom and she was like, You have to sign Bonnie up. So she did. I was hoping to get more experience in like the choreography field, more references, and more things to add to my portfolio and to my resume. My mentor is Ms Pia. Getting to work with Ms Pia has been a lot of fun because she doesn't just look at the movement, she looks at the reason why we do it. So it's not just like Oh I'm gonna do this because it looks pretty, it's "Ok you take that into this next move and why, what message are you trying to convey right now" so it's not just oh we're talking about dance, we're talking about like what's going on in our lives and how that can affect our pieces and how that can affect our creativity.

So my piece, it's a modern piece and it's a quartet. And it's to the song Falling Slowly from Once. And in this piece there's two different couples and you see them when they're younger and when they're older and you see them progress through the hardships that they have. I want people to feel just the emotion that comes with it, whether the song makes them happy and remember some love that they have or if it makes them sad and remember something that they lost ... I just want them to feel something. My favorite type of dance is contemporary modern just because you can, there are no rules like with ballet where everything is like ok your body has to be here, this is your placement, even with jazz while there's less rules, it's still like this is the line you have to make. With contemporary and with modern, it's just this feels good, that looks good, I like it. I think the main difference was in the past I've been given a story. So they've been like "Here you go, here's this song, this is where it fits in the show, this is where you start this is where you need to end." And with this one it was, Ok, i get to pick the song. I get to pick the story, I get to do all the things. I get to decide the costumes and it was just everything trying to create and not just be given what I need. Um I just want to say Thank you ms pia for giving me a space to create freely and to be able to express myself in the way that I needed to.

Alex Floyd: Wow, wasn't that impressive. I can't even begin! The casting, the setting, it blew me away. From emotional to sass...on to our next performance.

Maylin Hernandez

Kistina: Hello everyone, I am Kistina Pressler and this is my first year as a mentor with the Young Choreographers Project. It has been an honor to be a part of this creative safe space and It has been a joy to connect with these teens through dance week after week. There has been such progress from session to session. And in one of those first weeks we asked the students, what does the future of dance look like? I believe those young choreographers have answered that and we are witnessing it tonight. The next student's work is a journey of self discovery, confidence, and creation. The first time I saw her choreography, I was immediately drawn to her unflinching connection to the audience through the camera. She's been dedicated to the choreographic process these past few weeks and I am incredibly impressed with her artistry. Here is Maylin Hernandez.

Maylin: Hi My name is Maylin Hernandez, I'm 14 years old and I'm a YC. I signed up to be a YC because I love dancing and it's something that I want to do in the future. I mostly do hip hop but I did do ballet when I was younger and that's basically all that I've done. This experience for me, choreographing from scratch has been different because it's not like freestyling it's really choreographing, practicing, repetition repetition and then with a mentor it's also different because I get feedback. It's not just me, my thoughts, and the mirror. Miss Kistina is my mentor. Besides the fact that she is very beautiful, she is very talented and she's very inspiring. A good freestyle helps me with choreographing because I can listen to the song and my body somehow just continues the movement, listens to the lyrics and tries to give the message and then afterwards I just repeat that and see what I like and what I don't like. My final showcase piece is showcasing my duality, confidence and finding my true self. My first song is a much more slower song. and in this song I'm purposely looking at the

ground and not looking at the camera and then in the second song, I finally found myself and now I'm looking at the camera and I'm showcasing everything. I was deciding between the two songs because it hadn't hit my brain yet that I could mesh the two but I contacted Miss Kristina and outside of class time can I like meet you? and then that's when she showed me many different ways to solve my problem until I found the solution which was doing two songs and two choreographies and even though it's more complicated, it's fun... you know? I would definitely want people to be inspired and get confident after watching my dance. The fact that my mentor had a different dance background definitely influenced me as well as my other partner Aryssa, she also certainly does much more contemporary more more dance style that I never really learned. But it was so beautiful that I kinda started thinking I want to incorporate the legs and do floorwork and also learn more about those dance styles. My favorite part of the program is that all the mentors and all the mentees because they've really shown me that dancing isn't about like being judged, isn't harsh like, you have to be the best you have to be the best you have to be the best, it's a process and truly to be the best, you have to be happy within you. Through YCP, I feel like now my personality, I'm not that shy you know I'm not like oh, like shaking, especially now I'm more carefree and I don't listen to the opinions or like the mean thoughts in my head and realized that everybody here is positive and has positive vibes. Thank you so much Miss Kristina You're so beautiful and I hope you make it, so you're so successful in life and I hope that you have the best year and I just want to thank you so much for everything you taught me. I want the audience to know that I am very grateful to be here and I am very happy to be here and that I hope that they feel something with my dance

Irene: Maylin was awarded the Dennis Michael Ortega Memorial scholarship because of her strong character and determination. Maylin, you honor my brother's memory with your beautiful achievements. On behalf of all my siblings (and there's a lot of them), thank you.

Here's Ana to tell us about the next YC

Erin Compton

Ana: Hello everyone, my name is Ana Miro and I've had the pleasure and privilege to be a mentor in this session of Young Choreographers Project. I've loved working in this program and it's ability to empower and create young leaders, inspire creative thinking and just give a new voice a new form of voice to these young students. It's been a learning experience in both directions and I could not be prouder of all the students that participated, all their hardwork and especially my two mentees, On that note, I have the honor to introduce to you an amazing piece by an inspiring young lady that not only inspired me but everybody in the group and I hope you enjoy her piece as much as I've enjoyed seeing it grow in the past few weeks. Doing a piece dedicated to her ancestor, here is Erin Compton.

*******Erin's video was edited differently than at the time of this transcript so it may sound different than this paragraph reads*******

Erin: I'm Erin, my name is Erin Compton. I'm 16 years old and I'm proud to be a YC. I do ballet, tap, jazz, and hip hop. Hip hop is my favorite kind of dance because I like to be a sassafra a lot. I've been a lot of places a lot because I'm a traveler, and I love going on vacations. I have a sister who got involved in dancing too. I'll be doing ballet in my final dance because I'm more eloquent and graceful. My piece is about the ancestors of my family line. I like to do the past to present. I am doing the past tense of the

path of our american history and I could be in the dress I had, the 1800s dress I wore for Halloween last year. And we used trains like the real family did back in the 1800s. When I dance I feel more connected to my great grandparents and my great great great grandfather. I want them to feel like they are from the great depression in the 1900s and my ancestors were alive back then around the Jim Crow laws. My mentor is Ana, she is really kind, super sweet and she likes also is really fun to talk to. I would thank her alot because she has done so much time with me and I have fun. I have a lot of dance mentors and I love ana so much and i think she feels the same way. She has a lot of good in her and helped me see it right through me. This was my very first time choreographing. The YCP program is like really fun to dance to and you might enjoy dancing to it. I really hope that you guys enjoy it and I really hope that you guys have a lot of fun while doing it.

Alex: Are you crying? I'm crying...I'm just so ...speechless. What a wonderful honoring of your ancestors. Can you wait for more? I can't...here we go to the next piece.

Karina Hernandez

Bradford: Hi Everyone, my name is Bradford Chin and I use he/him/his pronouns. Normally I'm based in either Southern California or San Francisco but I'm currently calling in from West Palm Beach Florida, which is established on the unceded territory of the Seminole, Taino, Tequesta, and other unknown indigenous peoples. My visual description is that I'm an Asian male with a shadow of facial hair above my lips and on my chin. I

have black quarantine length hair that is about 10 inches long, parted almost down the middle and swept toward the back of my head. I'm wearing a dark grey half zip athletic top and I'm sitting in front of sliding white closet doors. I am a dance artist, educator, scholar and diversity equity inclusion justice and accessibility consultant as well as audio describer for dance. It's been a huge privilege to witness this year's Young Choreographers as they have supported each other and grown together in these unprecedented, challenging and isolating times. Thank you all for joining us today in celebrating our Young Choreographers. The next work was created by young choreographer, Karina. At Young Choreographers Project, we use dance and choreography to help our young choreographers become confident leaders and risk takers. Becoming a leader doesn't happen overnight but it can start here. Each one of our young choreographers is a leader in their own right. Karina, you have reminded us that goals are individual and that we should be constantly considering what is truly important. It has been my privilege to witness you develop your communication skills and sense of agency and I am so proud of you. Everyone, please join me in celebrating Karina.

My name is Karina, I'm 17 years old, and I'm a YC. I found out about YCP from school. My favorite part of YCP is the dance movements. I'm from El Salvador. I like to listen to music and to watch tv show on netflix. My mentor puts a song on and I dance with it. My mentor is Bradford. to really work hard on it. I think the Spanish dance is easier but I want to challenge myself. Thank you Bradford for showing me songs to inspire dance. ya to inspire dance. Well, I saw one video that was last time where the Spanish people were dancing to Spanish music. I forgot what's her name but when I saw it I was like, and I guess I like the dance that I made. cause um for the

program, and it's about a dance you could make up the movements about it. I think I'm going to make more dance after the program.

Irene: What a surprise and delight that was, well done. Over to you Ana.

Kimberlin Mejia Flores

Ana: The student that you are about to see has been such a pleasure to work with. Her words of wisdom, her openness to learn, and just her super welcoming personality, has definitely left a mark. This piece is such a representation of that joy that she gives all of us and I can't wait for you guys to see it and enjoy it. Without further ado, here is Kimberlin Mejia.

Kimberlin: My name is Kimberlin Mejia, I'm 15 years old and I'm a YC. (y en espanol) So I would like to be like a dancer when I grow up so I thought this was going to be an opportunity for me to learn more about dance and so that I could learn more about it. (en espanol, captions read: I like learning new cultures, practicing ballet and all the things my mentors have taught me) I really like hip hop, I'm really into it I saw videos on youtube and I'm like I wanna do that I practice and practice. Maybe it's not good but I really practice to do my best now. My final piece is about what makes me happy. It was gonna be what makes me sad but no because I don't wanna cry while doing it. so I will do what makes me happy, so that's what it is about. (in spanish, cc read: Things that make me happy are alone time, listening to loud music in my room and dancing.) I learned a lot in this program while doing my final cause Ms Alex teach about a lot of things. I learned how to do a slow mo, I never thought that before. And like how can I repeat a movement in a piece and it's like I can do it this way and i can do

it this other way and how can I take a video from that view and that view. My mentor is Ana. This is my first time ever having a mentor. She's a beautiful person, she's so happy She says I'll be your friend, you be my friend. You can tell me what you want and we can talk We're not perfect so if you make a mistake don't worry about it that's why I really love her she's such fun with me. (captions: Thank you Ana, thank you for all your help. I have the courage to do what I love now which is dancing. I was afraid to express myself through dancing but not anymore thanks to you. All the things you've shared in our lessons have taught me so much. I know you've been through a lot in your life but have achieved your dreams and that inspires me. Thank you for all of the wonderful things you have taught me. Thank you.) When I entered to the program I was so shy, about like I can't do this, I'd be like, I'm not gonna make it but after talking with the mentors and making some friends, I'm more confident that I can do the things that I want if I never give up.

Alex: Yesssss!!! How fun was that?! I was dancing the whole time!! Keep dancing in your seats and we are gonna take a short intermission with our founder and director Lila Turner.

Lila: Good evening everyone, my name is Lila Turner. I am the founder and managing director of Young Choreographers Project. On behalf of the organization, I'd like to thank you all for being here and I really hope you are enjoying the performances so far. This showcase is one of my favorite parts of the program because it's an opportunity for our young choreographers to showcase their work and celebrate after many weeks of hard work. In 2020, Young Choreographers Project created our very first

volunteer program. We recruited several talented people with various professional backgrounds to come together as a community to help us raise funds, plan our first online program, and to produce our very first virtual showcase. We really lucked out with our volunteers and I'm so grateful for all the time and effort they've put into making sure that this all happened. I want to give a special shout out to ioli Filmeridis, Steph Galbincea, Lacy Kelsey, Kara Mondino, Kistina Pressler, Karen Sitz, and Lindsay Weiss. We appreciate each and every one of you and all of your hard work. Thank you so much.

As a volunteer led organization, our donors and grant makers play a vital role in ensuring that we can continue to empower young people through dance choreography and mentorship. I'd like to give a special thank you to all of the people and organizations who made financial contributions throughout the years. As our organization has many plans and hopes to expand our reach to more young people, we encourage you to continue your generosity by making a donation today. Visit YCPLA.org and click Donate Now. No amount is too small. Once again I'd like to thank you all for joining us for our very first virtual showcase and I hope you enjoy the rest of the show.

Citlali Nunez

Bradford: The next work was created by young choreographer, Citlali, or Citlit, who is this years recipient of the Arthur Turner Leadership scholarship. This scholarship was established in honor and loving memory of Arthur Art Turner. Among many things, Art was a lover of the arts and

dance, an educator, an army veteran who served our country for 30 years on active duty, and most importantly the father of YCPs founder and director, Lila Turner. The Arthur Turner Leadership Scholarship is awarded to Citli in recognition of her leadership skills and other qualities that reflect Art's character. Citli, I am so proud of you. It has been my joy to witness you pursue your project on your own terms, forging your own path, and connecting your own dots, while also supporting your mentors and fellow choreographers in both big ways and small. Everyone, please join me in celebrating Citlit.

*******Citlali's video was edited differently than at the time of this transcript so it may sound different than this paragraph reads*******

Citlali: Hi my name is Citlali Nunez, I'm 16 years old and I'm a YC. I signed up to be a YC because the choreography experience, right, the most I had choreographing was just a little piece in a dance for school. I used to take ballet when I was younger. At school I did contemporary, house and hip hop. One of the teachers was a house dancer, right, so when we were doing club, we decided to make one with her to learn house. I don't know if I want to be a choreographer or just a dancer but certainly dance is something I enjoy to do. Well, dancing is sort of what people give you, right, and then you express it. Choreography is something that you want to give to people. I want to give people through my choreography a sense of like home. The dance is mostly about how covid has affected us from one day having been out going out with friends to like being at home by ourselves. Well in the beginning, there was a lot of debate whether I should do this or not, right, just between myself, because it's such a big topic, right, I didn't know how I was going to express it. But right now I'm kind of mostly making it feel, having a mood sort of like home. That like sense of relief that

you're home. My mentor is Bradford and he's actually one of the very sweetest people I've met right, uh, like I said, there's no judgement. When we go into our separate mentor and student groups, he gives out ideas, shares what we might work on, shares how we can improve, right, if I'm stuck he's like there and like suggests things that I can do over the week. It's frustrating right not getting ideas for movements, but it's also exciting when you start coming up with pieces and it kind of like flows out you're just like sticking them together. Anything can be a dance, right. I've heard it through other people and like other programs as well but I think YCP kind of like gave me the idea of what it means. I think I have a better way to express myself. In situations that call for me to speak, I think I can speak out better and I'm actually a very big introvert like I'm very big, right. But I think through the program, I think , because we share often, it's helped me to like speak out and it's fun to share right because everyone's like smiling, they add onto the ideas, they build on it,

Irene: Citlit, I'm amazed at your progress in becoming a confident and empowered woman. Nothing can hold you back...Pia

Vanessa Alfaro

Pia: Vanessa joined YCP through the Howard and Margaret Ortega Memorial Scholarship. She was such an inspiring mentee. She is so free and spontaneous in the way she creates which are very important qualities in an artist. Working with her was full of surprises and I know this is just the start for her.

Irene: People born in December are special, and those that are born on the 29th of December are AMAZING!!

Kistina, take it away

Aryssa Ebbeler

Kistina: Our next student has bravely opened her heart to the choreographic process. Her piece about someone leaving and the desperation and emotional turmoil from the aftermath moved me from it's first iteration. Her work is beautiful for its composition but also its raw feeling. Here is Aryssa Ebbeler.

Aryssa: Um, I'm Aryssa Ebbeler. I'm 16 and I'm a YC. I have been dancing for 14 years. I do all styles of dance and I'm a competition dancer. I don't know exactly where I want to take my dance career and I want to choreograph but I also want to do architectural engineering and interior design. I initially went into the program just wanting to like further my choreography like experience and then um as we did it I really enjoyed like the editing and like the videography part of it. Um, my mentor is Kistina. She is a contemporary dancer and like, that's very similar to what I feel I am and like uses her body to like really move like fluidly. I really like fluid movement and I feel like I really like the deeper concepts and sometimes that works better with contemporary. Originally, I when I was choosing my song, I um I wanted to use like a slower like more emotional song. It was this one song that I had always like put aside because I love that song to use, and I liked it cause I wouldn't have to cut it so when I started doing

that I just wasn't all that into choreographing with it. So then I found another song and I just went with that song and I'll have to cut it but I'll use that and it's it's called A little bit yours by JP Sacs and it's very emotional and I think the emotion I'd use to describe it is like desperation and saying that like your heart is still with someone. The inspiration for this piece was multiple friendships and relationships. I kinda started it with one relationship and then as I continued the piece I realized that it was about more than one. Your emotions definitely guide your movement. So I think it's just initially improv-ing to the piece and see where like those emotions take you. I initially wanted to start the piece standing up on the side and then I realized that didn't really fit with how I wanted the piece to start so I think I just moved it to start on the floor. I think I want people to feel more frustration and like, with like the situation and everything and how but also come to a realization that not everything is gonna work out the way you thought it would. Um I definitely recommend the program, I feel like I learned a lot and that I was definitely able to spend a lot of time on my piece and get a lot of work on it. My favorite part of the program was definitely the editing, I'd say and just being able to go into a studio and edit my first phrase with like the different angle views. Thank you Kistina for really pushing me in this environment and helping me direct me through my choreography and finding ways to make my choreography better fit the dance.

Alex: Bravo!! What a display of technique, talent and emotion, and that editing! Incredible. We have one more piece for you, to close out this special night...hope you haven't run out of tissues yet!

Yulissa Leiva

Pia: It was my honor to mentor Yulissa. Yulissa is a ray of sunshine and she showed us that being vulnerable is not a sign of weakness but rather a sign of strength, and this is just the beginning for her. She is multi talented and she has a lot more stories to tell.

Hello, I am Yulissa Plineda, I am 14 years old and I am a YC. I joined the program because my dream is to become a pop star and I don't really have that much of experience with dancing like making my own things so I wanted to learn how and the second I heard Young Choreographers I decided I'm going to join, I'm going to come here and I'm going to learn how to make my own thing. My dream started when I was young like very young age when I was going through things, foster care, and then, I don't know wh, in my darkest moments a little voice came in, I call her Panda cause obviously I'm not gonna say Yulissa point 2. I call her Panda. And Panda, she always encouraged me, um, whenever I felt down whenever people told me that I am fat and I am ugly that voice Panda said, you are not fat, you are not ugly you are amazing, you will continue going and working towards your dream so you can end up helping others. The choreography that I am creating is based on my young age, duality. I just added some few like touch ups like just to see, just to experiment um and I do kind of like it, I ended up adding a little moment at the beginning with like a little slow right, a little soothing, and that is just me feeling doubtful right and having that like Panda like that other me, it kind of represents everybody else and her as well that are helping me even though I closed them out, they're still helping me, they're still gonna be right there. and then that's when the whole pump it up kind of stuff happens. My mentor is Ms Pia. Thank you mademoiselle Pia for helping me through this journey I know I may have been a little stubborn, by not turning on cameras at times

or things like that but overall you still helped me and I know that you'll be there, thank you for supporting me through my journey. Well miss Pia she was telling me like her experiences, also like my other like peer, Bonnie, she also said some doubts that she had with her choreography so did miss Pia so I guess that made me feel that I am not alone, I'm not the only one feeling down, um that we've all been through that and well I can still be pushing forward even though I get all these negative things, doubts. My favorite experience through YCP would be having all of us together, doing warm ups together, sharing things, creating a bond together, is my favorite thing. I also love the little activities before the mentor classes. I love how we all just do our breathe ins breathe outs and warm ups and all those things. I guess what I want you guys to see, to know is that it's ok to have a person a duality, it's ok to feel doubtful because everyone around you cares about you and they are still gonna be helping you even though you shut them out, they're still gonna be there, even though you don't agree with them, they're still going to be there and they're still going to help you through your journey. clap clap clap.

Irene: Who's got two thumbs and loved your dance? This gal!

Congratulations.

Congratulations to all the YCs, Mentors, volunteers on a fantastic show. On behalf of everyone at Young Choreographers Project thank you and see you next time.

Young Choreographers, take a bow!