DANSE DANSE



2026-2027 COMPANION GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dance as a **Form of Cultural Expression**: MÁM and Danza Contemporánea de Cuba P.04

Dance as a **Sensory Experience**: Christos Papadopoulos and Company Wayne McGregor P.07

Dance as a **Celebration of Memory**: The Ballets Jazz Montréal P.10

Dance as a **Source of Freedom**: Compagnie Marie Chouinard and Morin/Leroux · Arts vivants P.13

Dance as a **Form of Protest**: Charles Brecard x 7Starr P.16

Dance as a **Celebration**: Gauthier Dance and Balé da Cidade de São Paulo P.19

Activities P.22

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF DANCE ?

10 SHOWS
A MULTITUDE OF REASONS TO GO SEE DANCE

We marvel at the beauty of dance… and sometimes certain works leave us perplexed. But quite often, whether we enjoyed a performance or not, the experience of dance remains in the audience's mind; it lingers within us for several hours, a few days, or even a lifetime. **Have you ever wondered what dance is really for? Is it a language? Or pure entertainment?**

Through this guide, which covers Danse Danse's 2026–2027 season, we invite you to discover a program that offers a multifaceted perspective on dance and what it can offer each and every one of us—whether we're newcomers, enthusiasts, or even skeptics—because we believe there's one thing dance certainly cannot do: leave us indifferent.

This resource can be explored alongside the generic guide on dance (french only), which helps improve your appreciation of dance and introduces you to different dance styles.

ENJOY YOUR DISCOVERIES!

DANCE AS A FORM OF CULTURAL EXPRESSION

Teać Daṁsa
Danza Contemporánea de Cuba

Teać Daṁsa

From the very first moments, MÁM sweeps us away to another place—an Ireland of rugged hills and tight-knit communities bound by music and dance. The work is deeply grounded in the landscapes of the Dingle Peninsula, home territory of choreographer Michael Keegan-Dolan, where the Irish language and its legends remain vibrantly alive.

Inspired by the image of a mountain pass—a threshold to the unknown and the wondrous—the work blends the raw power of traditional **Irish dance with the fluidity of contemporary movement**. Through the gaze of a young girl, a vibrant ceremony unfolds, bringing together a dozen performers, seven musicians and concertina virtuoso Cormac Begley. Youth and age, past and future collide. As the music takes hold, the dance intensifies, pulsing with visceral energy.

EN SAVOIR +

Danza Contemporánea de Cuba

Founded in 1959, Danza Contemporánea de Cuba is known for its unique style, a skillful blend of **mambo, Afro-Caribbean traditions, classical ballet and contemporary influences**. For their Quebec debut, two of the company's choreographers infuse the dancers' bodies with their signature vision.

Annabelle Lopez Ochoa (Reversible) and George Céspedes (Katharsis Morphé + Mambo 3 XXI) explore notions of **identity, creative effervescence, and the social climate** of their island. With total commitment, an impressive cohort of dancers of impeccable agility deliver this choreographic and musical journey full of contrasts and sensuality. A captivating adventure where the myths of the past illuminate the present; an invigorating cultural and artistic encounter!

EN SAVOIR +





BRAINSTORM
DANCE AS A FORM OF CULTURAL EXPRESSION

Every culture has developed its own ways of moving, celebrating, resisting, or telling its story through the body. Dance crosses borders without needing translation, while remaining deeply rooted in a place, a memory, and a collective identity.

Teać Damsa and Danza Contemporánea de Cuba are two striking examples: dances born of distinct cultural heritages, performed on stage with a pride and vitality that resonate with us on a universal level.

To you:



DANCE AS A SENSORY EXPERIENCE

Christos Papadopoulos
Company Wayne McGregor

Christos Papadopoulos

Exploring the unison and cohesion of the group, Greek choreographer Christos Papadopoulos captivates audiences with works where bodies move as one, vibrating with intensity. A rising presence on the European scene, he fascinates with the precision of his choral compositions. My Fierce Ignorant Step draws its initial spark from the sonic **memories of his childhood in Greece**. How do we recapture that youthful sense of invincibility?

The dancers pulse with fearless joy, guided by collective memories of a time when everything felt possible. Despite the group's unstoppable drive, individualities surface. **Echoes, voices, and bodies intertwine like instruments.** Gradually, the choreography and score—composed by Kornilios Selamsis—gain momentum, propelled by the breath and vocal impulses of the performers. Until they reach collective euphoria. Exhilarating!

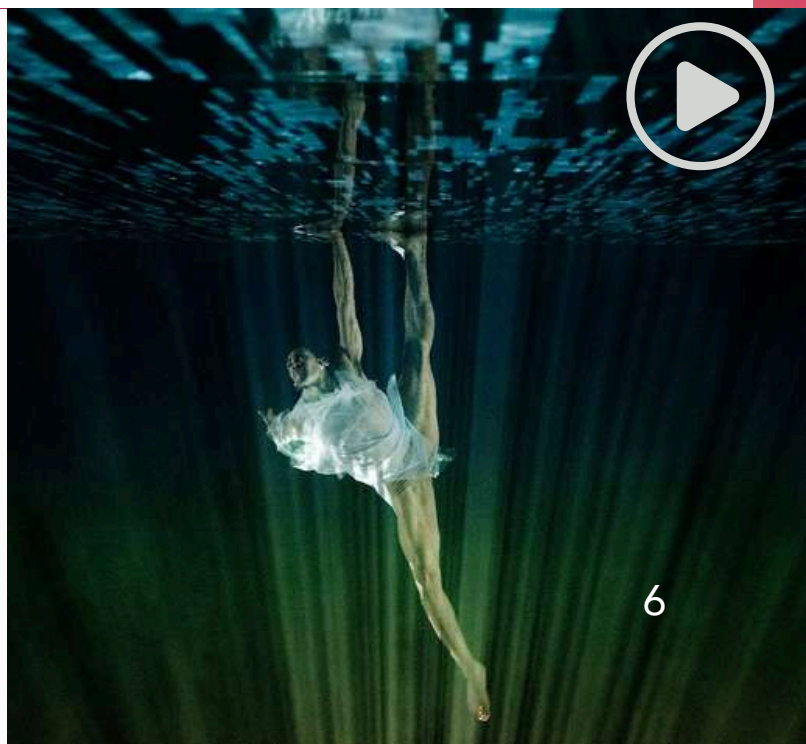
EN SAVOIR +

Company Wayne McGregor

Visionary choreographer Wayne McGregor explores the intersections of the **body, technology, and artificial intelligence** to expand the boundaries of movement. A vertiginous journey that awakens every sense.
Since the beginning of time, humankind has had a fascination with the void. From deep sea to deep space, these dark, mysterious zones ignite both our imagination and our desire to explore our world to its limits. Deepstaria — a title inspired by an enigmatic species of jellyfish with a stellar-sounding name — is a **highly sensory, meditative pure dance** and sound experience which reflects on our profound relationship with the void and our own mortality.

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BRAINSTORM
DANCE AS A SENSORY EXPERIENCE

We are immersed in the world, and our bodies are constantly interacting with it through the senses of sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch. The senses allow us to understand the world around us, to be-in-the-world—that is, to be in relationship with it.
In My Fierce Ignorant Step, childhood memories become collective movement. In Deepstaria, mysterious and profound sensations become an experience that overwhelms the senses.

Now it's your turn to explore your sensations and memories through movement!

To you:

SHOULD WE UNDERSTAND DANCE?

CAN WE FEEL A DANCE PERFORMANCE WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING IT?

IF WE ALL HAVE THE SAME SENSES, WHY DON'T WE ALL FEEL THE SAME WAY?

CAN WE FEEL A DANCE PERFORMANCE WITHOUT FEELING IT?

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN UNDERSTANDING AND FEELING?

DANCE AS A CELEBRATION OF MEMORY

Ballets Jazz Montréal

Dance Me

After touring **109 cities** across 18 countries, *Dance Me – Music by Leonard Cohen* returns to Montreal one last time. A unique opportunity to experience — or rediscover — this powerful work that has moved audiences around the world.

Like no other, **Leonard Cohen**, who passed away ten years ago, was able to shed light on the human soul with such rare lucidity. His unmistakable voice echoes throughout *Dance Me*, BJM's stirring tribute performance. Sixteen songs — from the iconic *Suzanne, So Long, Marianne, Famous Blue Raincoat, Hallelujah*, and *Dance Me to the End of Love*, to more recent titles — weave a seamless journey through his body of work, unfolding in a spellbinding **dance concert**. The result of a creative collaboration between choreographers Andonis Foniadakis, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, and Ihsan Rustem, and stage director Eric Jean, Dance Me is based on an original idea by Louis Robitaille. The show fluidly blends their artistic visions into a dance that is both physical and generous — beautifully brought to life by BJM's **14 performers**.

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BRAINSTORM
DANCE AS A CELEBRATION OF MEMORY

Dance Me is neither a documentary about Leonard Cohen nor a stage adaptation. It is a choreographic work—a way of exploring a musical work through the movement of the body. Three different choreographers, one shared subject. One shared goal: to pay tribute to the singer who passed away in 2016.

To you:



DANCE AS A SOURCE OF FREEDOM

Compagnie Marie Chouinard
Morin/Leroux · Arts vivants

Compagnie Marie Chouinard

A total artist, **vibrant and radically alive**, Marie Chouinard brings the intimate into dialogue with the monumental. Bodies laid bare, tension on pointe, laughter and cries intermingled. The choreographer presents a curated selection of emblematic solos and duets from her repertoire. In the second half, the stage becomes a blank page. The book *Mouvements* (1951) by poet and painter Henri Michaux - comprising a long poem and 64 India ink drawings inspired by Asian art -becomes a score for the creator. Ink blots, multiform, nervous figures: a true choreographic substance to which she gives life, driven by the **exhilaration** of inventing form. Supple bodies, coursing with the relentless music of Louis Dufort, echo the projected drawings.

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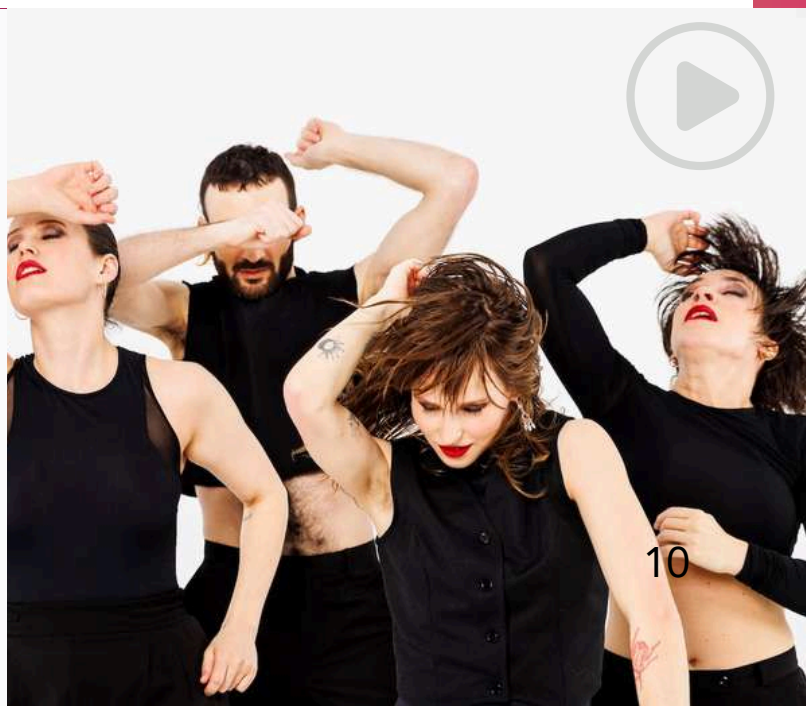
Morin/Leroux · Arts vivants

Raw energy, spatial geometries, and electronic pulses. In the intimate setting of Agora de la danse, the Morin/Leroux duo delivers a **physical performance** in which five dancers search for the tipping point between exhilaration and transcendence.

The duo formed by dancer and choreographer Alexandre Morin, and author, dramaturg, and stage director Mathieu Leroux has cultivated a language where **movement and dramaturgy are closely intertwined**. Rooted in contemporary dance, their practice reaches across disciplines and reflects a strong penchant for experimentation. *Euphoric Thresholds*, their eighth collaboration—the first under the Morin/Leroux · Arts vivants banner—explores group momentum and the thresholds of euphoria. Five bodies seek ecstasy in a constantly redefined space. Set to an electronic score, they navigate shifting states—tension, fatigue, elation—each one a limit to expand beyond. Blending athletic figures, popular references, and formal abstraction, the performers evolve in a stylized, deliberately offbeat universe, where endurance fuels intensity and transforms energy into shared matter.

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BRAINSTORM
DANCE AS A SOURCE OF FREEDOM

The Morin/Leroux duo and the Compagnie Marie Chouinard each explore, in their own way, these spaces of freedom where the body takes over from the mind, where movement expresses emotions we don't always know how to show: one through collective exhilaration and the thresholds of euphoria, the other through solos and duets where the intimate becomes a spectacle, where cries and laughter coexist without apology.

To you:

WHAT GUIDES OUR MOVEMENTS?

CAN WE THINK WHILE DANCING?

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DANCING ALONE AND DANCING IN A GROUP?

DOES OUR BODY HELP US FEEL FREE, OR DOES IT PREVENT US FROM BEING FREE?

IS BEING FREE IN BODY AND MIND THE SAME THING?

DANCE AS A FORM OF PROTEST

Charles Brecard x 7Starr

Charles Brecard x 7Starr

With *SKLTR*, **krump** steps out of the streets and bursts onto the stage, merging two singular voices shaped by radically different paths. The result is a striking, cathartic aesthetic collision.

Born in the ghettos of Los Angeles in the early 2000s, krump is a dance form **rooted in raw, unfiltered expression**. Its sharp, explosive vocabulary channels power, tension, and collective momentum through the body. Vladimir "7Starr" Laurore, a driving force within the discipline, and Charles "Brøken" Brecard bring together their respective practices - 7Skopez and FLUIDIFY - to create *SKLTR*, grounded in a world inspired by dark fantasy. The stage becomes an arena where legendary warriors confront their inner demons, fall, rise again, and persist.

Five performers, leading figures in krump, unleash a dense, surging energy carried by continuous currents of movement. Their bodies shift between intensity and release, precision and abandon. Set to an original score by Tomas Furey, a hypnotic choreographic texture takes shape - one where fury is forged into a transformative force.

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BRAINSTORM
DANCE AS A FORM OF PROTEST

Krump means "Kingdom Radically Uplifted Mighty Praise". Krump originated in the poor neighborhoods of Los Angeles, among people who had no other space in which to fully express themselves. Before becoming a recognized performing art, it was a language of survival and channeled anger. Those who practice it free themselves from the violence that surrounds them through dance. A true way of life and form of expression, this dance has a rich history.

To you:

WHAT CHANGES WHEN KRUMP MOVES FROM THE STREETS TO THE STAGE?

DOES THE INITIAL ANGER SURVIVE THE TRANSITION TO A DOCUMENTARY OR A STAGE PRODUCTION?

IN YOUR OPINION, CAN DANCE BRING ABOUT CHANGE, OR IS ITS POWER LIMITED TO EXPRESSING WHAT CANNOT BE SAID IN ANY OTHER WAY?

DANCE AS A CELEBRATION

Gauthier Dance//Dance Company Theaterhaus Stuttgart
Balé da Cidade de São Paulo

Gauthier Dance//Dance Company Theaterhaus Stuttgart

Dynamic and impressively versatile, Gauthier Dance brings a fresh spark to the **European dance scene**. To mark the 40th anniversary of its German home base, Eric Gauthier has invited a **dozen renowned international choreographers** to take on a bold challenge: create a work inspired by music that reflects the artistic identity of Theaterhaus Stuttgart, a venue with deep jazz roots. Here, music acts as a powerful driving force. The evening bursts to life with Barak Marshall and culminates in a breathtaking finale: Andonis Foniadakis' trampoline-powered Bolero +.

In between, a dazzling parade of irresistible creations by Hofesh Shechter, Benjamin Millepied, Virginie Brunelle, Johan Inger, Marco Goecke, Stijn Celis, Dominique Dumais, Mauro Bigonzetti, Sofia Nappi and Eric Gauthier himself.

EN SAVOIR +

Balé da Cidade de São Paulo

Electro-Brazilian rhythms, infectious energy, and the sheer pleasure of movement: this double bill by Balé da Cidade de São Paulo celebrates dance that is explosive, visceral, and boldly collective. An electrifying **sensory journey**.

With more than 200 creations to its name, the company stands as one of Brazil's leading cultural forces. In *Fôlego* (breath), pulsation becomes the driving force, coursing through every gesture. Bodies ripple in continuous flow, multiplied by a vast mirror that transforms the stage into a **shimmering kaleidoscope**. Breath itself becomes the spark for connection, resonance, and transformation. In counterpoint, *BOCA ABISSAL* immerses the group in sweeping circular trajectories, releasing a regenerative energy in the face of exhaustion. The **18 performers** trace a radiant passage set to an electro score infused with Brazilian accents, where the fearless joy of dancing together bursts forth.

EN SAVOIR +





BRAINSTORM
DANCE AS A CELEBRATION

Fireworks brings together several joyful and festive choreographies created by various world-renowned choreographers. The show feels like one big dance party.

To you:

WHY DO HUMANS CELEBRATE?

IS LABOR DAY A CELEBRATION?

IS VALENTINE'S DAY A CELEBRATION?

WHAT WOULD A SOCIETY WITHOUT CELEBRATIONS BE LIKE?

IS DANCING A WAY TO CELEBRATE? WHY?

ACTIVITIES: WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF DANCE?

Throughout this guide, we've explored six ways of looking at dance: as a sensory experience, as a celebration of memory, as a form of protest, as a cultural expression, and as a source of freedom. Six perspectives, but a single underlying question: What is the purpose of dance?

This is a question that's hard to answer definitively, and the answer changes depending on whether you ask it before or after seeing a performance, alone or in a group, in your mind or in your body.

The following two activities invite you to continue this exploration in a fun and creative way, either on your own or with friends!

ACTIVITY 1 (ALONE OR AS A GROUP):

Choose a function of dance from the following list:

- **cultural expression**
- **sensory experience**
- **celebration of memory**
- **source of freedom**
- **protest**
- **celebration**

Complete the sentences below based on the function you have chosen. If you're doing this activity in a group, have your friends guess which function you chose by reading the completed sentences aloud to them.

- If dance were a color, it would be _____ because _____
- If dance were a piece of music, it would be _____ because _____
- If dance were a fabric, it would be _____ because _____
- If dance were a question posed to the world, it would be: _____

ACTIVITIES: WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF DANCE?

ACTIVITY 2 (ALONE OR AS A GROUP):
Choose one of the quotes below, or a quote you know that resonates with you, to define the purpose of dance:

- **Paul Valéry** : « *On a l'habitude d'utiliser notre corps à des fins pratiques, d'aller au plus vite et au plus efficace et simple pour répondre à des besoins immédiats, or en danse, on ne se contente pas de mouvements faciles et pratiques, on va dans la complexité, dans des mouvements inutiles dans notre vie quotidienne.* » **"*We're used to using our bodies for practical purposes, seeking the fastest, most efficient, and simplest ways to meet our immediate needs; yet in dance, we don't settle for easy, practical movements—we delve into complexity, into movements that serve no purpose in our daily lives.*"**

- **Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker** : « *Comme je parle, je danse.* » **"*As I speak, I dance.*"**

- **Friedrich Nietzsche** : « *Il faut avoir du chaos en soi pour accoucher d'une étoile qui danse.* » **"*You have to have chaos within yourself to give birth to a dancing star.*"**

Create a piece (drawing, poem, collage, choreography, etc.) that, in your opinion, represents the purpose of dance based on the quote you've chosen. The original quote must remain visible in the final piece.

Send us your creation at audrey.steiner@dansedanse.ca. We'll showcase your work on Danse Danse's social media throughout the season!

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AUDREY STEINER
Développement des publics
audrey.steiner@dansedanse.ca

dansedanse.ca
info@dansedanse.ca
514 848.0623 / 1 855 848.0623
2, Rue Sainte-Catherine Est, Bureau 200, Montréal