

A shirtless male dancer with dark, curly hair is captured in a dynamic pose against a solid blue background. He is leaning back, with his right arm extended upwards and his left hand near his head. The lighting highlights the contours of his muscular body.

EN

ŻFINMALTA

NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY

2024 / 2025

SEASON PROGRAMME

NAPA

National Agency
for the Performing Arts

ŻFINMALTA
NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY

2024 / 2025

SEASON PROGRAMME

NAPA National Agency
for the Performing Arts



photo by **Alexandra Pace**

UNDER THE ARTISTIC DIRECTION OF MATTHEW WILLIAM ROBINSON

ŻfinMalta is a radical force in the dance landscape, critically engaging with the multifaceted nature of contemporary society, challenging and reimagining the dynamics of movement and representation.

Through the integration of diverse perspectives and innovative practices, we seek to explore and articulate new paradigms of physical expression.

ŻfinMalta transcends traditional boundaries and conventions of dance, using a range of artistic methods to interrogate and reflect upon the evolving intersections of culture, technology, and identity.

By fostering a rich dialogue between Malta and the world, we aspire to create a space where diverse perspectives are acknowledged and deeply examined.

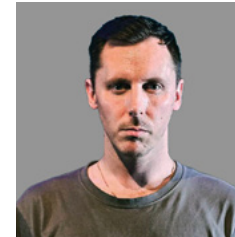
In our pursuit of artistic excellence and intellectual rigour, ŻfinMalta endeavours to inspire thoughtful discourse and transformative change.

Our goal is to continuously push the frontiers of dance, enriching the cultural landscape and challenging our audiences to rethink the role of dance in a rapidly evolving world.

THE COMPANY

ŻfnMalta is a home for groundbreaking artistic collaborations that centre movement as a transformative force in our world, engaging a breadth of artistic voices from near and far to create visually striking, physically distinctive dance work, that captivates the imagination of audiences nationally and internationally. Embedded within the artistic ecology of the nation, ŻfnMalta strives to highlight Malta as a vibrant cultural centre within the European landscape of artistic practice.

Under the artistic direction of Matthew William Robinson, the company is made up of ten full-time dancers, and two apprentice dancers, hailing from Malta and across Europe. Behind the scenes is a highly skilled and passionate team of dance and arts professionals who bring to the company their expansive knowledge of the local and international contemporary art world. Combined, they make up a repertory dance company which is fast gaining recognition and a reputation on the European touring circuit.



FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

MATTHEW WILLIAM ROBINSON

Welcome to my first season as Artistic Director of ŻfnMalta, where we proudly celebrate the company's tenth anniversary.

Malta made a bold decision to establish its national dance company as a contemporary one—a visionary act that embraced the evolving present. This commitment reflects the ambition and forward-thinking nature of the nation, and I am honoured to lead ŻfnMalta into its next chapter with my artistic vision.

ŻfnMalta is not confined to a single dance style. Instead, we draw on diverse perspectives and innovative practices, exploring the intersections of culture, technology, and self. This season, we delve into notions of identity—including our own as a company.

Who were we? Who are we now? Who will we become? As we reflect on our past and envision our future, we are ambitious about the possibilities that lie ahead.

Collaborating with exceptional artists, this season will thrill, inspire, provoke thoughtful dialogue, and challenge the poetic potential of the moving body. We will celebrate our decade throughout the season, and with a special week of events in 2025 culminating in a celebratory party. More details will follow later this year.

Whether you've been part of ŻfnMalta's journey for ten years or are new to the company like me, you are warmly welcome. We look forward to celebrating with you this season and continuing the ambitious journey that began a decade ago.

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photo by Alexandra Pace

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UTOPIA*choreography by Emanuel Gat***11 October 2024**

Musikè, Ferrari Theatre, Padua

8 November 2024

Festival of Ideas, Casino Maltese Ballroom, Valletta

Choreography, being a practice of organising groups of people in action, can and must be a manner of pointing towards ideal forms and systems for individuals and societies. Regardless of the achievability of these utopian models, the fact a certain choreographic system shows clear evidence of being beneficial for the group involved, is of great value. It is a daily practice of striving to achieve - within the artistic realm - that which is un-achievable (and probably has no place) in the real world.

Utopia is the result of a collaboration between Emanuel Gat and the ŻfinMalta company dancers, a celebration of their uniqueness, virtuosity, engagement, fearlessness, sense of responsibility and humanity. In a stream of choreographic consciousness, *Utopia* charts the personal journeys of ten individuals looking for connection and examining the role of the performer as an onstage, live creator.

Emanuel Gat was born in Israel and first danced with the Liat Dror Nir Ben Gal Company before setting out as an independent choreographer in 1994. His company Emanuel Gat Dance is based in Marseilles, France. He is ranked as one of Europe's leading and most prolific choreographers working today. Over the past 25 years, Gat's work has been presented in most of the leading venues and festivals for dance worldwide.

Choreography, Music & Lights Emanuel Gat**Costume Design** Holly Knowles**Additional Music** Chick-p**Duration** 60 minutes**Age** 5+*Supported by the Embassy of France in Malta.**photo by Camille Fenech*

ŽFINMADE 2024 – CORPOREALITY

5/6/7/8 December 2024
Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta

ŽfinMade is a biennial programme that invites six choreographers from Malta to create a series of solos and duets with the ŽfinMalta company dancers, each responding to the theme 'Our bodies in a digital world'. *ŽfinMade* is presented as three works per night, performed over four nights.

bookings **kreattivita.org**

Choreography

Florinda Camilleri, Valentina Cauchi, Tara Dalli, Pamela Kerr, Sandra Mifsud, and Sarah Vella

Dramaturg Victor Jacono

Costume Design Holly Knowles

Light Design Dali Aguerbi

Duration 70 minutes

Each work is approximately 18 minutes

Age 5+

Produced in collaboration with Spazju Kreattiv.

photo by Alexandra Pace





photo by Alexandra Pace

WANDERMUST 2.*choreography by* **Florinda Camilleri**

The *wanderMust* research series is Florinda's ongoing attempt to discover new, more responsive and 'response-able' ways of engaging with environments based on solidarity, care, and compassion. *wanderMust 1.* (2022) explored how its performers develop a sense of belonging in landscapes where they feel they do not quite belong. In *wanderMust 2.* Anthropocentric norms and practices are brought into question in a traditional theatre space. Together with the dancers, Florinda asks: is it possible to experience the theatre in a different way, such that the human is not the (only) protagonist of the performance? As in the previous iteration of this series, the camera is applied as a mediator of attention, to reflect the present intrinsic entanglement of human bodies with digital technologies.

EXTENSION*choreography by* **Sarah Vella**

In *Extension*, Sarah Vella delves into the nuances of emotion, allowing the dancers to inhabit a space where their true selves emerge. Alive, connected and collective, the performance becomes a dialogue between the self, the extension of the self and the other, inviting the audience to witness a journey that is both personal and universal. *Extension* strives to connect the essence of what it means to be human in today's modern world.

AI I AM*choreography by* **Valentina Cauchi**

Valentina explores the human condition in a rapidly changing, sometimes nonsensical world, through reflective expression. Using text as a starting point the work delves into the complexities of being human, seeking to illuminate our shared experiences and emotional landscapes in an uncertain reality.

AI I AM explores the evolving relationship between the human body and artificial intelligence, reflecting on AI's ability to alter our perception of our own physical identity, as well as our relationship to artificial identities. The work ultimately questions how technology reshapes our understanding of embodiment in a digital age.

ILLUSIO*choreography by* **Sandra Mifsud**

From the moment of conception, humanity embarks on an endless quest for happiness and connection. As we grow, this journey unfolds as a bittersweet dance of fleeting satisfaction and persistent longing. We navigate waves of joy and discontent, continually searching for the next experience or possession to momentarily fulfill our desires. *Illusio* explores this dynamic interplay, revealing the complex rhythm of our quest for meaning and the transient nature of contentment in a digitally interconnected world.

I AM LINKED, THEREFORE I AM*choreography by* **Pamela Kerr**

I am linked, therefore I am delves into the complexities of living in the duality created by social media. We seem to live in a constant state of tension between the digital persona and the authentic self. We seek validation while trying to create a unique identity, we want to remain connected while struggling with a sense of isolation. The pressure to present a curated version of life online remains constant.

Can we ever truly escape the duality of our online and offline lives, or are we forever caught in a dance between the two?

UNTITLED*choreography by* **Tara Dalli**

Angle, trend, line, orient, object, bias, drift, range, region, road, set, side, slant, tide, track, clash, crack, edge, point, send.

ŽFINDAYS 2025

21/22/23/28 February & 1/2 March 2025
Valletta Campus Theatre

An annual programme that brings choreographers who are making their mark in the international dance scene to Malta. **ŽfinDays 2025** features new works by Liliana Barros (Portugal/Germany), Simon Riccardi-Zani (France/Malta) and the re-creation of 'Somiglianza' by Kor'sia (Italy/Spain).

bookings zfinmalta.org

SOMIGLIANZA **(PRÉLUDE À L'APRÈS-MIDI D'UN FAUNE)**

choreography by **Kor'sia**

Somiglianza (Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un faune) is an ironic and joyful homage to Nijinsky's legendary creation and his renowned modern ballet, *L'après-midi d'un faune*. Combining fin de siècle imagery with exotic staging, *Somiglianza* questions symbolism in Western society. Nijinsky's creation of Debussy's *L'après-midi d'un faune*, one of the most famous modern ballets, serves as a starting point for Kor'sia to showcase their unique vision of dance iconography. Blending end-of-century imagery with contemporary entertainment, the work is a captivating journey through the history of dance, reinterpreted with a modern and innovative perspective.

Supported by
The Italian Cultural Institute of Valletta.

bookings zfinmalta.org*

Choreography Kor'sia
Antonio de Rosa, Mattia Russo
Music Claude Debussy
Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un faune and Alejandro da Rocha
Costume Design Luca Guarini
Set Design and Lighting Kor'sia
Antonio de Rosa, Mattia Russ

Duration 30 minutes
Age 5+

**Purchase your performance ticket
and attend the Open Rehearsal for free.*

SOMIGLIANZA

photo by Alexandra Pace



IGNIS*choreography by* **Liliana Barros**

In **IGNIS** (Latin for fire) we are plunged into a world of deep arousal. Portuguese choreographer Liliana Barros uses the relationship of cause and response to ignite deep energies and channel profound emotions.

We burn inside, we explode.

Let us radiate in our exquisite physical condition in space.

We do not want to hide; we want to amplify.

Let it flare up, let it spark.

Is it a poisonous inner impulse or the path to love and salvation?

Let us be kind.

IGNIS reveals itself as a transformative power, focusing on the emergence of energies that cannot be directed, and channelling them as if into a roadmap for the liberation of all the physicality they contain.

bookings **zfinmalta.org***

Choreography & Concept Liliana Barros

Composer Martin Mitterstieler

Light Design Dali Aguerbi

Costume Design Liliana Barros

Costumier Linda Rowell

Duration 30 minutes

Age 5+



photo by **Alexandra Pace**

**AND THE OTHERS, ONE DAY WE
PLAYED OUTSIDE FOR THE LAST TIME**

choreography by **Simon Riccardi-Zani**

And the others, one day we played outside for the last time continues a series that began in 2022 with *Ones, in the shade of sandcastles*, a new choreography for ŻfinMalta, followed by *Plus Ones, at the anchor of water lilies*, commissioned for the Franco-German pavilion at the Malta Biennale 2024.

This piece reflects on what's left behind — people, dreams, and landscapes. After carving out spaces for new meanings in *Ones* and inventing new stories in *Plus Ones*, what remains when we finally step out of our personal sanctuaries? How does the real world appear, and is there still room for exploration, play, dialogue?

Supported by Embassy of France in Malta.

bookings **zfinmalta.org***

Choreography Simon Riccardi-Zani

Dramaturg/Assistant Choreographer Alix Coudray

Costume Design Zoe Camilleri

Filmmaker and Director James Vernon

Light Design Dali Aguerbi

Duration 30 minutes

Age 5+

**Purchase your performance ticket and attend the Open Rehearsal for free.*



photo by Alexandra Pace

LAUNCHING SOON

Keep following ŻfnMalta social media for further announcements on the following productions to finish ŻfnMalta's 2024/25, 10-year anniversary season.

DECADE

choreography by **Thick & Tight**

21-26 April 2025

Teatru Salesjan, Sliema

Join us for a week-long 10-year anniversary programme of performances, participation, and special events, culminating in a spectacular weekend with the premiere of **DECADE**, a new choreography created for the occasion by Thick & Tight.

MORTAL HEROES

choreography by **Sita Ostheimer**

23/24/25 May 2025

Teatru Manoel, Valletta

Explosive and delicate, aggressive, and gentle, Sita Ostheimer's new work for ŻfnMalta takes the viewer into a captivating world where words are replaced by movement, emotions collide, and feelings transform. Sita Ostheimer's work is a journey in search of the 'Other' through her distinctive movement language and approach to sound and light. In **Mortal Heroes** she leads us on a journey of deep self-reflection and remembrance, of leaving and returning.

Supported by The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, Valletta.

VUM-BARALA-ZUNGARÉ U MIN KITIBHA'

August 2025

Fort St. Elmo, Valletta

In August, a special production titled Vum-Barala- Zungaré u Min Kitibha will be staged, an adaptation of Francis Ebejer's original - an adaptation by Albert Marshall that will bring together Teatru Malta, ŻfnMalta, and KorMalta in a historic collaborative performance at Fort St. Elmo.

MORTAL HEROES

photo by Alexandra Pace

A woman in a black sports bra is the central focus, looking down with a focused expression. She is in a dance studio, with other dancers visible in the background, slightly out of focus. The lighting is soft and even, highlighting the contours of her body. The overall mood is one of concentration and physical activity.

LEARNING & PARTICIPATION

photo by Alexandra Pace

Learning and participation programmes aim to provide a strengthening, transformative, and confidence-building experience for both body and mind. Get moving with training opportunities for all ages and abilities, or immerse yourself in dance as an active spectator, with activities including open rehearsals, and events designed to connect participants with ŻfinMalta's artistic collaborators.

For schedules, announcements, and updates throughout the season, go to zfinmalta.org/education-and-participation and subscribe to our newsletter.

CREATIVE MOVEMENT WORKSHOPS

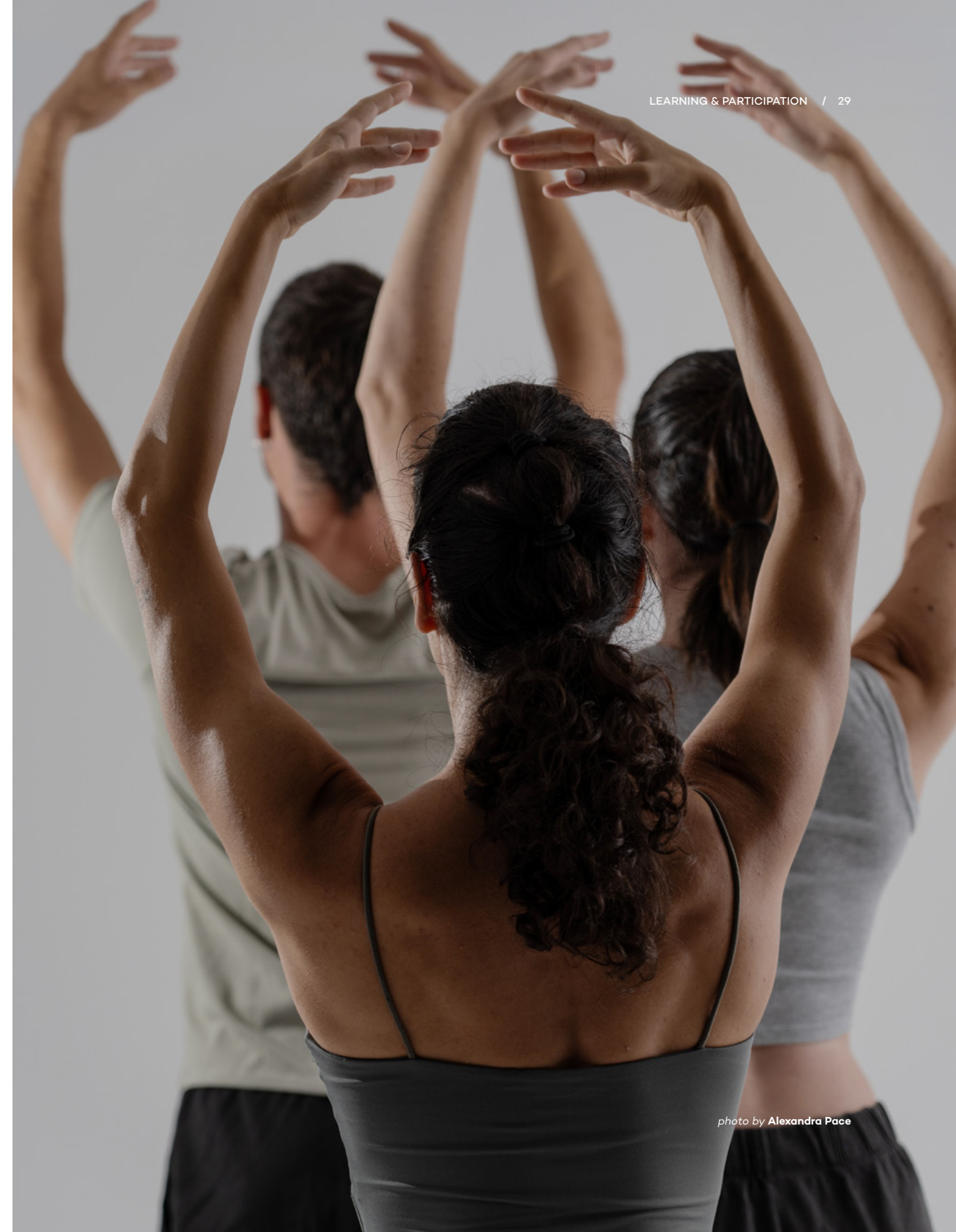
ŻfinMalta's *Creative Movement Workshops* are the perfect team building activity for your organisation, group, or community. Each workshop is tailored to the skills, background and age of participants and is led by a minimum of two ŻfinMalta company dancers. Workshops introduce participants to the world of dance and help them dig deeper into a pre-existing relationship with dance. Creative Movement Workshops encourage participants to open up in a safe, curated space, and explore new concepts through the lens of movement.

Contact Education & Outreach Artist Martina Zammit to request a detailed workshop structure or proposal martina.d.zammit@zfinmalta.mt

ĊAQLAQ SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAMME

ŻfinMalta's School Outreach Programme is stronger than ever this season, charged to share the transformative power of movement with Malta's young learners. Led by the company dancers, ŻfinMalta's school outreach programmes take the highest level of dance to students in pre-primary, primary, secondary, and upper secondary education, in the safety of their own classroom. Programmes are tailored for students of all ages and backgrounds, and created under the ethos that dance is a means by which anyone can experience and explore their creativity and imagination.

Contact Education & Outreach Artist Martina Zammit to discuss a *Ċaqlaq* programme best suited to your students and environment martina.d.zammit@zfinmalta.mt





COMPANY OPEN CLASSES

Monday to Friday / 10:00
ŻfinMalta Studios, Valletta

Commencing September 2024.

For one week, each month, ŻfinMalta opens its doors to professional dance artists and students in vocational training to join the company dancers for their morning practice. Led by a cast of esteemed local and international guest teachers, classes are varied and challenging and include somatic, contemporary, ballet, and yoga practices. ŻfinMalta company open classes provide a safe and inclusive space for dancers to further develop a professional practice, make connections, and experience life within Malta’s national dance company. Classes are open to experienced dancers of 18+ years, and students under the age of 18 are accepted on a case-by-case basis.

bookings showshappening.com

Age 18+
Cost €10 per session / 5 sessions for €35
(booking fees apply)

DANCE INTENSIVES

ŻfinMalta Studios, Valletta

ŻfinMalta’s intensives provide valuable opportunities for both professional and aspiring dancers, led by a diverse range of experts including local and international guests, as well as the professional company dancers of ŻfinMalta.

Participants have the chance to explore a wide range of techniques, training methods, and instructors, all designed to support professional development. Engaging with renowned artists from various backgrounds in the professional dance sector gives students an enriching experience to complement their regular training. For those new to movement, ŻfinMalta offers intensives focused on creative exploration, nurturing participants’ imagination and deepening their connection to movement through fun and accessible workshops.

Dance Intensives to be announced across ŻfinMalta social media, website and newsletter.

details zfinmalta.org/events

IŻFEN MA’ ŻFINMALTA:
COMMUNITY ADULT CLASSES

September 2024 - June 2025 / 19:00 - 20:30
ŻfinMalta Studios, Valletta

Get moving with ŻfinMalta’s evening adult dance classes, led by expert teachers offering ballet, contemporary, somatic, and yoga practices. Open to participants from all backgrounds and levels of fitness and flexibility, these fun and accessible classes address our fundamental human need to move. Most importantly, no previous experience in dance is required.

Season 2024/25 brings a host of new teachers with a variety of class experiences. This season’s line-up includes Douglas Comley, Zoe Camilleri, Julienne Schembri, Sarah Vella, Lotte La Haye, and Emma Walker.

bookings zfinmalta.org

Age 18+
Cost €12 per session /
pacakge per month €40 (4 sessions)

OPEN REHEARSALS

ŻfinMalta Studios, Valletta

Open Rehearsals take audiences behind the scenes of ŻfinMalta’s productions during the creation process. This is a rare opportunity to preview the work before opening night and experience the process of what goes into making a dance production for stage. Join open rehearsals for each production throughout the season to see the dancers at work and meet the many artistic collaborators who bring a work to life.

bookings showshappening.com*

Cost €5

*Purchase your ticket for a performance and present it at the relevant Open Rehearsal for free entry.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

photo by Alexandra Pace

AIR2025 – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Open call February 2025

Residencies to take place in 2025

ŻfinMalta Studios, Valletta

Now in its sixth year, the ŻfinMalta Artist in Residence (AiR) programme supports artists based in Malta who are engaged in dance making and choreography. AiR is an opportunity for emerging dance artists to explore their ideas in a new context, and have access to a space to research, experiment, take risks, and discover new ways to develop and present their work. While choreography is the central exploration of the residency, makers from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

Selected residents will receive a financial contribution from ŻfinMalta to support their project.

Applications for ŻfinMalta's AiR programme will open later this season. Follow our social media for announcements, and see open calls on our website.

details zfinmalta.org/opportunities

STUDIO SESSIONS

ŻfinMalta aims to support and nurture dance artists with this exciting initiative. Launching this season, Studio Sessions opens the ŻfinMalta studios for artists' own use, providing a space to create, research, or practice. Use of the studios is against a donation, and subject to availability alongside the company's artistic programme. For updates on this initiative follow ŻfinMalta's social media and website for announcements.

bookings project@zfinmalta.mt



photo by Alexandra Pace



photo by Alexandra Pace

ONLINE RESOURCES

ŽFINPODCASTS

CONVERSATIONS ON DANCE

Visit our archive of podcasts, highlighting the myriad ways dance features in our lives, reminding us that everyone has a relationship with movement, and everyone has an experience of dance. It's also an opportunity to draw on the opinions, ideas, and perspectives of the many voices in our cultural ecology. In these candid interviews by members of the ŽfinMalta team, we get an insight into the lives and minds of dancers and choreographers, as well as artists working in other disciplines, policy makers, curators, writers, directors, and thinkers, many of whom are also our collaborators.

ŽFINSTORIES

DANCE STORIES ON FILM

Announcing a new season of ŽfinStories! Part documentary, part day in the life of, ŽfinStories takes you behind-the-scenes with ŽfinMalta's company dancers. This series of candid, moving, and sometimes funny, short films has been created in collaboration with the award-winning director James Vernon. Each episode is both an exploration of the artistic creation process and an insight into the personal and professional lives of ŽfinMalta's extraordinarily talented, professional company dancers.

ŽFINBLINKS

HOW DANCE IS MADE

Short and sharp, as the name suggests, ŽfinBlinks is a series of engaging and animated videos exploring different choreographic tools and their development over time, equipping audiences with further tools to be an educated spectator. Through the analysis of a range of works, ŽfinBlinks looks at how dance-makers create, asking questions such as: How to choreographers generate material? What is a movement signature? What methods are used to structure a composition?



photo by Alexandra Pace



photo by Alexandra Pace

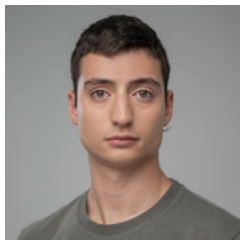
THE COMPANY

COMPANY DANCERS



ANDREA BIAGIONI

Born in Italy in 1998, Andrea Biagioni's first experience as a child was urban dance. He undertook contemporary training from the age of nineteen. Since 2019 he has worked with various companies in Italy and abroad and performed works by Ogmia, Alexander Ekamn, Maud Le Pladec, Staatstheater Stuttgart, and Komische Oper Berlin, Staatstheater Hannover, Kodance&co, Michele Merola, and ResExtensa, on stages throughout Europe and Asia.



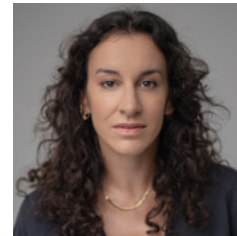
MARTÍ BLANCO ROMEU

Born in Barcelona in 2001, Martí started dancing in an elementary school where dance was mixed with music. Later he studied at the professional dance conservatory of the Institut del Teatre, Barcelona, where he worked with various guest dancers and established choreographers. Martí graduated in contemporary dance in 2020 and subsequently joined IT Dansa, Barcelona, as an apprentice for the first year and then as a company dancer. During his time with IT Dansa he has worked with an extensive and varied repertoire of choreographers such as Akram Khan, Alexander Ekman, Cayetano Soto, and Ohad Naharin, among others.



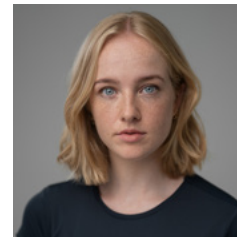
PEARL CALLEJA

Born in Malta in 2002, Pearl started dance at the age of five and has trained in classical ballet, contemporary, and Spanish dance. She graduated from Seed Dance Studios in 2019 and furthered her studies in contemporary at DAF (Dance Arts Faculty) in Rome under the direction of Mauro Astolfi. Pearl has worked with artists including Michele Merola, Emanuele Soavi, Roberto Scafati, Francesca Pennini, Roy Assaf, Tania Carvalho, Emanuel Gat, Mauro Bigonzetti, and Paolo Mangiola. Pearl was also nominated for the Young Artist of the Year Award in the 2022 addition of Premju għall-Arti. She joined ŻfinMalta as an apprentice in 2020 and as a company dancer in 2021.



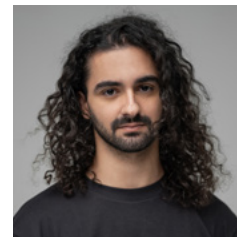
LIDIA CARICASOLE

Born in Italy in 1997, Lidia began her dance education at the Vic Ballet Academy in Verona. In 2021, she graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance from The Juilliard School in NYC, under the direction of Alicia Graf Mack. Lidia has performed in repertoire by José Limon, Paul Taylor and Martha Graham, as well as in new creations by Ohad Naharin, Bryan Arias, Spencer Dickaus, Jianhui Wang, Andrea Miller, and Matthew Neenan. She was awarded the Juilliard Career Advancement Fellowship from 2021-2023. Lidia joined ŻfinMalta in 2022 and has performed works by Paolo Mangiola, Emanuel Gat, Mauro Bigonzetti, Tânia Carvalho, Roy Assaf and Ambra Senatore, among others.



LOTTE LA HAYE

Lotte La Haye was born in The Netherlands in 2000. Since 2009 her dance education at The Royal Conservatoire of The Hague has included both the School for Young Talent and the HBO Bachelor Program. From 2014-2018 she was part of NDT's Young Talent Project, dancing in works from Jiří Kylián, Johan Inger and Ohad Naharin. Lotte became an apprentice with Scapino Ballet Rotterdam in 2018 under Ed Wubbe. She joined ŻfinMalta in 2021.



KEITH MICALLEF

Born in 1993, Keith began his dance training at age 12 under the tuition of Theresa Lungaro Mifsud at The Dance Workshop. He trained in classical ballet in the Cecchetti Method, achieving a Distinction at Advanced 2 level. He also trained in contemporary and flamenco dance styles. Keith joined ŻfinMalta in 2014, and has since performed works by Paolo Mangiola, Jacopo Godani, Jose Agudo, Roy Assaf, Iván Pérez Avilés and Emanuel Gat, among others. Prior to joining the company, Keith graduated from the University of Malta with a Degree in Legal Studies.

COMPANY DANCERS *CONTINUED*



HUGO OLAGNON

Franco-Italian, Hugo Olagnon started dancing with Acrobatic Rock and Boogie Woogie in national and international competitions where he finished seven times French Champion, and 3rd in the 2013 World Cup. After training in contemporary and classical dance with Jean-Claude Gallotta, he trained under Anne-Marie Porras in Montpellier until 2017. Hugo has performed works by Shahar Binyamini and Ohad Naharin. He has danced with the Ballet National de Marseille under (La)Horde, and with Avshalom Pollak Dance Company. As a freelance artist he has recently worked with Damien Jalet for Paris Opera, Richard Wherlock in Basel, and with Alexander Ekman for the 2024 Paralympics Ceremony.



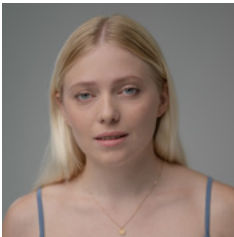
SIMON RICCARDI-ZANI

Born in 1998 in Nice, France, Simon began his dance training aged eight, and furthered his studies at the Opera Ballet School of Paris. He continued his education in contemporary dance and graduated in 2019 from the Paris National Conservatoire. Simon joined ŻfinMalta the same year, and has since performed works by Paolo Mangiola, Roy Assaf, Emanuel Gat, Jacopo Godani, Tânia Carvalho, among others. Simon’s first choreographic work was commissioned in 2022 as part of the biennial ŻfinMade programme.



MARIO MANARA

Mario Manara grew up in Italy and started dancing from a young age at Vic Ballet Academy in Verona alongside performing for a local theatre company. Manara trained at Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance, graduating with a first class BA (Hons) in 2020. During his time at Rambert School, Mario had the chance to work with choreographers including Christopher Bruce, Mark Bruce and Thick & Tight. He also had the opportunity to perform his own work at the Lilian Baylis at Sadler’s Wells. Mario then joined VERVE, the postgraduate company of Northern School of Contemporary Dance, in 2021, touring works by Matthew William Robinson, Botis Seva, Caroline Finn and Barnaby Booth. He joined NDCWales in 2022 performing works by Andrea Costanzo Martini, Caroline Finn, Marcos Morau, Matthew William Robinson and Melanie Lane amongst others.



AMBER VAN VEEN

Born in 1999 in Amsterdam, Amber began her training at the Dutch National Ballet Academy and completed her education at the Royal Ballet school of Antwerp. After her graduation in 2018, she enrolled as trainee with Ballet Flanders, where she had the opportunity to work with choreographers including Akram Khan, Jean-Christophe Maillot and Alexander Ekman, under the artistic direction of Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui. She was also an apprentice at the International Danstheater in Amsterdam, touring for a year in the Netherlands and Belgium. Amber joined ŻfinMalta in 2019.

APPRENTICE DANCERS



LUKE BUGEJA GAUCI

Luke started his dance career in Malta at The Dance Workshop, under the direction of Theresa Lungaro. Following that he continued his dance studies abroad, working with various choreographers and collaborating in a range of projects and performances both in Malta and abroad. Luke joined ŻfinMalta as an apprentice in 2024.



NICOLE CHETCUTI

Nicole Chetcuti was born in 2002. Her training has consisted of various dance genres including ballet, contemporary, Spanish, and urban styles. Nicole furthered her contemporary training at Northern School of Contemporary Dance in Leeds and graduated in 2023. She has since travelled to Germany, Los Angeles, Seattle and The Netherlands as a freelance artist. Highlights include working with Saju Hari, Gracefool Collective, Vidya Patel, Joseph Mercier, and Imogen Reeve. Nicole joined ŻfinMalta as an apprentice in 2024.

THE COMPANY

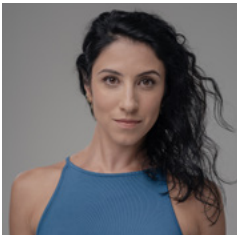


MATTHEW WILLIAM ROBINSON
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Artistic Director Matthew William Robinson joins ŻfnMalta in 2024 for its 11th season. Robinson's vision for the company is supported by his own distinguished career as a dancer, choreographer, rehearsal director and artistic director.

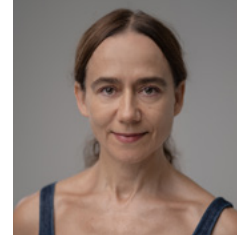
His choreographic work has moved extensively across the United Kingdom and internationally to venues and festivals in Europe and beyond. Collaborating across forms, Robinson is engaged in ongoing and emerging collaborative partnerships in the fields of sound, fashion, theatre and technology.

For many years Robinson was an integral part of Scottish Dance Theatre as dancer and rehearsal director, performing work by a range of international choreographers. From 2016 he was Artistic Director of VERVE where he developed the company's reputation for bold commissioning and the quality of artistic training it offers emerging dance artists. In 2021 Robinson became Artistic Director of National Dance Company Wales. Rooted in bold collaborations, the company's artistic work has embraced diverse perspectives and innovative vocabularies, forming unique programmes that have inspired internationally. Matthew is a graduate of London Contemporary Dance School.



BRENDA LEE GRECH
ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Maltese artist Brenda Lee Grech has a diverse portfolio in both theatre and film within the dance sector. Locally, she trained under the direction of Johane Casabene before launching her professional career internationally, spanning over 20 years. She has worked in various capacities with Ballet d'Europe, Scottish Ballet, Rambert, Punchdrunk and Dancers Career Development. As a performer she has collaborated with and performed works by Kylian, Forsyth, Bourne, McGregor, Schecter, Eyal, Cherkaoui, Doyle and many others, touring in Europe, Asia, Australia and the US. Locally she has appeared as the Head Judge in TV talent show Brillanti, 2023 dance series. She first joined ŻfnMalta as a rehearsal director under the artistic direction of Paolo Mangiola and was appointed Associate Artistic Director in 2024.



NICOLE BEARMAN
PRODUCER

Nicole is a creative producer with more than 25 years' experience creating programmes, events and publications for contemporary art spaces, museums, universities, and festivals, including ŻfnMalta, Blitz Valletta, Malta Design Week, the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney, the Biennale of Sydney, Sydney Design Festival, and Australian Design Centre. She has worked extensively both as an editor and a contributor to numerous international art, architecture, and design magazines. Nicole holds degrees in Visual Arts and Museum Studies, both from the University of Sydney. She joined ŻfnMalta in 2019 as Producer of 'Threaded Fine', by Rosemary Lee, and in 2020 was appointed as the company's Producer.



MARTINA ZAMMIT
EDUCATION & OUTREACH ARTIST

Martina was born in Malta in 1987. She first danced with the Olivia Dow School of Russian Ballet in Malta, where she studied the Legat System. Martina completed three degrees at the University of Malta, beginning with a bachelor's degree in English and Archaeology, and followed by a Masters in English, Modern and Contemporary Literature and Criticism. She then undertook a Bachelor of Dance Studies, which is where she was introduced to contemporary dance. Martina joined ŻfnMalta as a company dancer in 2014, and since 2018 has been in the role of Education & Outreach Artist.

THE COMPANY *CONTINUED*



SUZANNA NIKOLIC
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Born in Malta, Suzanna graduated from the University of Malta with a Bachelor of Commerce in 2019. She furthered her studies at Lund University in Sweden where she obtained a master’s degree in international marketing and strategic brand management. Suzanna joined ŻfinMalta in 2023. Apart from ensuring that the ŻfinMalta brand is widely known and continuously innovating itself, she truly enjoys being active in sports and travelling.



EMMA LOUISE WALKER
CREATIVE LEARNING AND CONTENT OFFICER

Emma was born in the UK. She was accepted as an associate at the Royal Ballet School, and participated in ‘Blink Margate’, working with Company Wayne McGregor. She later graduated with First Class Honours from Central School of Ballet and was selected for the pilot year of Akram Khan’s AKX programme. In 2018, Emma toured the UK with DeNada Dance theatre’s production ‘Toro,’ by Carlos Pons Guerra. Emma joined ŻfinMalta as an apprentice in 2015, and a full-time dancer in 2018, working with choreographers including Paolo Mangiola, Jacopo Godani, and Tânia Carvalho. Emma now works for ŻfinMalta in marketing, content creation and education.



MOHAMAD ALI ‘DALI’ AGUERB
TECHNICAL MANAGER

Dali is a Tunisian-born LGBTQI+ activist and artist based in Malta, whose work intersects performance, politics, and social justice. As a lighting designer and technical director, Dali has worked on a variety of productions, from intimate theatre to large-scale opera productions. His expertise in stage lighting and technical management ensures that every production runs smoothly and delivers a visually stunning experience.



photo by Alexandra Pace

OUR SUPPORTERS



Thanks to our accomodation partners Anna Maria Camilleri, and Elisa & Simon Grech

SUPPORT US

Your support of ŻfinMalta ensures that we can continue to deliver as one of the region’s leading contemporary dance companies. By getting involved you are providing vital support for our artistic programming and productions, touring programme, education and participation activities for all ages, and professional development programmes. Most importantly, you will share in the beauty and joy of contemporary dance and know that your gift, regardless of its size, is of tremendous value to us.

For more information contact:

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Editor Nicole Bearman
Photography Alexandra Pace
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ŻfinMalta National Dance Company is part of the National Agency for the Performing Arts (NAPA), a public agency providing a joint legal, administrative, and organisational framework for KorMalta, Teatru Malta and ŻfinMalta.

The National Agency for the Performing Arts (NAPA) was established in 2023 with the distinct aim of raising the profile of performing arts in Malta, both locally and internationally. As the go-to agency for the performing arts, its aim is to have an active role in policymaking and advocacy for the performing arts as a discipline in all its facets – from backstage to onstage, from administration to performance and from development to legacy – through the creation of a sustainability strategy for the itself and the sector it operates within, as well as synergies with other Public Cultural Organisations (PCOs) and the private sector.

In its contribution towards fair and sustainable opportunities for engagement within the arts, NAPA administers and sustains the three national companies of theatre, dance and choir – Teatru Malta, ŻfinMalta and KorMalta. Its organisational structure has been designed to strengthen the respective artistic visions, development, brands, and identities of Teatru Malta, ŻfinMalta and KorMalta ensuring that they are uniquely distinct to each produce a yearly stand-alone artistic programme, but synergised through co-productions and collaborations for a local and international audience.

The Agency is governed by a Board of Directors and a Chairperson, and is managed by Mro. Dominic Galea as Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Director Christabel Borg Preca, and three Artistic Directors.





2024



2025

ROYAL BALLET & OPERA



THE ROYAL OPERA

**THE MARRIAGE
OF FIGARO**
LIVE SEP 10 2024
ENCORE SEP 15 2024

**THE TALES
OF HOFFMAN**
LIVE JAN 15 2025
ENCORE JAN 19 2025

TURANDOT
LIVE APR 1 2025
ENCORE APR 6 2025

DIE WALKURE
LIVE MAY 14 2025
ENCORE MAYN 18 2025

THE ROYAL BALLET

**ALICE'S ADVENTURES
IN WONDERLAND**
LIVE OCT 15 2024
ENCORE OCT 20 2024

CINDERELLA
LIVE DEC 10 2024
ENCORE DEC 15 2024

THE NUTCRACKER
LIVE DEC 17 2024
ENCORE DEC 22 2024
DEC 28 2024

SWAN LAKE
LIVE FEB 27 2025
ENCORE MAR 2 2025

ROMEO & JULIET
LIVE MAR 20 2025
ENCORE MAR 23 2025

**BALLET TO
BROADWAY**
LIVE MAY 22 2025
ENCORE MAY 25 2025

WWW.EDENCINEMAS.COM.MT



ZFINMALTA
NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY