

New Dance Alliance Unveils 2026–27 Black Artists Space To Create Resident Artists

Claude 'CJ' Johnson, Elyse Morris and André M. Zachery have been selected for the residency program supporting Black dance artists.

By: A.A. Cristi Jul. 21, 2026



The 2026–27 artists-in-residence are Claude 'CJ' Johnson, Elyse Morris, and André M. Zachery. Each artist will receive a one-week residency with unlimited access to a dance studio and full living space at Arts on Site R&R in Kerhonkson, NY, as well as a \$2,000 stipend. The residency is designed as both a retreat and a space to create without the pressure of developing a new project. Additionally, artists are invited to show work at NDA's annual Performance Mix Festival.

Founded in 2020, BASC was envisioned by former NDA advisory board member Angie Pittman 'as a way to value and amplify the tremendous work that Black

artists have historically done and are doing to shape our nation's imagination, language, and humanity.'

Artists are selected by an invited curatorial committee of previous BASC artists and New York-based artists. NDA's motivation in gathering this committee is to transfer organizational and curatorial power to artists of color, and work toward cultivating a more transparent and accessible organization for all artists. The committee selects artists who demonstrate a rigorous commitment to conversation in dance and performance within the communities they are rooted in, in addition to dedication and longevity in practice, performance, and community building.

The 2026–27 BASC curatorial committee: Tatiana Desardouin, Justice Jones, Jelani Taylor, and Nathan Trice.

2026–27 BASC RESIDENT ARTISTS

A Chicago native, Claude 'CJ' Johnson is a dancer, choreographer, and movement director based in Brooklyn, NY. After completing his studies at The Chicago Academy for the Arts and SUNY Purchase College, where he was awarded the Adopt-A-Dancer Scholarship, CJ has had the opportunity to perform works by Merce Cunningham, Trisha Brown, Twyla Tharp, Mark Morris, Aszure Barton, Zoe|Juniper, Johannes Weiland, Kevin Wynn, Princess Madoki, and many more. He was also a full-time company dancer with A.I.M. by Kyle Abraham from 2017 to 2022, during which he became a 2021 Princess Grace nominee. CJ is currently a guest dancer for companies and choreographers such as Trisha Brown Dance Company, AIM By Kyle Abraham, NVA & Guess, Rashaun and Silas, Keerati Jinakunwiphat, and many others. He has also participated in his own choreographic residencies through the Baryshnikov Arts Center, The Joyce Theater, Motive Brooklyn, CUNY Dance Initiative, and many more. As a performer, choreographer, and Black queer artist, CJ dances to translate the human experience for audiences, recognizing dance as the most powerful catalyst for self expression and social change. In any artistic space, he believes his responsibility is to expand the knowledge and perspective of his community's vast experiences.

Brooklyn native Elyse Sharifa Morris is a dancer, choreographer, poet, curator, and humanitarian. She holds a Masters in Public Health from the NYU School of Global Public Health and a BA in Dance Performance & Science from Goucher College. Her training lineage includes F.H. LaGuardia HS, The Ailey School, LINES Ballet School, The School at Jacob's Pillow, Springboard Danse Montréal, and the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, where she lived and studied the history of performance and dance.

Morris is a former dancer of Seán Curran Company and former dancer/collaborator with A.I.M by Kyle Abraham, with whom she completed three seasons of domestic and international tours, as well as set Abraham's work on students from SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Dance. Throughout her dance career, she has worked with artists such as Maleek Washington, Sylvain Emard, Alanna Kraaijeveld, Robert Battle, Thaddeus Davis & Tanya Wideman-Davis, Larry Keigwin, Heather McArdle, Robert Moses, Troy Powell, and Nathan Trice. Morris also served as artistic director of Reflections Dance, a faith-based dance collective from 2011-2019. As a creative, she choreographs for jazz music videos and theatrical plays, is a member of Vocal Energy, a R&B Choir founded by Nicholas Ryan Gant, and is currently writing her first poetic anthology exploring themes of childhood, home, love, grief and musicology.

André M. Zachery, artistic director of the Brooklyn-based Renegade Performance Group, is an interdisciplinary artist, scholar, researcher, and technologist with a BFA from Ailey/Fordham University and an MFA in Performance & Interactive Media Arts from CUNY/Brooklyn College. His practice, research, and community engagement are artistically focused on merging choreography, technology, and Black/African Diaspora cultural practices through multimedia work. His works have been presented domestically and internationally, receiving support through several residencies, awards, and commissions. Zachery is a 2016 New York Foundation for the Arts Gregory Millard Fellow in Choreography, a 2019 Jerome Hill Foundation Fellow in Choreography, and a 2025 Strokes of Genius Fellow from Black Genius Foundation. He is currently an Associate Arts Professor at the Tisch School of the Arts in the Dance Department at New York University.

Since founding RPG in 2007, Zachery has presented work both domestically and internationally, with acclaimed press from publications such as the Brooklyn Rail, The New Yorker, and The New York Times.

ABOUT ARTS ON SITE R&R

Arts on Site R&R is a Residency & Retreat Center offering uninhibited space in nature for artists, wellness practitioners, and outdoor enthusiasts. The property is in Kerhonkson, NY, in the Shawangunk Mountains, two hours north of New York City, and features 20 acres of forest adjacent to Minnewaska State Park. Guests can enjoy access to the outdoors with hiking trails close by that lead to waterfalls and high mountain lakes. The center features two large studio spaces, a communal kitchen, bath house, and a series of yurts, cabins, and canvas tents, with accommodations to host up to 25 guests. <https://www.artsonsite.org>

ABOUT NEW DANCE ALLIANCE

Incorporated in 1989, New Dance Alliance (NDA) is a performing arts nonprofit. Its mission, from the earliest days, has been to support emerging experimental movement-based artists. NDA has made an explicit commitment to equity and inclusion by creating programs that center the work of artists from historically marginalized communities of color, LGBTQ artists, and artists with disabilities. NDA provides space, residencies, and performance and networking opportunities that help artists cultivate relationships, develop their artistry, and open doors to share their work in the US and internationally. NDA's programs support the work of more than 100 experimental artists and 2,500 audience members each year.

NDA's programs include Performance Mix Festival, Black Artist Space to Create, LiftOff, Work Sessions, Satellite, and Karen Bernard Projects.

For more information, visit <https://newdancealliance.org>.