

QUEENSBORO DANCE FESTIVAL 2026 SUMMER TOUR



Photo credit: Robin Michals

Queensboro Dance Festival 2026 Season Finale

SATURDAY AUGUST 15

Queens Theatre | Flushing Meadows-Corona Park

Representing the diversity of Queens through dance, 20 Queens-based dance companies have been touring outdoors throughout Queens since May. After over 30 events, today's finale marks the only time all 20 dance groups perform in one day, adapted to the theater. Choose your own adventure from today's schedule of events, and enjoy a thrilling day of Queens dance!

FINALE SCHEDULE

12:00 PM at THE UNISPHERE, Flushing Meadows-Corona Park:
Community Drum + Dance Circle led by Kofago Dance Ensemble (free)

12:30 PM PARADE: From The Unisphere to Queens Theatre
led by San Simon Cochabamba (free)

1:00 PM QUEENS THEATRE LOBBY:
Dance Party with DJ Elephantglasses (free)

2:00 PM THEATRE MAINSTAGE: DANCE PERFORMANCES (Ticketed, 60 min)

3:15-3:45 PM LOBBY: Danceback with Manhatitlan (30 min, free)
Join us for a Mexican Folkloric dance lesson

3:30-3:45 PM CABARET: Meet the Dancers Talkback (15 min, free)
with Flamenco Latino, RH Moves, The Kingdom Dance Company, and Robert Mark Dance

4:00-4:30 PM LOBBY: Danceback with Nā Pua Mai Ka Lani Nūioka (30 min, free)
Join us for a Hawaiian hula dance lesson

5:00 PM THEATRE MAINSTAGE: DANCE PERFORMANCES (Ticketed, 60 min)

6:15 - 6:45 PM LOBBY: Danceback with Cordillera Cultural Ensemble (30 min, free)
Join us for a Northern Philippines dance lesson

6:30-6:45 PM CABARET: Meet the Dancers Talkback (15 min, free)
with Drye/Marinaro Dance Company, Cole Collective, Queens Ballet Collective

7:00 PM THEATRE MAINSTAGE: DANCE PERFORMANCES (Ticketed, 60 min)

8:00-8:15 PM THEATRE MAINSTAGE: Meet the Dancers” Talkback (15 min, free)
with Gotham Dance Theatre, Neela Zareen, Cucala Dance Company, and Kinding Sindaw

8:30-9:30 PM LOBBY: Cast and Community Reception with DJ Lady Katie
Light refreshments and celebration!

QUEENSBORO DANCE FESTIVAL FINALE

2:00 PM PERFORMANCES

*Denotes Queens Premieres

Capiteles

Caporales is a high-energy, traditional Andean dance originating from Bolivia. Inspired by the Afro-Bolivian Saya, it features athletic, rhythmic movements, distinct boots with bells, and vibrant costumes, often performed to honor the Virgin of Socavón.

Company: San Simon Cochabamba
Choreographer: Caporales San Simon Cochabamba
Dancers: Dancers of San Simon Cochabamba
Music: “Monster Band” in Bolivia

San Simon Cochabamba (Rego Park) Caporales is a high-energy, traditional Andean dance originating from Bolivia. Inspired by the Afro-Bolivian Saya, it features athletic, rhythmic movements, distinct boots with bells, and vibrant costumes, often performed to honor the Virgin of Socavón.

Chant 1: Oli Aloha, Chant 2: He Aloha No Na Pua Mai Ka Lani, Ka'i: Ho'opuka E Ka La, Mele: Kakuhihewa, Ho'i: Ho'i E, Ho'i La, Chant 3: Mahalo Ke Akua*

This year's mele (song/main dance), Kākuhihewa, is a mele inoa (name chant) that honors the legendary Chief of O'ahu, Kākuhihewa. This was choreographed by Kumu Kale Pawai in 2011 and is a premier for Queens.

Company: Nā Pua Mai Ka Lani Nūioka
Choreographer: Kale Pawai
Dancers: Maria Ycasiano, Arlise Ellis, Jeanna Alvarez, Akemi Akaiwa
Chanters: Christopher Chung & Tristan Vizconde

Nā Pua Mai Ka Lani Nūioka (Long Island City) Starting in June 2002, Hālau Nā Pua Mai Ka Lani translates into 'The Many Different Flowers from Heaven.' Queen Lili'uokalani favored the children of Hawai'i, calling them nā pua (flowers). Kumu Kale Pawai, 1967-2016, trained under various Kumu Hula, culminating with his 'Uniki (graduation) 'Olapa under Kumu Kimo Alama Keaulana.

Rule of Thumb*

A conversation between a Korean contemporary dancer and a Taiwanese house dancer, this piece explores the process of understanding one another while speaking different languages.

Company: Ah-Molla Dance Collective

Choreographer: Dahyun Kim

Dancers: Dahyun Kim & Wan Rong Tseng

Music: "Roy's Scat" & "Wonderland-Winterland Mix" edited by Dahyun Kim

Ah-Molla Dance Collective (Woodside) is a group of dancers dedicated to uplifting AAPI talent and narratives. Ah-Molla(아, 몰라!) can be translated to 'I don't know, let's just go for it and see where it takes us!'. Like this statement, Ah-Molla Dance Collective values moving from playfulness, collaboration, and experimentation.

Jalisco Volando*

Jalisco Volando features a reimagined take on the iconic dance el Son de La Negra from the Mexican state of Jalisco dating back decades, originating sometime after the Mexican Revolution. The song is in the style of mariachi, and become emblematic of Mexican Folkloric Dance groups internationally.

Company: Manhatitlan

Choreographer: Karla Andrea Perez

Dancers: Angelica Velasquez, Felix O. Perez, Jackie Hernandez-Solano, Jason Mendoza, Jason Novillo, Jazmin P. Perez, Karla A. Perez, Leonel Chaperro, Maylyn Portillo Corona, Monse Velazquez

Manhatitlan (Long Island City) Manhatitlan aims to serve as a platform for preservation and advancement of Mexican, Mexican American and Immigrant narratives through dance, design and production. We place an emphasis on learning within an intergenerational and multilingual environment to form long lasting bonds and care within our community.

Argentine Zamba and Milonga*

Experience the soul of Argentina through the Zamba, a lyrical courtship where handkerchiefs express a wordless love story, and the Milonga, a spirited, fast-paced dance of rhythmic joy. Together, these forms celebrate the deep emotional range and vibrant cultural heritage of Argentine social dance.

Company: Silvana Brizuela Weigel

Choreographer: Silvana Brizuela Weigel

Dancers: Silvana Brizuela Weigel & Juan Alessandrini

Music: "Tu Regreso" by Gustavo Madeja, "Ella es asi" by Edgardo Donato

Silvana Brizuela Weigel (Jackson Heights) Born in Argentina, professionally trained in Ballet at Teatro Colon. Contemporary dancer trained at Teatro Municipal G. San Martin. Argentine Folk and Tango teacher with over 27 years of experience dancing and performing, trained by masters teachers like Gabriel Misse, Lojo Vidal, Norberto Guichenduc, Mingo and Esther Pugliese among others.

Bonsai*

Bonsai - the Japanese cultural practice of cultivating miniature trees through careful pruning, wiring, and trimming. Key shapes and associations: Cascades, Slantings, Uprights, the twisted growth of branches through wires, the gentleness of breeze, tension of roots pulling through soil, the stability of a pot.

Company: RH Moves

Choreographer: Rachel Hsu

Dancers: Rachel Hsu & Morgan Ziegler

Music: “A Ballad for Chong Wang” and “Pingpxng” by Yin Yin

RH Moves (Astoria) Rachel Hsu is a Queens-based dancer-choreographer drawing from contemporary, martial arts, and improvisation. A company member with Umami Playground and Ah-Molla Dance Collective, she has been featured at Rockefeller Center, New York Design Week, Peridance Presents, and QDF, in addition to ongoing guest engagements in Taiwan & Dartmouth College.

Guajiras Con Guajeo X3*

Guajiras con Guajeo X3 is a dance of mixed cultures; Guajiras flamencas epitomizes the feminine flamenco posture and style, incorporating the language of the Abanico developed in the 1880s. The Guajeo section exemplifies Cuban interplay and layering of percussion, song and improvisation to form a climactic ending in Caribbean style!

Company: Flamenco Latino

Choreographer: Aurora Reyes

Dancers: Sophia Angulo, Julissa Cadenillas, Mirta Cotto, Aurora Reyes

Music: Original composition by Basilio Georges

Costume Design: Natalia Starkova

Flamenco Latino, Inc. (Jackson Heights) Aurora Reyes is a respected flamenco dancer, choreographer, and teacher in the Flamenco communities of Spain and New York. She is of Spanish descent, which inspired her inquiry into flamenco. Aurora’s collaboration with composer Basilio Georges produced Flamenco Latino, a NY-based Flamenco dance company, fusing Flamenco and Afro-Caribbean traditions.



3:15 PM LOBBY:

Free Danceback with Manhatitlan

Join us for a Mexican Folkloric dance lesson! (30 min)

3:30 PM CABARET:

Free “Meet the Dancers” Talkback

with Flamenco Latino, RH Moves, The Kingdom Dance Company, and Robert Mark Dance (15 min)

4:00 PM LOBBY:

Free Danceback with Nā Pua Mai Ka Lani Nūioka

Join us for a Hawaiian hula dance lesson! (30 min)

5:00 PM THEATER:

DANCE PERFORMANCES BY:

Drye/Marinaro Dance Company

Kinding Sindaw

The Kingdom Dance Company

Cole Collective

Robert Mark Dance

Allpayana danza tradicional ecuatoriana

QUEENSBORO DANCE FESTIVAL FINALE

5:00 PM PERFORMANCES

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Wholly Earth*

Wholly Earth centers on the power of unity and the strength of the circle. Set to Abbey Lincoln's soulful Afro-jazz score, the work explores intimacy within community. Through shared rhythm and collective movement, it invites audiences to witness connection and the grounding force of coming together.

Company: Drye/Marinaro Dance Company

Choreographers: Jamie Drye & Francesa Marinaro

Dancers: Mikalla Ashmore, Chieh Hsiung, Mayu Nakaya, Caleb Patterson, Virginia Santucci

Music: "Wholly Earth" by Abbey Lincoln

Drye/Marinaro Dance Company (Forest Hills)

Drye/Marinaro Dance Company (DMDC) is a Queens-based contemporary company co-directed by Jamie Drye and Francesca Marinaro. Now in its 15th NYC season, DMDC blends modern, theater, and non-Western forms. Through its nonprofit, Fusia Community Arts, the duo leads mentorship, choreography, and arts education across New York and Pennsylvania communities.

Manobo Bukidnon Talaandig Dugso*

We present Dugso (offering) and Banog (hawk/eagle) of the Indigenous peoples of Bukidnon. Practiced by Talaandig, Higaonon, and related Lumad communities, these dances are sacred ceremonial forms rooted in Indigenous cosmology, ecological knowledge, and ancestral continuity. This program reframes Indigenous dance as embodied prayer, healing practice, and cultural transmission—not entertainment.

Company: Kinding Sindaw

Choreographer: Potri Ranka Manis Queano Nur

Dancers: Mica Milagros, Kelsea Suarez, Raymon Acosta, John Yanong

Musicians : Nonilon Queano , Francisco ortega , Angelina Ortega , Ernesto "Abe" Pamolarco, Potri Ranka Manis

Kinding Sindaw (Jackson Heights)

Kinding Sindaw is the longest-standing Filipino cultural dance group in NYC which focuses specifically on the indigenous peoples of Mindanao. Through immersive performances and public-facing workshops, they aspire to inspire the diaspora to explore their lineage and challenge ages-old institutional bias so they and their communities can achieve healing.

Footprints of Legacy*

"Footprints of Legacy" is a powerful tribute to immigrant communities, weaving stories of struggle, hope, and triumph. This dynamic fusion of hip hop, dancehall, Afrodance, and West African styles captures the essence of the immigrant journey, honoring their contributions and resilience. Through movement, we amplify their voices and spark solidarity.

Company: The Kingdom Dance Company

Choreographer: Paige "Queen Tut" Stewart

Dancers: Darren Justice, Sophia Angulo, Amarfis Collado, Lauren Vaicels, Sherece

Thomas & Paige "Queen TuT" Stewart

Music: A Mix by The Kingdom Dance Company

The Kingdom Dance Co (Rosedale) The Kingdom Dance Company is a vibrant collective repping Queens. Creating powerful, inspiring and uplifting performances. Our portfolio includes Making Moves, Queensboro Dance, Queens Pride, Dumbo Dance Festival and US Open. We're proud to bring our dance, storytelling & poetry to audiences everywhere with creativity, self-expression, and healing through art.

What Are You Waiting For

This work is a playful tap solo. This solo performed to the music of Roy Hargrove, alternates between playing the groove and reacting to the soloist. Both choreography and improvisation are utilized in this piece.

Company: Cole Collective

Choreographed and danced by: Nicole Ohr

Music: "Crazy Race" by unknown artist

Cole Collective (Astoria) Nicole Ohr is a Queens-based tap dancer/choreographer/dance educator. She danced for Undertoe Dance Project, and Les Femmes, and has perform at BB Kings, Queens Theatre, Symphony Space, and on the TODAY Show. Nicole is Artistic Director of Cole Collective; a Queens-based tap dance company, and is producer of Dance Astoria.

Portrait*

"Portrait" is a duet that depicts the trust and turmoil of a long term relationship rooted in passion and love.

Company: Robert Mark Dance

Choreographer: Robert Mark Burke

Dancers: Sarah Housepian & Sabatino A Verlezza

Robert Mark Dance (Astoria)

Choreographer and performer Robert Mark Burke (he/him) has worked with 10 Hairy Legs, Megan Williams Dance Projects, Pascal Riout, among others and is currently a member of the Lucinda Childs Dance Company. An Astoria resident, he has taught professional and collegiate workshops including in South Africa and the Cayman Islands.

Sonidos de la Costa Ecuatoriana

A performance that traverses the cultural richness of the Ecuadorian coast through its diverse sounds, rhythms, and traditions. From the Guayaquil identity immortalized in the music of Julio Jaramillo to the power of the Esmeraldas marimba and the energy of the bomba, this choreography celebrates the diversity, joy, and essence of our land.

Company: Allpayana danza tradicional ecuatoriana

Choreographer: Christian Pérez

Music: "Sarañusta" by Samy, "The Commoners" by Andean Sentiment, "Kambaglla Love" by The Long Way

Allpayana danza tradicional ecuatoriana (Jamaica) Allpayana was founded on January 11, 2024, in Queens, NY, under the direction of Christian Pérez and Gabriela Pizarro, who are committed to preserving the festive heritage of Ecuadorian communities through the promotion of customs and traditions that highlight Ecuador's identity and diversity.



Donate to support Queens dance!



6:15 - 6:45 PM LOBBY:

Free Danceback with Cordillera Cultural Ensemble

Join us for a Northern Philippines dance lesson (30 min)

6:30-6:45 PM CABARET:

Free “Meet the Dancers” Talkback

with Drye/Marinero Dance Company, Cole Collective, Queens Ballet Collective (15 min)

7:00 PM THEATER DANCE PERFORMANCES BY:

Kofago Taraji

Gotham Dance Theater

Queens Ballet Collective

CORDILLERA CULTURAL ENSEMBLE

Neela Zareen

Cucala Dance Company

Jatary Sunchy Danza y Proyección Escénica

8:00-8:15 PM THEATER

Free Meet the Dancers Talkback

feat. Gotham Dance Theatre, Neela Zareen, Cucala Dance Company, and Kinding Sindaw (15 min)

QUEENSBORO DANCE FESTIVAL FINALE

7:00 PM PERFORMANCES

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Wongo

The Wongo dance (often spelled Wango or Wongo) is a traditional, highly elegant dance and rhythm belonging to the Peul people (also known as the Fulani, Fula, or Halpulaar). It is performed during major social events, including weddings, village homecomings, baptisms, and seasonal harvest celebrations.

Company: Kofago Taraji

Choreographer: Kevin McEwen

Dancers: Temiola Olaniran, Jayla Minnifield, Jovani Anderson, Briana Glover

Drummers: Kzurii Zatharu, El Hadji Faye, Kevin McEwen

Kofago Taraji (Jamaica) Kofago Taraji is a Queens-based youth employment and dance training initiative of the Kofago Dance Ensemble. Taraji provides paid summer work experience, intensive African Diasporic technique, and mentorship that builds discipline, professional readiness, and cultural pride. Participants perform, teach, and engage communities as emerging cultural ambassadors for sustainable artistic futures.

Summer Suite 8.0: Rock the World*

Summer Suite 8.0: Rock the World spotlights rock music in multiple languages, including Spanish, Tagalog, and Arabic, while celebrating how global rock has shaped identity, rebellion, and joy across cultures. GDT's choreography draws from street jazz, contemporary techniques, and queer movement vocabularies like waacking, and cultural influences of our dancers.

Company: Gotham Dance Theater

Choreographers: Marc Nuñez, Amanda Lowe, Nadia Khayrallah, Davonna Batt, Emily Hart Lopez

Dancers: Amanda Lowe, Cameron Kay, Dahyun Kim, Davarria Ford, Davonna Batt, Emily Hart Lopez, Jessica Watkins, Marc Nuñez, Nadia Khayrallah, Sara Lavelley,

Sarina Gonzalez *cast varies by show

Music: A mix by Gotham Dance Theater

Gotham Dance Theater (Woodside) MARC NUÑEZ (he/him) is queer Filipinx-American, Director of Gotham Dance Theater. Credits: Rihanna, Todrick Hall, Donald McKayle's Etude Ensemble, Mike Esperanza's BARE Dance Company, Cathy Rigby is Peter Pan. Choreography Credits: 2024 Paris Olympics, Lysistrata Jones: A Musical Comedy. Teaching Artist: Mark Morris Dance Center, Marymount Manhattan College, Crunch.

Brahms Piano Quartet*

“Brahms Piano Quartet” (2026) serves as a spiritual successor to one of Mr. Blanken’s earliest works, “Brahms Double Concerto” (2016). This new creation continues his exploration of Brahms’ rich musical architecture, offering a vibrant celebration of musicality, classical dance, virtuosity, and precision.

Company: Queens Ballet Collective

Choreographer: Billy Blanken

Dancers: Blake Brown, Devon Darrow, Debora Greer, Sabrina Pretto and Tanya Trombly

Music: Johannes Brahms

Queens Ballet Collective (Formerly Sheepmeadow Dance Theatre - Long Island City) Billy Blanken founded Sheep Meadow Dance Theatre in 2016 as a medium for exploring movement through a socially-engaged dance practice. The project creates repertoire with an emphasis on classical ballet. His mission is to provide the highest quality in dance performance for all, regardless of economic background.

@sheepmeadowdancetheatre

Echoes of the Mountain People of the Cordillera

The piece is a vibrant folk dance repertoire celebrating the rich cultural diversity of the Cordillera Autonomous Region in the Philippines. This is the weaving together of various indigenous groups to form a cohesive, resilient cultural whole, much like the threads in a tapestry.

Company: CORDILLERA CULTURAL ENSEMBLE

Choreographer: MJ Payos

Music: Live gongs

CORDILLERA CULTURAL ENSEMBLE (Astoria) The CORDILLERA CULTURAL ENSEMBLE is an independent group dedicated to promoting the Igorot cultural heritage and history through ethnic dances and songs in our traditional native attire, celebrating courtship, kinship, and friendship, social gatherings, and festivities.



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Muse and Movement*

Kathak performance “Muse and Movement” opens with an expressive dance where Radha and Krishna linger in tender companionship, shaping the work’s emotional center. It then shifts into a vibrant 16-beat tarana marked by crisp footwork and rhythmic clarity. Together, the pieces move from lyrical emotion to pure kinetic energy.

Company: Neela Zareen

Choreographed & danced by: Neela Zareen

Neela Zareen (Jackson Heights) Neela Zareen, a Queens-based Indian classical dancer, trained in Kuchipudi with Guru Sadhana Paranji and in Kathak with Guru Prerana Deshpande. Her Jackson Heights school, Neela Dance Academy, promotes both forms via teaching and performing and is committed to connecting with the diverse communities of Queens and beyond.

Dilema

Dilema is a classic song by Johnny Ventura, and we’re using it as a vehicle to represent the hometown salsa style of the Big Apple. A new crop of dancers that have expressed their desire to perform this piece, so it returns.

Company: Cucala Dance Company

Choreographers: Andre Irving & Gabriela Nunez

Music: "Dilema" by Johnny Ventura

Cucala Dance Company (Long Island City) Cucala Dance Company was formulated by four awesome people from a variety of backgrounds: Andre Irving(Jamaica), Kalliopi Siamidou(Greece), Gabriela Nunez(Puerto Rico), Paul Gonzalez(Ecuador/PuertoRico). Dance is unity, it brought us all together & we want to share that unity with you.

Casería De Venado*

Ancestral activity based on deer hunting to celebrate and give thanks to Pachamama for the food provided.

Company: Jatary Sunchy Danza y Proyeccion Escenica

Choreographer: Jimmy Buestan & Edisson Buestan

Dancers: Bryan Quito, Jonnathan Guaman, Alan Bermúdez, David Cuji, Erick Quinatoa, Isaac Guaman, Marco Quito, Raúl Maita, Lorena Naula, Belén Cuji, Leydi Tigasi, Lady Quinatoa, Sabrina vicuna, Leslie Chariguaman, Dayana Chariguaman, Noelia Aguilar, Jennifer Manobanda, Evelyn Barzallo, Aileen Cabrera

Jatary Sunchy Danza y Proyeccion Escenica (Corona) The Sunchy Project, which in Spanish means Force Project, began on November 14, 2012, with two young dancers from the Ñucanchik Ayllu group who wanted to project, spread, promote, and innovate ancestral Ecuadorian culture in the traditional, popular, & scenic fields.



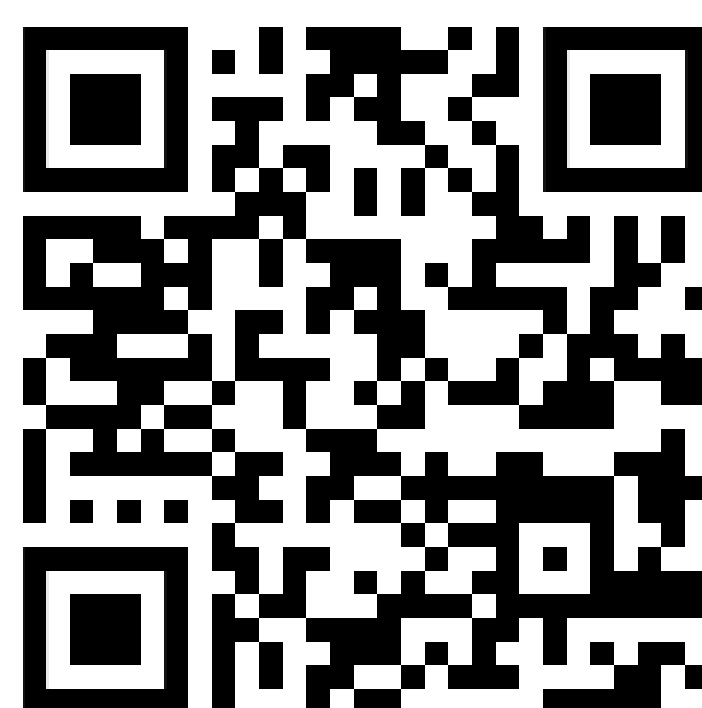
8:00-8:15 PM THEATRE MAINSTAGE: “Meet the Dancers” Talkback (15 min, free)

with Gotham Dance Theatre, Neela Zareen, Cucala Dance Company, and Kinding Sindaw

8:30-9:30 PM LOBBY: Cast and Community Reception with DJ Lady Katie

Light refreshments and celebration!

Thank you for coming!



Please donate to support Queens dance

Special thanks to Queens Theatre

Corona Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that our show today is on the native land of Munsee Lenape and Lekawe people, who continue to live and work on this land to this day.

About Queensboro Dance Festival

QDF was launched in 2014 with the mission to strengthen the dance community in Queens, and inspire a greater appreciation for Queens dance. Presenting Queens-based dance companies of diverse cultures and styles, QDF tours free performances, parties, and classes every summer throughout Queens public spaces. QDF provides free career resources for Queens dancers, and brings local dance programming into Queens neighborhoods.

QDF has been cited for its community impact in the first 2017 Create NYC Cultural Plan; a 2018 honoree of Queens Pride with a Proclamation from NYS Comptroller’s Office Thomas P. DiNapoli and certificate from NYC Public Advocate Letitia James; 2019 LIC Game Changer Award with Best in Arts & Humanities, certificate from Assemblywoman Cathy Nolan, 2023 Citation of Honor by Queensborough President Donovan Richards, 2024 City & State’s Power 100 in Arts and Culture, and 2026 Proclamation from Council Member Julie Won.

QDF 2026 Crew

Founding Executive Director: Karesia Batan

**Stage Managers: Jenna Arkontaky,
Leah Dustin, Cece Gutierrez**

Sound Engineers: Daniel Figueroa, David Velazquez

Stage Crew: Shonari Thomas

Content Manager: Leah Dustin

Marketing Manager: Nadia Conway



DONATE TO SUPPORT QUEENS DANCE!

Queensboro Dance Festival is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. The Queensboro Dance Festival is made possible in part by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature; by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; and City Parks Foundation and Partnerships for Parks through the NYC Green Fund.

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