



Astoria 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.*

SHOW PROGRAM

Sunday September 13, 2026

Performances at Athens Square, Astoria

**Denotes Queens Premieres*

PERFORMANCES:

By Queens Ballet Collective

Queens Ballet Collective (Long Island City) Billy Blanken founded Queens Ballet Collective (formerly 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

Riverdaughter

"Then another clear voice, as young and ancient as Spring, like the song of a glad water flowing down into the night from a bright morning in the hills, came falling like silver to meet them." J.R.R. Tolkien. Riverdaughter draws from images of mythology, fiction, harmony, destruction and history.

Company: Queens Ballet Collective

Choreographer: Billy Blanken

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

Costumes by Sabrina Pretto

Music by Resident Composer, Nick Virzi

Dying Swan

A traditional interpretation of the iconic solo attributed to Anna Pavlova.

Company: Queens Ballet Collective

Choreographer: Billy Blanken

Dancer: Sabrina Pretto

Brahms Piano Quartet*

Billy Blanken created this ballet as a spiritual sister to his 2016 creation, Brahms Double Concerto. The piece showcases the dancers' virtuosity, strength, beauty, and tenacity. This ballet is the first work Mr. Blanken created for Queens Ballet Collective. It reflects the vibrancy of the city and moments of shared elegance.

Company: Queens Ballet Collective

Choreographer: Billy Blanken

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

Costumes by Sabrina Pretto and Mary Jane Houdina

By Robert Mark Dance

Robert Mark Dance (Astoria)

Choreographer and performer Robert Mark Burke (he/him) has worked with 10 Hairy Legs, Megan Williams Dance Projects, Pascal Rioult, 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.

Passages

Created from a longing to reconnect, Passages follows three dancers as they navigate isolation, uncertainty and the enduring need to find strength in one another.

Company: Robert Mark Dance

Choreographer: Robert Mark Burke

Dancers: Derek Crescenti, Sarah Housepian, Jared McAboy

Music by Luke Howard

Portrait*

An intimate duet tracing a couple through pain and conflict as they choose to work together, revealing the resilience required to build a stronger partnership.

Company: Robert Mark Dance

Choreographer: Robert Mark Burke

Dancers: Sarah Housepian & Sabatino A Verlezza

Music by Marcin

Shadow Dance (Preview)

A haunting duet of love, loss and memory that asks how we grieve the parts of ourselves, and our relationships, that no longer serve us.

Company: Robert Mark Dance

Choreographer: Robert Mark Burke

Dancers: Mary Lyn Graves and Jared McAboy

Original Score by Eric Dietz

Out of the void; Into new light

An explosive ensemble work tracing a journey from darkness toward hope, as six dancers push themselves to new, undiscovered limits.

Company: Robert Mark Dance

Choreographer: Robert Mark Burke

Dancers: Derek Crescenti, Mary Lyn Graves, Sarah Hillmon, Erin Love, Jared McAboy and Sabatino A. Verlezza

Original Score by Mark Sanderlin

Thank you for coming!

Our goal is 100 people, \$10 at a time: bit.ly/supportqueensdance



NEXT ON TOUR: Corona Plaza, Sept 20

Silent Disco Party, Sept 25

www.queensborodancefestival.org/calendar

The 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 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



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.

Special Thanks to today's sponsor: Athens Square Committee

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