



Shannon Litzenberger  
Productions

# WORLD AFTER DARK

choreography & direction by  
**SHANNON  
LITZENBERGER**

## A NEW MULTI-MEDIA DANCE THEATRE PRODUCTION

Choreographed and Directed by  
**Shannon Litzenberger**

Premiere produced in partnership with  
March 6-9, 2019

 **Harbourfront centre**

*The nights of our generation are aglow with artificial light.  
Is there no trace of darkness left on you?*

A new, Dora Mavor Moore Award nominated production by Shannon Litzenberger Contemporary Dance, *World After Dark* explores the erosion of our relationship to night, inspired by Christopher Dewdney's popular book *Acquainted with the Night: Excursions through the world after dark*. From the three stages of nightfall to the science of the cosmos; from the birth of nightlife to the empire of dreams; from the biology of nocturnal creatures to the mythology of the night sky, *World After Dark* takes us on an epic voyage through the mysteries of night, inviting us to reclaim the night – a metaphor for the sensual, the embodied, and the feminine.

The creation of *World After Dark* benefited from incubation support from companies like Soulpepper Theatre Co., Toronto Dance Theatre, the National Ballet of Canada, Canada's National Ballet School, Peggy Baker Dance Projects and Harbourfront Centre's Performing Arts Residency program. The production has also been supported by the Toronto Arts Council, Ontario Arts Council, Canada Council for the Arts and Power Corporation of Canada.

## About the Artist

*"...tall, proud, tender and defiant."*

-Michael Crabb, National Post



*"...dynamic and full of emotion...a delight to watch."*

-Lucy Everleigh, Mooney on Theatre

A choreographer, dancer, producer, director and facilitator, **Shannon Litzenberger** is known for creating live performance experiences at the intersection of forms. Rooted in dance, Litzenberger's innovative collaborations come to life in conversation with theatre, literary and visual arts. Her perspective is decidedly feminist, philosophical, and socially conscious. Her roots in Canada's rural prairies inspire recurring themes of

connection to land, environment, belonging, identity and place. Her work has been presented across Canada and the US, in collaboration with some of Canada's leading artists including Marie-Josée Chartier, Lorna Crozier, Renelta Arluk, Charles C. Smith, Ravi Jain and Michael Greyeyes, among many others. She has been an invited resident artist at Banff Centre, Soulpepper Theatre, Toronto Dance Theatre, Remai Modern, Gros Morne Summer Music and Atlantic Ballet Theatre. She is the recipient of the Jack McAllister award for accomplishment in dance, a 2019 Chalmers Fellow and a twice-shortlisted finalist for the prestigious KM Hunter Award.

## Original Cast and Creative Team

Concept, Choreography and Direction **Shannon Litzenberger**

Inspired by **Christopher Dewdney's** *Acquainted with the night: Excursions through the world after dark*

Created with and Performed by **Linnea Swan, Louis Laberge-Côté, Syreeta Hector, Emily Law, Nikolaos Markakis** and **Kathia Wittenborn** with narration by **Irene Pauzer** and **Dan Wild**

Touring cast includes performances by **Aryana Malekzadeh, Michael Mortley, Yui Ugai,** and **Lindsay Harpham**, with rehearsal support by **Nikolaos Markakis**

Dance Dramaturg / Creative Advisor **Gerry Trentham**

Creative Advisor **Marie-Josée Chartier**

Writer / Theatre Dramaturg **Guillermo Verdecchia**

Lighting and Set Design **Ken MacKenzie**

Projection and Interactive Video Design **Elysha Poirier**

Sound Design **John Gzowski**

Costume Design **Alexandra Lord**

Stage Management **Laura Cournoyea**

Production Champion **Jordana Deveau**

*"Compellingly original."*

- Susan Walker, artsblog



*"To see my book realized in such imaginative and emotional detail is amazing. With her innovative choreography, Shannon has captured the core of the book. This visionary production should establish Litzenberger as one of Canada's foremost choreographers."*

- Christopher Dewdney, author,  
*Acquainted With The Night*



[www.shannonlitzenberger.com/worldafterdark](http://www.shannonlitzenberger.com/worldafterdark)

## Creating World After Dark

Night has inspired the creation of a great many works of art, no doubt because of the richness of its metaphors. For me, night is a metaphor for the sensual, the embodied and the feminine. To explore the erosion of our relationship with night is to discover our growing disconnect with our sensory world, with our natural environment, with our own bodies, and with feminine virtues like intuition, cooperation, sensitivity, and creative expression. What are the consequences of living in a world where the equilibrium of the masculine and feminine energies are so out of balance?

This question was my point of departure for creating *World After Dark*, the beginning of my own creative journey into the metaphorical darkness. Inspired by the simultaneously scientific and poetic text of Christopher Dewdney's enchanting book *Acquainted with the Night: Excursions through the world after dark*, the creation of *World After Dark* has been a rich journey - a winding road of discovery and experimentation. What has emerged is a work about reclamation.

Artistic Director, Shannon Litzberger Contemporary Dance



## Technical Considerations

*World After Dark* is an ensemble performance with 6 (six) dancers in one act running approximately 65 minutes. Minimum play space is 30'w x 25'd measured from the proscenium line to the cyc. The performance space/venue must have the ability to project a full screen image on the back wall/white cyc with black scrim US of the playing space. To include (optional) floor projections, the performance requires the use of white or grey dance floor. The sound for the performance, as well as the projected visuals, will be played through the Company's computer system (QLab), which will be operated by the Stage Manager. Ideally, the venue can supply a minimum of 20 lighting instruments, as well as at least one 5000+ lumens projector that can adequately cover the cyc. Most technical requirements are scalable and determine set up time. A full tech rider is available by contacting the company.

Images by Kevin Konnyu and Lyon Smith





## What Audiences Said

*"It was dark... stunning... epic... magical."*

*-Alex Taratine, Downtown Hyundai*

*"Both funny and profound. The performers are truly amazing..."*

*-Sylvie Bouchard, Artistic Director, Dusk Dances*

*"A fresh way to think about and experience the night...beautiful production."*

*-Paul Genest, VP, Power Corporation*

*"What an evocative work brimming with thoughtful meditations."*

*-Brendan Healy, Artistic Director, Canadian Stage*

*"Such a beautifully evocative mix of dance, theatre and poetry."*

*-Dana Lafarga, RBC*

*"Your work brought me back to the wintry dark skies in the northern part of Canada during a blackout. It was like seeing inside myself."*

*-Yvonne Ng, Artistic Director, d:mic festival*

*"It was beautifully meditative, delicate and a reminder of connections to land, resource and infinite freedom."*

*-Nyda Kwasowsky, audience member*



Video: <https://vimeo.com/800110416> Passcode: night

**More on World After Dark**

[www.worldafterdark.com](http://www.worldafterdark.com)

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## Workshops and Community Engagement

An experienced artist facilitator, Litzenberger designs and animates workshops on movement, creation, collaboration, and leadership within educational and organizational settings. She draws from her 20+ years of experience in dance, physical theatre and interdisciplinary creation to engage participants in co-creative experiences centered in embodied and experiential learning. Her workshops typically offer experiences that enhance sensory attention, expand imagination, cultivate empathy, and strengthen our ability to relate, collaborate and create things together. She has worked with all kinds of people including from high school students to corporate executives, software designers and bankers, PhD Scholars and cultural leaders.

### Focus on Community - Past Projects

#### HOMEbody - lessons in prairie living...

Find out how a group of high school students in rural Saskatchewan expressed their ideas about home and shared them with their community.

<https://vimeo.com/62999270>

#### Everyday Marvels

Who says bankers can't dance? Developed at the intersection of professional and community-based performance creation, see how an enthusiastic group of RBC employees made their professional dance debut at the Gardiner Museum during Toronto's Nuit Blanche event. <https://vimeo.com/91848325>

### Sample Workshops

**Activating Poetic Attention** - Exploring sensory attention as a strategy for leadership and well-being

**The Art of Collaboration** - How to make things together. A workshop for groups and teams.

**Introduction to Choreography** - Discover strategies and tools for making dances

**Repertoire workshop for Dance Students** - Explore contemporary dance technique and learn choreography from the show

#### The HOMEbody Symposium

Discover how *HOMEbody's* themes of identity, belonging and place became the catalyst and inspiration for a day-long symposium in New Brunswick where over 300 entrepreneurs, students, artists and industry specialists from across the province came together to exchange ideas about how to make New Brunswick a great place to call home.

<https://www.homebodysymposium.com/>

*“Connecting people and communities to opportunities for creative engagement with the world is an essential part of my role as an artist. Whether through a shared performance experience, participation in interactive experiences or through collective creation, I’m deeply invested in building connections between people through art, imagination and poetic expression.”*

- Shannon Litzenberger



## World After Dark at The Nexus Cabaret

Presented by Timea Wharton-Suri and TO Live at Nuit Blanche

World After Dark re-emerged at Nuit Blanche on October 1, 2022 with beautifully enhanced video projections and live motion tracking by Elysha Poirier. Co-presented by Timea Wharton-Suri and TO Live at Meridian Arts Centre in North York, it opened the inaugural Nexus Cabaret. The evening was hosted by Nicole Inica Hamilton and featured a diverse array of dance artists from across a spectrum of cultures and practices. Enthusiastic audience members were lined up outside the door ahead of the performance and the theatre was quickly at capacity.



### Touring Dates (2024-25)

May 31 – June 2, 2024 – Guelph Dance, Guelph, ON

November 13-16, 2024 – Northern Arts Centre  
Yellowknife, NWT

November 17-23, 2024 – ArtSpring  
Salt Spring Island, BC

*"The October 2022 presentation of World After Dark at The Nexus Cabaret charmed audience members. The event attracted a broad age-range of viewers, many of whom had little previous exposure to multidisciplinary performance work. They noted the delight of not knowing what would come next throughout the piece; the moving imagery through sound, projection, and movement combined; and, importantly, the enjoyment they felt having experienced the work."*

~ Timea Wharton-Suri, Curator

### World After Dark has been generously supported by



### Company Touring History (select)

#### Everyday Marvels

Gardiner Museum, Nuit Blanche, Toronto, ON (2013)

Riverrun Centre, Guelph Dance, Guelph, ON (2014)

Remai Modern, Saskatoon, SK (2020)

#### HOMEbody - lessons in prairie living...

Winchester Street Theatre Toronto, ON (Premiere)

Registry Theatre, Kitchener, ON (2013)

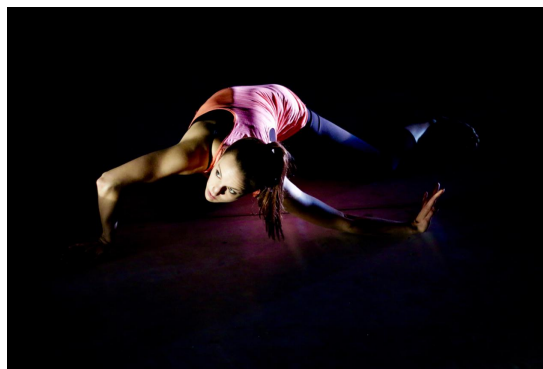
Capitol Theatre, Moncton, NB (2015)

Fredericton Playhouse, Fredericton, NB (2015)

#### The Den

Toronto Fringe Festival (Premiere)

Dance: made in Canada (2013)



Images by Ken Greenhorn and Lyon Smith



Shannon Litzberger

Contemporary Dance

#### Contact

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## Creative Team Biographies



**Elysha Poirier (Projection and Interactive Video Design)** is a multidisciplinary artist working with animation, film and video. Combining digital and analog techniques she creates intrinsic worlds that dabble between 2D animation, mixed media and 3D environments. Based in Tiohtiá:ke/Montréal, Elysha is currently experimenting with generative platforms for virtual and mixed reality, including experimental web design. Elysha's realized a wide range of installations and engaged in live performances for dance, experimental music, film, theatre and web.



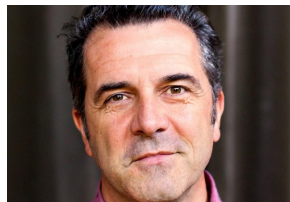
**Ken MacKenzie (Lighting and Set Design)** has been a freelance designer and educator for the past 15 years. Ken's award-winning set, lighting, costume, and video designs have appeared on stages across Canada, the United States and Europe. Ken has won multiple Dora Mavor Moore Awards and has been nominated for awards across Canada. Since 2017 Ken has been the president of the Associated Designers of Canada and has been one of the founding members of IATSE local ADC659. Since the fall of 2021, Ken has begun a faculty position at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon teaching in the department of Drama.



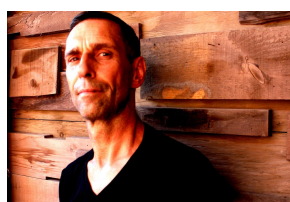
Composer, sound designer, musician and instrument maker **John Gzowski (Sound Designer)** worked on over 200 theatre, dance and film productions for which he has done composition, sound design, live Foley, live music and as musical director. He has played banjo for opera in Banff, studied Carnatic classical music in India and played oud and guitar in jazz and folk festivals across Canada and Europe. His theatre work has won him 6 Dora's, from 18 nominations for companies like Stratford, Shaw Festival, Luminato, National Arts Centre, the Mirvishes, MTC, the Arts Club, Canstage, Soulpepper, Dancemakers, Red Sky, Tarragon, Factory Theatre and YPT.



**Alexandra Lord (Costume Design)** trained in the bilingual set and costume design program at The National Theatre School of Canada and was mentored by designer Lorenzo Savoini in the Soulpepper Theatre Company Academy. Alexandra strives to create from a place that takes into consideration human relationships with ourselves and others within diverse environments. She is particularly drawn to collaborative projects that demand a discourse that transcends difference, engaging in the liminal space of gender, race, and socio-economic definitions.  
[www.alexandralord.com](http://www.alexandralord.com).



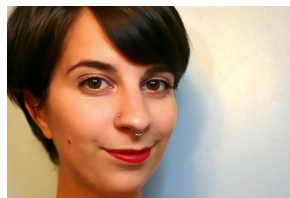
**Guillermo Verdecchia (Writer/Dramaturg)** Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and educated in Ontario. RESIDENT ARTIST, SOULPEPPER 2017: *Animal Farm*; *Of Human Bondage* (Toronto, New York). FOR SOULPEPPER: *Blood Wedding* (translator, 2016); *Fronteras Americanas* (2011); *The Barber of Seville* (dramaturge, 2013); *Of Human Bondage* (dramaturge, 2014). OTHER THEATRE: *Line in the Sand* (Factory Theatre); *The Art of Building a Bunker* (Revolver Fest, Vancouver). OTHER: Soulpepper Academy Head of Playwriting; Curator for Summerworks Festival 2016.



**Gerry Trentham (Creative Advisor)** is Artistic Director of *lbs/sq* "performance" now in its 27th year. He has written, choreographed and directed over 40 works for the stage including the Dora nominated *Four Mad Humours* (2011), the *Art of Peace: Invitation & Arrival* (2016/2021), *The Apology Project* (2017) and *Trees* (2018). Recent film awards included international acclaim for his work *Monument* (2021). Over three decades he has been internationally acclaimed with rave reviews and in Toronto has received eight Dora Mavor Moore nominations or awards most recently as a cast and voice director of Denise Fujiwara's hit *EUNOIA*.



A multi-faceted artist, **Marie-Josée Chartier (Creative Advisor)** moves easily between the worlds of dance, music, opera, and multi-media in her roles as choreographer, performer, director, vocalist, or teacher. Her choreographic works have been presented in festivals in Canada, Europe, and Latin America and have been featured on documentary films and national television. She is the recipient of the 2015 Jacqueline Lemieux Prize and the 2001 K.M. Hunter Artist Award. She has been nominated nine times for Dora Mavor Moore Awards, having won twice, for *fifty-one pieces of silver* and with the Collective Urge for *And By the Way, Miss*.  
[www.mariejoseechartier.com](http://www.mariejoseechartier.com) [www.chartierdanse.com](http://www.chartierdanse.com)



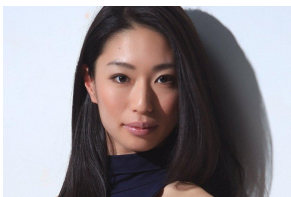
**Laura Cournoyea (Stage Manager)** is a Toronto-based arts manager and administrator. Some credits include: tiger princess dance projects & dance:made in canada, adelheid, Michael Caldwell, Tribal Crackling Wind, Fujiwara Dance Inventions, Dreamwalker Dance Company, Toronto Dance Theatre, Dusk Dances, Ontario Dances, Lucy Rupert, and CanAsian. Laura is currently back at school, working toward a degree in Social Work.



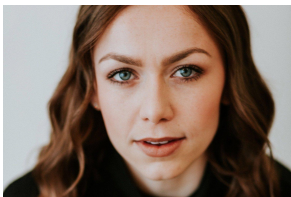
Born and raised in Saskatchewan, **Linnea Swan (performer)** has had a long and colourful career that has seen her call Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, and now Calgary home. For over twenty years she has had the pleasure of working and collaborating with many of Canada's esteemed dance / theatre companies and artists including Serge Benethan, Susie Burpee, Dancemakers, and David Danzon among others. Her extensive performance career has been recognized with multiple Dora Mavor Moore Award nominations - receiving the 2013 Award for Outstanding Performance, as well as the K.M. Hunter Artist Award in Dance. Linnea is Associate Artist with Dancers' Studio West.



**Michael Mortley (performer)** graduated from the University of Trinidad and Tobago in 2015. Since arriving in Canada in 2018, he has worked with companies such as KasheDance (Re:Imagining TPM), wind in the leaves collective (Searching for Eastman), Ronald Taylor Dance (Psychosis, Rendezvous with Madness Festival), Dusk Dances, NAFRO Dance (Moving Inspirations Dance Festival), Shannon Litzenberger Contemporary Dance, and Fujiwara Dance Inventions, among others. Michael is also a photographer, arts marketer and administrator.



Born in Hiroshima, Japan, **Yui Ugai (performer)** holds a BFA in honours and an MFA in Dance from York University in Toronto. She has danced and toured with York Dance Ensemble, Limitless Productions, Parahumans, The Little Pear Garden Dance Company, wind in the leaves collective, Ballet Creole, Kashe Dance Company, Anima Inc. (Mexico/Peru) in Japan, Taiwan, Jamaica, The United States and England. Yui also focuses on community engagement through dancing. She has performed Arts in the Parks with Ballet Creole and Porch View Dances with Kaeja d'Dance.



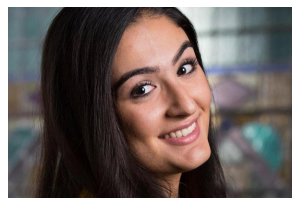
**Lindsay Harpham (understudy)** is a dancer, dance educator, choreographer, and adjudicator. She has worked with companies such as Red Sky Performance, Larchaud Dance Project, Gaffly, ACE Dance Theatre, Nimii Project, Hit and Run Productions, Remai Modern, and RSD performance. As a dancer, she has toured throughout Canada, the United States, Europe, and Australia, notably at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Australia Joint Dance Congress, with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and at CINARS. As a creator, Lindsay has choreographed and directed dance films entitled *Synonymous Red*, *Bones*, *SHH*, and most recently *Behind Us* which was screened at Remai Modern's *LUGO*.



**Louis Laberge-Côté (performer)** is a Toronto-based dancer, choreographer, teacher, and rehearsal director. An acclaimed performer, he has danced with over thirty companies and has been a full-time member of Toronto Dance Theatre (1999-2007) and the Kevin O'Day Ballett Nationaltheater Mannheim (2009-2011). His work has garnered him a Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding Choreography, as well as ten other individual and ensemble nominations for Performance or Choreography. A sought-after pedagogue, he is Assistant Professor of Dance at Toronto Metropolitan University. He holds an MFA in Creative Practice from the University of Plymouth (UK).



Originally from Montreal, **Kathia Wittenborn (performer)** is a Toronto based dance artist and certified Barre, Pilates and Yoga movement teacher. Kathia has trained, created and performed throughout North America and Europe; collaborating with many critically acclaimed artists and companies including Amanda Acorn, Sylvain Émard, Aria Evans, Marie Lambin Gagnon, Jane Alison Mckinney, Sharon B. Moore, Yvonne Ng, Sashar Zariff Dance Theatre, JD Dance and Tribal Crackling Wind (Peter Chin). Her work in Chin's Woven received a Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding Performance (ensemble).



**Aryana Malekzadeh (performer)** is a Toronto based dancer, teacher, choreographer and performing artist. She is a graduate of The School of Toronto Dance Theatre, and York University's Dance BFA program, where she was awarded numerous scholarships for her excellent work ethic. Aryana has worked with many renowned choreographers such as David Norsworthy, Peggy Baker, Roberto Campanella, Syreeta Hector, and Christopher House. Throughout her career, Aryana has been performing professionally in works such as Emily Cheung's, "Spectrum of Connection" at Dance Ontario DanceWeekend, Charles Moulton's, "72-Person Ball Passing" at the Fall For Dance North festival.



**Nikolaos Markakis (Rehearsal Director)** was first introduced to dance at the Cretan Association of Toronto, where he studied Cretan Folkloric dance. He followed his passion of movement to York University where he completed his BFA in 2013. Post his undergraduate degree, he has performed and choreographed with Half Second Echo and performed for: Susie Burpee, Valerie Calam, Marie-Josée Chartier, Alison Daley, David Earl, Hanna Keil, Shannon Litzenberger, Tracey Norman and Peter Randazzo. Recently Nikolaos completed his MFA at York University where he researched the possibility of hybrid choreography between Cretan Folkloric and Contemporary dance practices.