



Funded by an Undergraduate Research Grant  
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Department of Theatre & Dance

# le poème | La Danseuse

Karen Fleming

Faculty Mentor: Anne Van Gelder  
Design Mentors: Johann Stegmeir, Heather Hogg, Maja E. White

## Conceptual Development

- Inspired by Hilda Doolittle's poem "The Dancer" (1935), modern dance pioneer Isadora Duncan, and the male poets whose oppressive gaze they sought to overcome
- Analyzed representations of female dancers in modernist poetry for English Honors Thesis
- Expanded on Thesis research by looking at more archival images/videos of Duncan
- Exploring differences between historic depictions of the female dancer and the identity she crafts for herself in the modern era



Photos from New York Public Library, Jerome Robbins Dance Division

## Film Creation

- Plan to create a hybrid, half-film/half-stage dance arose partially from COVID-19 concerns, but the film component creates a sense of distance or removal while emphasizing that the image of the dancer on screen is a projection (not real)



- Collaborated with film student Megan Salters
- Filmed at Maymont Park in October 2020 with two cameras to capture many different angles



Photos by Karen Fleming

- Final film was crucial in studio rehearsals to sync live and recorded movement

## Design Elements

### Costume Design

- Design for film costume derived from Duncan's Greek-inspired costumes
- Adapted pre-existing costume by dyeing it pink with purple ombre on underskirt and ribbons



Photo by Karen Fleming



Photo by Karen Fleming

- Design for stage costume developed to create the image of a modern woman
- Dyed fabric a dark pink, constructed top and shorts by hand



Photo by Anne Van Gelder

### Lighting Design

- Collaborated with student designer India Henderson
- Leaf gobos to add texture to stage during first section
- Bright lighting during second section to show strength

### Set/Projection Design

- Collaborated with Phil Hayes and Josafath Reynoso to develop ideas for dropping hanging fabric
- Collaborated with Robby Williams on projection design



Photo by Karen Fleming

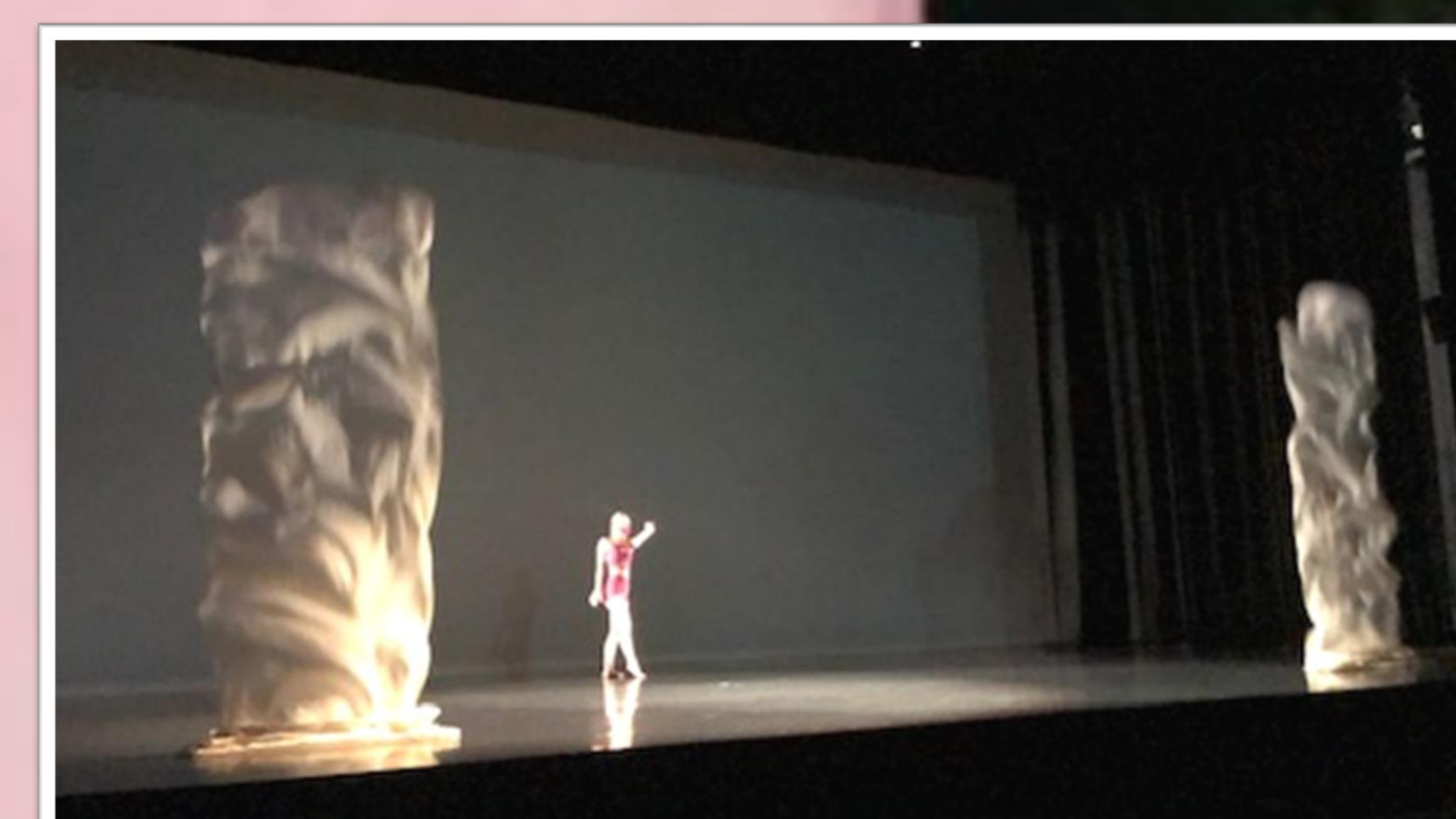


Photo by Robby Williams

## Performance

- *le poème | La Danseuse* was filmed on February 24, 2021 in the Alice Jepson Theatre and premiered virtually as a part of TIME | IN | SPACE, University Dancers 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Concert, on March 19, 2021
- Performance streamed for one week



Photos by David Van Gelder

