ARTS

"For me, the cinema is not a slice of life, but a piece of cake."
ALFRED HITCHCOCK DIRECTOR

Yale Ballet to stage 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' adaptation

BY MELISSA ADAMANTIDI
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

The Yale Ballet Company will collaborate with the Yale Undergraduate Chamber Orchestra to stage William Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in The Dome at the Schwarzman Center on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Set to Felix Mendelssohn's score, the ballet reimagines Shakespeare's tangle of lovers — Hermia and Lysander, Helena and Demetrius — as they stumble through an enchanted forest ruled by the Fairy King Oberon and Queen Titania. Oberon's servant Puck ensures that chaos reigns through misplaced affection and magical mischief.

"When interpreting this play for a ballet we wanted to keep as many story beats as possible while also adapting the story into dance and what works for our company," Valeria Peña '28, the co-artistic director and choreographer for the show, said. "We decided to streamline the story due to our company's size limit. This meant cutting out the play within a play and focusing solely on the two pairs of lovers."

In this version, Bottom, portrayed by Yala Feikin '28, is reimagined as a townsperson who accidentally wanders into the forest and is transformed into a donkey rather than a member of an acting troupe. The production stars Nathan Burns '28 as Oberon, Camille Chiu '26 as Titania, Olivia Rosato '29 as Hermia, Anaum Showkat as Helena, Peña as Puck, Zach Jarvis '28 as Lysander and Gryffin Wilkens-Plumley '26 as Demetrius.

Mendelssohn's score will be performed live by the Yale Undergraduate Chamber Orchestra under the direction of Tommaso Bailo '27, providing the emotional backbone for the piece. Peña explained that the company structured the choreography around the music's natural rise and fall, using grand triumphant passages for moments of joy and slower melancholic themes for scenes of rejection and confusion.

"The lovers' choreography shows a lot of hugs, hand holding and longing gazes to show the audience that they're in love," Peña said. "For the comedic elements we added exaggerated and silly movements that made the dancers laugh, and when the dancers are having fun the audience feels it too."

Co-artistic Director Burns said that balancing creative visions was one of the production's main challenges.

"Sometimes Valeria wanted something to go one way, and I was thinking of taking a different approach," Burns said. "But walking and talking through each idea as it came up was the best approach. We'd decide on the overarching theme and divide up the choreography from there."

Burns, who also performs as Oberon, described the ballet's tone as "drama touched with a hint of humor, like a Disney film that entices a chuckle."

The production's technical design also adapts to The Dome's distinctive layout. With audience seating arranged in a semicircle around the stage, the company is foregoing sets and most props, relying instead on costumes and lighting to create atmosphere. Peña credited Frida Lopez '28, the costume designer, and Kiara Warren '28, the lighting designer, with helping to bring the magic of the forest to life.

Wilkens-Plumley, who portrays Demetrius, noted that the show represents a new era of collaboration within the company.

"This year is much more of a team effort with co-presidents co-artistic directors and a full board sharing the load," Wilkens-Plumley wrote in an email. "We are here for scholar-artists; we want you to partake as little or as much as you like, all the way from just attending company class to choreographing a story ballet in your second year!"

The production is supported by the Creative and Performing Arts awards, which are administered by the Council of Heads of College. The Creative and Performing Arts residency offers student artists the chance to bring ambitious projects to life in the Schwarzman Center Dome.

Peña said the most rewarding part of organizing the production has been watching her dancers' work come alive.

Performances are free and open to the public with registration.

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Movement to open fall show based on TV series

BY KIVA BANK AND BRETT PENK
STAFF AND CONTRIBUTING REPORTERS

"We got that drip!" the dancers shouted from their starting positions on the stage of the Off Broadway Theater, ready to begin their rehearsal on Monday night. The theater filled with energetic beats as Movement, a K-pop and open-style dance group at Yale, prepared for its semester debut Thursday night.

"It's more than dancing, it's a performance," Movement member Eniola Ajanaku '29 said. "It's art."

The showcase will consist of four performances, at 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. on Thursday and Saturday. The group announced its theme of competitive reality television shows in an Instagram post last week.

The showcase centers around survival shows — reality series in which trainees compete for a spot in a K-pop group — Irene Zheng '27, one of Movement's presidents, said. Viewers or judges eliminate contestants each week until a new group is selected to debut.

The showcase is inspired by one survival show in particular, "The Debut: Dream Academy," a 2023 reality series where the girl group KATSEYE originated.

The performance will also be the debut of Movement's new members. According to Zheng, the group recruited 10 new members this fall.

She said that many new members saw Yale Movement perform at Dance Jam back in August, a showcase of multiple dance organizations that generated interest in auditioning for the group.

"We're very excited for the young energy. They're all very, very excited to be on stage, to be in this space for the first time," Zheng said.

According to Zheng, the group is hoping to make the show visually immersive through a variety of mediums.

Zheng said the performance will include video skits in between each dance that have an overarching plot that follows the theme of the showcase as four idols will compete for their debut. The short comedic clips on an LED background will also allow time for dancers to complete quick changes.

"Movement is really pushing boundaries with how this space can be utilized," she said. "I think we're one of the only dance groups that actively uses the LED back wall for our background videos, and we also do in-house, very intricate lighting design."

Zheng said that Movement is also distinguished by their cue calls — phrases they shout at the beginning of each routine to signal to the technical booth they are ready to start.

She explained the presidents will make an announcement before the showcase begins to practice with the audience and help them prepare for the crowdwork that will occur throughout the performance.

Beyond choreography and months of rehearsal, members said the group also provides a space for community and growth. They said the strong sense of community helps spread K-pop culture across the entire Yale campus.

Haeun Rho '28, a member of the group tapped last spring, said, "I think it's very nice how people who love K-pop at Yale University got together and get to enjoy this season together."

Ajanaku said, "It's just a way for us to escape, and kind of just pull out all the stress after all the hard academics especially at a school like this."

The address of the Off-Broadway Theater is 41 Broadway.

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Rhythmic Blue asks 'whodunit?' in fall showcase with detective plot

BY KIVA BANK
STAFF REPORTER

A mystery is in the chilly autumn air and Yale's hip hop group Rhythmic Blue may be the only detectives able to solve the case. Their mascot, RBertha, has long been out of the limelight, and her brief return to the dance group was cut short by her suspicious disappearance at their fall showcase Wednesday night.

The showcase — titled "RB Who DunnIt" — opened Wednesday in the Off Broadway Theater to an enthusiastic crowd that cheered at every killer twist, turn and pop-and-lock. The overarching murder mystery theme of the 80-minute show was inspired by the vision of artistic director Tyler Ou '28 to incorporate the color red into a "dramatic" and "cryptic" plot.

"I wanted to include acting to give the show a little bit more cohesion, but still maintain our identity as a fun, crowdwork-driven show," Ou said.

Throughout the night, emcees Genesis Browne '26 and Gabriellie Cabral-Genito '28 led the audience through energetic skits as they performed the role of detectives to discover which dancer kidnapped the group's beloved mouse.

Ou said it is a "little known fact" that Rhythmic Blue has a mascot, and he wanted to "reintroduce" RBertha with this theme while also including skits during the traditional emcee breaks.

Tori Browne '27, one of the group's executive presidents, said that in past showcases, the theme has not been incorporated into the performance besides the program and the promotional photo shoot.

"I think that keeping the theme in the show itself through emcee breaks makes it a lot more worthwhile, especially for the artistic director who put a lot of thought into why the theme is what it is," Browne said. "I hope we are able to choose themes in the future that will allow us to integrate it a lot more into the show."

The theme was also presented in the photoshoot on Rhythmic Blue's Instagram page last week to promote the fall showcase. Richelle Chang '28, the group's publicity chair, said working on the theme was a "collaborative process" between all board members.

"With this theme, it makes sense that there's a plot," Chang said.

Ou said that the change to have a specific script for the emcee breaks was within the group's "comfort zone" because many members have experience with acting.

Ou, who is also publicity co-chair for Yaledancers, said the use of red in both groups' November showcase themes was a coincidence.

Rhythmic Blue's traditions include an introductory video clip at the beginning of the show and a behind-the-scenes video during intermission.

The newly tapped members also customarily start the show following the group opener. This year, the six "RBabies" performed their piece called "Innit," a mashup of "WNA" by Sdot Go and "WHIM WHAMMIE" by PLUTO and YKNIECE.

"For the audience, it's a really good way to see our new talent and cheer for them," Browne said. "I also think for the babies themselves, it's really cute to know that they are highlighted at the beginning of the show, when a lot of people's attention is at its peak."

The group also deviated from some of its traditions in this fall showcase. Typically, the showcase features around 20 pieces, and this year there are only 15 works, including the group opener and closer, choreographed by members.

Ou explained that there was more interest this year in signing up for multiple shorter, interlude group pieces rather than solos and duets.

According to Ou, Nneka Moweta '27 incorporated an original music video into the beginning of her piece, something that has never been done before in a Rhythmic Blue performance. The video showed some dancers lip-syncing in a classroom before they came out onstage to dance to the rest of the song "Sticky" by Tyler the Creator.

Moweta and Christian Daniels '27, the two dance captains, both "made it a point" to incorporate various other styles influenced by African American culture into the group's choreography, Ou said. This included dance hall, krumping, waacking and voguing in addition to typical hip-hop fundamentals performed by the group.

Chang said most of the shows sold out instantly, but she encouraged people who are interested in seeing the group perform to join the waitlist.

"I'm excited for you guys to figure out whodunit," Ou said.

In addition to two performances on Wednesday evening, Rhythmic Blue will perform Friday at 6 p.m and 9 p.m.

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UPCOMING ARTS EVENTS

Performing Arts

Theater
"Lost and Found: A Mosaic of Plays" at Nick Chapel Theater, Nov. 15 at 7 p.m., free tickets
"Urinetown" at University Theater, Nov. 19-22 at 8 p.m., paid tickets

Dance
"The Debut" by Yale Movement at the Off-Broadway Theater, Nov. 15 at 6 & 9 p.m., free tickets
"Fame" by Yale Modern Dance Collective at Crescent Underground, Nov. 14 at 8 p.m., free tickets
"Winter Ball" by Yale Ballroom Dance Team in JE Dining Hall, Nov. 15 at 9 p.m., free tickets
"Sabor en Nuestra Sangre" by Sabrosura at Off-Broadway Theater, Nov. 18 at 6 & 9 p.m., Nov. 20 at 6 p.m. and Nov. 21 at 9 p.m., tickets not yet available

Performances
"Fridays @ Five" at The Ballroom, Nov. 14 at 5 p.m., no tickets required
Shades of Yale Fall Jam at 53 Wall Street, Nov. 14 at 6 p.m., free tickets
Pitches & Tones Fall Jam at Sudler Hall, Nov. 15 at 7 p.m., free tickets
Yale Dabke Fall Showcase at Crescent Underground, Nov. 15 at 7:30 p.m.
"Bittersweet" ¡Oye! Fall Showcase in Stiles Common Room, Nov. 16 at 7 p.m., free tickets

Comedy
Standup Comedy Showcase by the students of CSTD 2300 at Hopper Cabaret, Nov. 14 at 7 p.m., free tickets

Yale School of Music
"Siddhartha, She" by the Yale Philharmonia, YSM faculty artists and Yale Choral Artists with the Yale Opera, Yale Glee Club, and Yale Voxtet in Woolsey Hall, Nov. 15 at 7:30 p.m., paid tickets & free student tickets
Violin by Kyung Yu in Morse Recital Hall, Nov. 16 at 3 p.m., no tickets needed
Yale Repertory Chorus Recital in Battell Chapel, Nov. 17 at 5 p.m., no tickets needed
Cello by Austin Fisher in Sudler Recital Hall, Nov. 17 at 7:30 p.m., no tickets needed
Soprano Laura Miah Ramos Salinas in Morse Recital Hall, Nov. 17 at 7:30 p.m., no tickets needed
Percussion by Andy Akiho ft. Imani Winds in Morse Recital Hall, Nov. 18 at 7:30 p.m., no tickets needed
Lunchtime Chamber Music in More Recital Hall, Nov. 19 at 12:30 p.m., no tickets needed
"Songs from the Imagination: Music Inspired by the Poetry of William Blake" by Yale Voxtet at the YCBA, Nov. 20 at 5 p.m., no tickets needed

Schwarzman Center
"Magic for Animals" by Liza Toonkel, Nov. 14 at 7:30 p.m., free tickets
"A Midsummer Night's Dream" ballet, Nov. 14 at 6 p.m. and Nov. 15 at 7:30 p.m., free tickets
"EveryBody Dances" with Yasmine Lee, Nov. 16 at 11 a.m., free tickets

Galleries & Exhibitions

Yale University Art Gallery
"Nusantara: Six Centuries of Indonesian Textiles" exhibit on display until Jan. 11
Hans Hofmann exhibition on display until June 28, 2026
"Keeping Alive the Remembrance" exhibition on display until Oct. 11, 2026

Yale Center for British Art
"William Blake: Burning Bright" exhibit on display until Nov. 30
"Hew Locke: Passages" exhibit on display until Jan. 11 2026

Schwarzman Center
"RUSUNUNGUKO" on display in The Dome Gallery until June 28, 2026

Yale School of Architecture
"Maintaining Impermanence" exhibit on display until Nov. 15

Lewis Walpole Library
"Caricatures, Campagna, and Connoisseurs" exhibit on display until Dec. 23

Yale School of Art
"Kitchen Sink" first year MFA showcase on display until Nov. 25

Film & Literature

Public Screenings
"Touch of Evil" screening in HQ, Nov. 14 at 7 p.m., no tickets needed
"The Secret Agent" advanced screening at 53 Wall St., Nov. 15 at 7 p.m., no tickets needed
"We Shall Not Be Moved" screening in HQ, Nov. 16 at 11 a.m., no tickets needed
"The Lady Eve" screening in HQ, Nov. 20 at 7 p.m., no tickets needed
"Wicked For Good" advanced screening in HQ, Nov. 18 at 7:30 p.m., free tickets

Beinecke Library
"Unfolding Events" on display until March 1, 2026
"Textured Stories" on display until March 3, 2026