

# CURRICULUM VITAE

## Matthew Thornton

Movement Artist / Choreographer / Educator

Artistic Director, Agua Dulce Dance Theater

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## EDUCATION

2017 **Virginia Commonwealth University** M.F.A. in Movement Pedagogy

1996 **University of Wisconsin, Madison** B.A. in English Literature

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2017-2020 **Richmond Waldorf School**, Movement Arts Teacher. Designing and implementing a program that includes games, sport, dance and theatre for grades 1 through 8.

2011-2017 **University of Richmond**, Assistant Professor of Dance. Teaching Dynamic Partnering, Contact Improvisation, Repertory, Capoeira Angola, Chi-Gung. Faculty Mentor/Choreographer, University Dancers. Choreographer, Theatre Productions

2009-2011 **Hope College**, Assistant Professor of Dance. Teaching all levels of Modern Technique, Improvisation, Capoeira, Repertory, and Non-Traditional Partnering. Mentoring and organizing student dance concerts. Choreographer

2008-2012 **Pilobolus Dance Theater**, Master Teacher of the Pilobolus Method, Summer Intensives, workshops while touring the U.S. and internationally. Helped create and codify Pilobolus Method, Technique, Advanced Technique and Corporate Leadership classes, instruct in audition process

2005-2008 **Hope College, MI** - Dance Dept. Visiting Lecturer, Instructor of Partnering, Capoeira, Composition, Contact Improvisation and Organic Movement, Modern, Choreography

2006-2007 **M.S. 118 Bronx/Pilobolus Dance Co.**, Pilobolus Method, helped create and run first long-term, in-school program in NYC

1994-2008 **Shaker Heights High School**, OH - Theatre Dept., Ensemble Program, Guest Artist - Physical Theatre Instructor/Choreographer

2002-2008 **Hathaway Brown School for Girls**, OH - Dance Dept., Guest Artist - Instructor/Choreographer

- 1999-2002     **Capoeira Angola Palmares** - Instructor and Assistant Instructor under Mestre Ombrinho of Afro-Brazil Arts. Taught in the following:  
*New York University, Sarah Lawrence College, The UN School, Sports and Arts in School P.S. 139 After School Program (Brooklyn, NY) Capoeira Angola Palmares Center, New York and New Jersey public schools*
- 1998/1999     **Baldwin Wallace College/Upward Bound**, OH - English Teacher summer enrichment program for Cleveland high school students

## **TEACHING INTENSIVES / MASTER CLASSES**

**North Carolina State University** - Capoeira Master Class / Partnering Master Class / Set *algum dia . . . some day* on Panoramic Dance Company - September 5-7, 2014

**Virginia Commonwealth University** - Department of Dance and Choreography.  
 Capoeira Master Class—February 8, 2013

**The Pilobolus Workshops, Level II and III** –Washington Depot, CT, week long intensives  
 August, 2012 and August, 2011, guest Master Teacher

**Studies in Contemporary Dance with Agua Dulce Dance Theater—May Term**, Hope College  
 May 7-25, 2012. Contemporary Technique, Capoeira, and Non-traditional Partnering

**Virginia Commonwealth University**, Department of Dance and Choreography.  
 Master Class on Partnering Technique, 2012, 2011

**Kansas State University**, Artist in Residence workshops and choreography, Dance and Theatre Departments. 2007

**Safmod**, Cleveland Dance Co. - Guest Artist, Organic Movement and Partnering, 2006

**Andanza: Compania Puertorriquena de Danza Contemporanea**, Puerto Rico - Company  
 Classes in Organic Movement and Partnering, 2004

## **FESTIVALS / CONFERENCES / SYMPOSIA**

2017                     **Fiesta de la Lengua / English Week 2017**, Universidad del Turabo.  
 Presenting an evening of work, installed at the Museum of the  
 Universidad del Turabo.

2016                     **Diasporic Body Grammar**, Princeton University.

- 2015 **2nd Annual Richmond Dance Festival - Collaborate**, Agua Dulce Dance Theater, premiere of *one head, many hats*, and *requinto*, adaptation of *algun dia . . . some day*, Film, *down by the riverside, i remember you*
- 2015 **American College Dance Association** - Towson University  
UR Faculty Representative / Master Classes in Capoeira and Dynamic Partnering / *turn and turn*, Adjudicated Concert / *dust* and *down by the riverside, i remember you*, Dance on Camera Program
- 2014 **American College Dance Festival** – George Mason University.  
Master Class in Capoeira/Master Class in Partnering Technique
- 2014, 2013 **Virginia Dance Symposium** – Faculty Representative for U of R, Virginia  
pre-college dance symposium, Capoeira Master Class
- 2012 **American College Dance Festival**, James Madison University  
Presented *La Orilla/The Shore*
- 2011 **2011 Dance Films @ The Flea Festival**, New York City. Screening of  
“The Seed and The Gardener”—collaboration between Agua Dulce Dance Theater and video artist KimSu Theiler
- 2011 **American College Dance Festival**, University of Akron, OH. Teaching  
Capoeira, Non-Traditional Partnering classes, Dynamic Group Movement.
- 2010 **American College Dance Festival**, Ohio University, Athens Ohio.  
Teaching Non Traditional Partnering, Capoeira. Presented Dance on Film  
*the seed and the gardener*
- 2009 **Michigan Dance Festival**, Hope College, MI. Taught Capoeira and Non-  
Traditional Partnering classes.
- Ohio Dance Festival**, Ohio University, Athens, OH. Contemporary Dance  
master class.
- American College Dance Festival**, University of Akron, OH. Taught  
Capoeira and Non-Traditional Partnering classes
- 2008 **New York Dance Parade, NYC** Agua Dulce Dance  
Theater’s performance of “Grain of Sand”
- Blue Curtain Music and Dance Summer Series** at Pettoranello Gardens  
in Princeton, New Jersey. Agua Dulce Dance Theater presented a full  
evening concert.
- 2006 **Jacob’s Pillow Inside Out Series**, MA. Agua Dulce Dance Theater  
performed “La orilla/The Shore” as artists of Pepatián, directed by Jane  
Gabriels

**Dance in America Series**, curated and produced by Vissi Dance Theater, NYC. Agua Dulce Dance Theater, “La Orilla / The Shore”

2005-2003 **Festival Internacional Danz’Aquí**, Puerto Rico. Participated as teacher, choreographer and dancer

### **Artistic Director**

2006 - Present **Agua Dulce Dance Theater**, Co-founded and directed with Alicia Diaz. Teaching/performing across the U.S., Puerto Rico and Mexico

2009-2010 **dANCEpROjECT**, Co-director with Steven Iannacone and Alicia Diaz, Hope College affiliated contemporary dance company

### **CHOREOGRAPHY**

#### **changing course, the body as vessel (2016)**

University of Richmond Museums

#### **turn and turn (2015)**

University Dancers concert **@30**. Modlin Center for the Arts, Alice Jepson Theatre

#### **down by the riverside, i remember you (2014)**

Dance on camera, directed by Alicia Diaz

#### **one head, many hats (2014)**

Solo, Pregones Theater, Bronx, NY

#### **Traveling (2014)**

Co-Choreographed with Alicia Díaz. Modlin Center for the Arts, Alice Jepson Theatre

#### **passing through (2013)**

Director, co-choreographer and performer. Shared evening with **eighth blackbird’s** new theatrical work, *Columbine’s Paradise*. Alice Jepson Theatre, the Modlin Center for the Arts.

#### **moving sculpture duet - RVA Street Art Festival (2013)**

site-specific movement installations GRTC bus depot, Richmond, VA

#### **Hunts Point Homes (May 20, 2013)**

Co-choreographer, site-specific, multi-disciplinary project based at BAAD! (Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance)

#### ***Dust, Standing Devi, Blacksmith’s Shed (June 2012)***

Three dance/video pieces produced at the 2012 Art Farm residency at Yellow Barn Workshops, Ravenna, Ohio. <https://vimeo.com/channels/aguadulcedancetheater>

**algún día... (some day) (May 19, 2012)**

Co-choreographed with Alicia Díaz. “Urban Conversations: City as Choreographer” curated by Jane Gabriels Danspace Project, St. Mark’s Church

**Conjuring the Wind (May, 2011)**

Trip the Light: Ephemeral at the Wealthy Theatre in Grand Rapids, MI.

**Shifting Mandala (2011)**

Hope College Faculty Dance Concert

**Untitled at Tompkins Square Park (2010)**

Site-specific, Tompkins Square Park, New York Dance Parade

**Two Evenings of Dance at The Old Grand Rapids Public Museum (2010)**

Site-specific, exhibit opening, “Michigan—Land of Riches: Re-Examining the Old Grand Rapids Public Museum”

**Into the Night (2010)**

Co-choreographed with Alicia Díaz in collaboration with Hope College students for the Dance 36 Faculty Concert.

**Grain of Sand: A Dance for the Camera Project (2009)**

Co-choreographed with Alicia Díaz, filmed by Alison Dobbins

**DANCE VIDEO: the seed and the gardener (2009)**

Co-choreographed with Alicia Díaz. Video by Kim Su Theiler

**Yucuninu (Site-Specific Film) (2008)**

Filmed by Alison Dobbins, in collaboration with Alicia Díaz.

**Grain of Sand (site specific version) (2008)**

2008 New York Dance Parade in Thompkins Square Park in NYC

**Prairie Dance (2007)**

Co-choreographed with Alicia Díaz in collaboration with the cast. Created for the Kansas State University Faculty Concert

**Spirits Crossing Over Water (2007)**

Co-choreographed with Alicia Díaz in collaboration with the cast. Created for The Moving Company of the Hathaway Brown School

**Mar Adentro (The Sea Within) (2005)**

In collaboration with Alicia Diaz and Marion Ramírez and percussionist Sebastián Guerrero. First Weekends Series at the Brooklyn Arts Exchange (BAX)

**House of Dreams (2005)**

Co-choreographed with Alicia Diaz, Hope College Faculty Concert Dance 31

### **PILOBOLUS Collaborations**

These pieces were created while working with **Pilobolus**.

**Night of the Dark Moon (2004)** Artistic Director Allison Chase

**Aquatica (2004)** Artistic Director Michael Tracy

**Megawatt (2003)** Artistic Director Jonathon Wolken

### **Learning Hot to Walk, Learning Hot to Fly (2002)**

Solo commissioned by Contemporary Motions

### **La Orilla (The Shore) (2002)**

Co-choreographed with Alicia Diaz, commissioned by Contemporary Motions. Winter 2002 Union St. Dance Space Grant, Artist in Residence, Capoeira Angola Palmares Center

### **One Day on the F (2001)**

Video Collaboration, F subway in Brooklyn, NY. Filmed by Brian Kantrowitz

### **Spring Ensemble Show**

Shaker Acting Ensemble in Shaker Heights Ohio, Spring Ensemble Show

**Grain of Sand (2006)**

**Begging Bowl (2003)**

**Djorelen (Anguished Songbird) (2002)**

**Salamander Dreams (1998)**

**Workshop Piece (1997)**

### **The Deer / I Leap (1993)**

Solo, Hamilton College Faculty Dance Concert

## **CHOREOGRAPHY FOR THEATRE PRODUCTIONS**

**WARM (JC Gonzalez) 2019**, workshop of a new pop/rock opera, Firehouse Theatre, Richmond, VA. Movement Director. Staging by Joel Bassin

**Locked and Loaded/A Story in Parts and Pieces, 2017**, original work Produced by the Conciliation Project in association with TheatreLab, Richmond, VA. Choreographer, Directed by Tawnya Pettiford-Wates

**Threshold (Oladipo Agboluaje) World Premiere. 2014**, University of Richmond  
Choreography by Matthew Thornton and LaShaunda Craddock, directed by Chuck Mike

**Spring Awakening (Steven Sater/Duncan Sheik) 2013**, University of Richmond.  
Choreographer, directed by Dorothy Holland

**blu (Virginia Grise) 2012**, University of Richmond

Movement consultant for the play, directed by Jose Joaquin Garcia with Patricia Herrera,  
Choreography by Alicia Diaz

**Trojan Women: A Love Story (Charles Mee) 2011** University of Richmond,  
Choreographer, Directed Dorothy Holland

**Children of Eden (Stephen Schwartz) 2011** – Hope Summer Repertory Theater - Holland, MI.  
Choreographer, Directed by David Colacci.

## **PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE**

### DANCE COMPANIES AND CHOREOGRAPHERS

- 2006-Present **Agua Dulce Dance Theater** – Performing in Mexico, Puerto Rico,  
New York, New Jersey, Michigan, Ohio, Connecticut, Virginia.
- 2016 **Aura CuriAtlas Physical Theatre – *A Life With No Limits*** – Firehouse Theatre,  
Richmond VA
- 2014-2016 **Maida Withers Dance Construction Company-*Mindfluctuations*** The John F.  
Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Theatre Lab, Lisner Auditorium,  
***Glacial Drift***/National Building Museum, Washington D.C.
- 2011 **Kora Radella – *Laden*** – Cleveland Public Theater
- 2005-2010 **Pilobolus Dance Theater (CT)** - Satellite Company / Creative Services,  
international touring, domestic and international commercial work
- 2009-2011 **Steven Iannacone (MI)** –Alwin Nikolais Centennial Alumni Concerts in NYC,  
Oakland University, University of Queretaro, Mexico, Michigan
- 2007 **79<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards (CA)** Pilobolus Dance Theater
- 2006 **Grimm Productions (NYC)** Company Member
- 2003-2005 **Pilobolus Dance Theater (CT)** Company Member, National/International touring
- 2002-2006 **Alice Farley Dance Theater (NYC)** Movement Artist, Stilt walker
- 2002-2003 **Freespace Dance (NYC/NJ)** Company Member
- 2002/2003 **Contemporary Motions (NY, MI)** Guest Choreographer, Performer
- 2001-2002 **Jody Oberfelder Dance Projects (NYC)** Company Member
- 2000-2002 **Afro-Brazil Arts (NY/NJ public schools)** - Capoeira shows and workshops

## TRAINING

### Virginia Commonwealth University 2014-2017 Graduate Theatre Pedagogy Program

Dr. Noreen C. Barnes	Theatre History/Theatre Historiography/ Dramatic Lit. and Theory: Tragedy/Theatre Pedagogy
Dr. Tawnya Pettiford-Wates	Solo Performance/Intro to Applied Theatre/ Ritual Poetic Drama
Dr. Aaron D. Anderson	Modern Theatre: Theory and Practice
David S. Leong	Mime/Directing/Directing and Choreography
Susan Schuld	Voice and Speech (Knight/Thompson) Vocal Yoga (Linklater)

## DANCE / THEATRE

2001-2005	<b>Pilobolus Technique</b>	Pilobolus Dance Theater
1995-1996	<b>Contact Improvisation</b>	Jim Lobley – UW Madison
1992-1994	<b>Modern Dance</b>	Hamilton College Faculty
1989-1992	<b>Movement Theatre</b>	James Thornton /Ensemble program <i>The Shaker Acting Ensemble under the direction of James Thornton with various guest artists: Vincent J. Cardinal(Acting), Wendy Kriss Lynne (Corporeal Mime), Steven Wasson (Corporeal Mime), Pilobolus (Dance), Peter Pucci (Dance), Louis Kavouris (Dance), Bill Wade (Dance) Daniel J. Travanti (Acting), Sara Smith (Music)Michael McElroy (Musical Theatre, Conditioning), David Wain (Film Project), Magpie (American Folk Music)</i>

## DANCE / MARTIAL ARTS

2006 -	<b>Pa Kua, Tai Chi, Western Boxing</b>	Wilson Pitts
2004-2012	<b>Mixed Martial Arts</b>	Roberto Sharpe
	<i>Synthesizing elements of Chi- Gung, Tai Chi, Pa Kua, Hsing Yi, Capoeira,</i>	
2009-2012	<b>Capoeira Angola</b>	Mestre Joao Grande
1999-2002	<b>Capoeira / apprentice</b>	Mestre Ombrinho, NYC
1996-1999	<b>Capoeira</b>	Wayne Chandler, Cleveland
1995-1996	<b>Capoeira Regional</b>	UW Omulu Capoeira Club
2000-2017	<b>Capoeira Workshops</b>	Mestre No, Mestre Joao Grande, Mestre Jelom Vierra, Mestre Alcides de Lima Mestre Valmir, Mestre Cabello, Mestre Cobra Mansa, Mestre Fabio

## SOMATIC PRACTICE



2012	<b>Chi-Gung</b>	Wayne Chandler
2005-2008	<b>Chi-Gung</b>	Sharon Smith
2005-2006	<b>Pilates - Somatic Approach</b>	Kane School of Core Integration
2001-2010	<b>Hatha Yoga</b>	Margot Milcetic

## **RECENT COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

Faculty Movement Research Studio at the University of Richmond - hosting Movement Workshops, Contact Improvisation Jams, Martial Arts Workshop and classes. Weekly Community class in Capoeira Angola, monthly Contact Improvisation Jam. 2014-2017

Richmond Youth Peace Summit –*Capoeira: The movements, music and history of Afro-Brazilian martial art/dance*. Richmond Peace Education Center/Northminster Baptist Church. 2012.

Capoeira workshop through CALM (Capoeira Angola Liberation Movement)—and The CARE Initiative (Conciliation, Alliance Building, Recognition and Engagement) 2012.

## **RELATED EXPERIENCE**

English Literature, Poetry, Vocal Performance, Visual Artist

## **REFERENCES**

Available on request