



MIGRATING THE COLOR FIELDS

9th Annual International Symposium
for Art, Dance, and Film-Hannover

NEOCORTEX DANCE
THEATRE COMPANY

STATES OF MIND

ALSO FEATURING:

COMPOSER,
LIVE PIANO ACCOMPANIST,
AND MAGICIAN:
FRANK J. GLAB
THE GREAT FRANKINI

LIGHTING SCULPTOR:
FRANZ BETZ

SCHARNIER THEATER HANNOVER

MUSICIAN:
WOLF RUEDIGER LEISTER

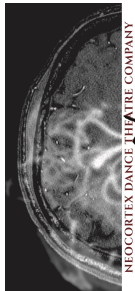


**FRIDAY, 26
JUNE 2026
20:00**

**BÜRGERSCHULE
NORDSTADT**
KLAUS-MÜLLER-
KILIAN-WEG 2
30167 HANNOVER, DE
BALLROOM, 2ND FLOOR

NEOCORTEX
DANCE.ORG





ABOUT NEOCORTEX DANCE THEATRE COMPANY (NDTC)

Neocortex Dance Theatre Company (NDTC) has put a great deal of effort into translating this program and other materials. The translation may not be perfect; we sincerely apologize should any errors have crept in. Our goal is to respect, honor, and appreciate German culture, and to avoid causing offense or acting disrespectfully toward anyone.

Thank you for your understanding!

Neocortex Dance Theatre Company (NDTC) is an emerging Chicago and Evanston, IL, USA-based pre-professional, professional, contemporary, and modern project-based dance theatre company. We explore themes of identity, trauma, mental health, and self-worth. No two stories and experiences are the same, and we provide stories of different experiences (your truth may not be the truth for others). We recognize that people can change and evolve for the better (despite past actions), and we are committed to providing opportunities for individuals to learn and grow. Our organization is dedicated to fostering a culture of empathy, understanding, and inclusivity. Mental health and mental illnesses will always exist on a spectrum, and we believe stories should be told without generalizations, stereotypes, or stigmas.

NDTC'S MISSION

Our primary mission is to promote awareness of mental health, reduce stigma, and foster a sense of relatability. We are dedicated to creating a safe, diverse, and inclusive environment.

Additionally, we provide a resource page featuring 34 categories on mental disorders and other mental health subjects, which lists various informational resources on our website, as well as offering printed and/or electronic informational resource brochures, artist talks, and answering questions for our performances.

Neocortex Dance Theatre Company (NDTC) is committed to contributing to the ongoing conversation on mental health, promoting community, advocacy, and empathy, and sharing a shared experience with audiences by exploring complex themes through dance.

Our goal is to establish a full-time dance company and a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization or LLC that offers pay-what-you-can classes to the community, regardless of socioeconomic status. Our programs will provide opportunities for dancers and movers to receive technical training, enhance their mental health and well-being, and foster a sense of community and connection in a safe and nonjudgmental environment.

ACTIVATOR/CONTENT WARNING:

Mental Health, Mental Illness, Bipolar Disorder, Trauma, Emotional Numbing, and Adult Themes, Content, and Discussion

Neocortex Dance Theatre Company (NDTC) explores complex themes about mental health and identity (including themes of suicide, non-suicidal self-injury, abuse, mental illness symptoms, and more). The material, choreographic works, and the artist's talk may be traumatizing for adult or children audiences. If you are unsure about the content, please reach out to us for further details.

DISCLAIMERS

Neocortex Dance Theatre Company (NDTC) is not a licensed medical organization or personnel and will not be held responsible or liable for your engagement, treatments, activators, or actions. The information and resources Neocortex Dance Theatre Company provides on our website, social media platforms, performances, rehearsals, artist's talks, presentations, lectures, workshops, residencies, or classes are not medical, personal, or legal advice, diagnosis, or treatments and should only be used for educational purposes. Always seek medical advice from licensed medical professionals.

*All lighting elements, lighting designs, and light sculptures were made possible and created by the lovely and talented
FRANZ BETZ.*

INTRODUCTION

Translator: Marianne Buchwald

SWITCHING (THE OSCILLATION OF POLARITY)

NEOCORTEX DANCE THEATRE COMPANY (NDTC)

CHOREOGRAPHER: Juan Enrique Roque Irizarry Jr., in collaboration with dancers

DANCERS: *Self:* Francisco Melendez, *Depression:* Timothy Tsang, and *(Hypo)Mania:* Derek Quesada

MUSIC: *12 Rounds 6 Feet Under* — Music collaboration with Allen Russell and MusicforMovers.com

Bipolar disorder is a mood disorder with symptoms of fluctuating (hypo)manic highs, depressive lows, and sometimes mixed episodes, affecting everyone uniquely. As someone who has bipolar disorder, Juan Enrique Roque Irizarry Jr. often does not recognize himself when he looks in the mirror and is typically flooded with thoughts and memories that reflect the harm and wounds inflicted on me over time. This piece explores his transformation of inner struggles from the switching states to outer expressions and the psychomotor agitation and retardation that his bipolar disorder causes.

SCENE 1 | INTRODUCTION: SELF

SCENE 2 | THE EMERGENCE

SCENE 3 | SELF VS. DEPRESSION

SCENE 4 | SELF VS. (HYPO)MANIA

SCENE 5 | SELF VS. DEPRESSION & (HYPO)MANIA (MIXED EPISODES)

SCENE 6 | FINALE: THE CONTINUATION

PAST DANCERS AND COLLABORATORS:

2024 | *Self:* Meg Gourley, *Depression:* Elisabeth Roskopf 이지영, and *(Hypo)Mania:* Mark Gonzalez

2025 | *Self:* Meg Gourley, *Depression:* Katie Speltz, and *(Hypo)Mania:* Kaleigh Dent

LOPHIIFORMES

NEOCORTEX DANCE THEATRE COMPANY (NDTC)

CHOREOGRAPHER: Juan Enrique Roque Irizarry Jr.

DANCER: Timothy Tsang

MUSIC: *Breaking the Surface* — Between Music: AquaSonic

Lophiiformes, the biological name for an anglerfish, is a haunting exploration of toxic allure, as the soloist succumbs to the irresistible pull from the treacherous light. Like an angler's fatal lure, the light beckons, promising escape from the darkness, but ultimately devours all who dares to touch it. This piece is a metaphor of being trapped in a cycle of destructive desires.

PAST DANCER

2018 | Jessica Morales

INTERMISSION

ENTANGLED

SCHARNIER THEATRE HANNOVER

CHOREOGRAPHER: Marianne Buchwald, in collaboration with the dancers

MUSIC: Music collaboration with Wolf Ruediger Leister and Volker Dowidat

UP AGAIN, DOWN AGAIN, UP AGAIN — *EXCERPTS*

NEOCORTEX DANCE THEATRE COMPANY (NDTC)

CHOREOGRAPHER: Juan Enrique Roque Irizarry Jr., in collaboration with dancers

DANCERS: Francisco Melendez, Derek Quesada, and Timothy Tsang

MUSIC: Music collaboration with Composer Frank J. Glab

VIDEO ARTIST: Alex Yasinovsky

The excerpts shown are snippets of the Euthymia ("Normal" Cognition:), Depression, Hypo(Mania), and the Mixed Episodes section of a larger work with a total of 6 dancers (20:33 minutes).

"Up Again, Down Again, Up Again" is a deeply personal and visceral dance piece inspired by Juan Enrique Roque Irizarry Jr.'s experiences with bipolar disorder. This abstract interpretation explores, although this theory was debunked by Dr. Joanna Moncrieff and her colleagues in July 2022, the intricate chemical imbalances in his brain, revealing the dynamic interplay between synapses, neurotransmitters, the amygdala, hippocampus, gray matter, locus coeruleus, dopamine, and serotonin. Through movement, the piece embodies the fluctuating states of normal

cognition/euthymia, depression, (hypo)mania, and mixed episodes, illuminating the cyclical patterns of ups, downs, and back up again.

SCENE 1 | INTRODUCTION: EUTHYMIA

SCENE 2 | DEPRESSION

SCENE 3 | INTRODUCTION OF (HYPO)MANIA

SCENE 4 | (HYPO)MANIA

SCENE 5 | MIXED EPISODES (SWITCHING)

SCENE 6 | FINALE: THE CYCLE CONTINUES

PAST DANCERS AND COLLABORATORS:

2025 | Mark Gonzalez, Nik Graves, Audrey Hartnett, Hannah Huang, Francisco Melendez, and Brady Neher

THE GREAT FRANKINI'S DELIGHTFUL DECEPTIONS

IMAGINATION, INC.

Translator: Marianne Buchwald

INTERMISSION

SCHATTEN IM NEBEL: ESCALATING DETACHMENT — 600-900 MILLIGRAMS *(PREMIERE)*

NEOCORTEX DANCE THEATRE COMPANY (NDTC)

CHOREOGRAPHER: Juan Enrique Roque Irizarry Jr.

DANCER: Juan Enrique Roque Irizarry Jr.

MUSIC: Music collaboration with Live Piano Accompanist and Composer Frank J. Glab

Emotional numbness is a state where an individual has reduced ability to feel or show positive and negative emotions. Also described as “emotionally dead,” emotional numbness can cause or exacerbate symptoms of depression, anxiety, aggression, and risky behavior. This piece is inspired by Juan Enrique Roque Irizarry Jr.’s experience with lithium, causing emotional numbness, leading to his recklessness, anxiousness, aggressiveness, and self-destructive patterns, as well as his most recent emotional numbing and depression within the past two years, from 2024 to the beginning of 2026.

VERBLASSEND FÄDEN—LONGING FOR TOUCH

(PREMIERE)

NEOCORTEX DANCE THEATRE COMPANY (NDTC)

CHOREOGRAPHER: Juan Enrique Roque Irizarry Jr., in collaboration with dancers

DANCERS: Francisco Melendez and Derek Quesada

MUSIC: Music collaboration with Live Piano Accompanist and Composer Frank J. Glab

This piece explores the ripple effects of emotional numbness: a continuation of the “Schatten im Nebel: Escalating Detachment — 600-900 Milligrams” piece. Emotional numbness is an individual experience, but its ripple effects dismantle our closest relationships. It causes a withdrawal from both oneself and others, leaving partners craving more from each other, yet unsure how to bridge the gap.

There is an ache of loneliness and a disconnect that seeps into cold beds and silent rooms—a grieving for the relationship that has slipped away, and a longing for the intimacy, touch, the spark, and wanting to be taken back to the night they met.

DAS WAR NICHT WAS ICH ERWARTET HATTE/ THAT WASN'T WHAT I EXPECTED **IMPROVISATIONAL DANCE PIECE**

NEOCORTEX DANCE THEATRE COMPANY (NDTC)

CHOREOGRAPHERS AND DANCERS: Juan Enrique Roque Irizarry Jr., Francisco Melendez, Derek Quesada, and Timothy Tsang

MUSIC: *Intermezzo Number 2 Opus 118* — Brahms: Performed by Frank J. Glab

LIGHT SCULPTOR: Franz Betz

ARTIST TALK: QUESTION AND ANSWERS

Translator: Marianne Buchwald



**JUAN ENRIQUE
ROQUE IRIZARRY JR.**
**NEOCORTEX DANCE THEATRE
COMPANY (NDTC)**

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | FOUNDER |
CHOREOGRAPHER, | COMPANY DANCER

*Photo Credits: Headshot: Michelle Reid; Action Shot:
Indie Media Studios and Identity Performing Arts*



Juan Enrique Roque Irizarry Jr. (He/Him) is a professional dancer and choreographer from Chicago and is the Artistic Director, Founder, Choreographer, and a Company Dancer for Neocortex Dance Theatre Company (NDTC). He began his performing arts journey with theatre and musical theatre, however, he started training with Joffrey Ballet (Gallery 37 and After School Matters) and Culture Shock Chicago at 17 and obtained a BA in Anthropology and Sociology with

a minor in Dance Studies from Knox College in 2015. At Knox College, he was awarded the John Hofsas Prize in Dance, the TRIO Persistence Award, and the TRIO, Dance, and Theatre Scholarships.

Through ongoing education, he is developing expertise in trauma counseling and through Envision Unlimited, he is currently pursuing his CRSS and CPRS certification to become a peer support specialist. He recently achieved an MFA in Dance at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee as an Advanced Opportunity Program Fellow in 2025. He is also a dancer and collaborator with Sildance Acrodanza, a dance instructor, and a magician's assistant for The Great Frankini. As a versatile dancer trained in multiple techniques and styles, such as modern, contemporary, jazz, street jazz, ballet, hip-hop, heels, Asian folk dance, West African, improvisation, somatics, (acro) yoga, and some aerial, Juan Enrique has performed nationally in cities such as Chicago (IL), Evanston (IL), Milwaukee (WI), Davenport (IA), Galesburg (IL), Springfield (MO), St. Louis (MO), and Kalamazoo (MI), and toured internationally in countries such as Cuba, Germany, Mexico, and Ghana. He has worked with various companies, residencies, and projects, like Identity Performing Arts, Rainbow Children Dance Collective, Innervation Dance Cooperative, and Movement Revolution Dance Crew, and also trained with Aerial Dance Chicago, Visceral Dance Center, and Joel Hall Dancers and Center. Juan Enrique is passionate about exploring dance, pedagogy, psychopathology, and mental health awareness, using his platform to help destigmatize mental illnesses.



FRANK J. GLAB |
THE GREAT FRANKINI
NEOCORTEX DANCE THEATRE COMPANY
(NDTC) |
IMAGINATION INC.

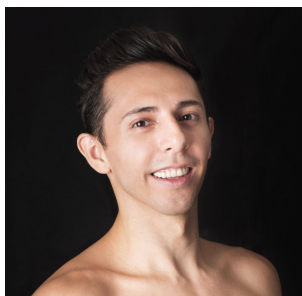
ARTISTIC ADVISOR | PIANIST | MAGICIAN



Frank J. Glab (The Great Frankini) attempts to raise the vibration of the world through his artistic accomplishments. He holds an MFA in music and is an accomplished pianist, organist, and vocalist. He works regularly as a choirmaster in church music with a penchant for early music. Frank is also an award-winning magician and collector of vintage magic equipment and stone lithography. Frank is also a cranio-sacral therapist and is the Artistic Advisor and Pianist for Neocortex Dance Theatre Company (NDTC). Frank attempts to bring healing as well as entertainment through all his artistic disciplines.

THE GREAT FRANKINI

The Great Frankini (Frank J. Glab) has been delighting audiences with his magic conjuring skills for over 50 years. He holds first place and People's Choice Awards from The Society of American Magicians and the International Brotherhood of Magicians. His magical performances include everything from table-side, sleight of hand magic to full-scale illusions, such as Sawing A Lady in Half. He strives to preserve magic history by presenting the true classics of magic. Frankini is also a masterful fire performer, including fire eating, fire breathing, and Samoan Fire Knife Spinning. He enjoys delighting audiences with spectacle and delightful deceptions, emphasizing with magical wonder—all good things can happen.



FRANCISCO MELENDEZ
NEOCORTEX DANCE THEATRE COMPANY (NDTC)
 DANCER | REHEARSAL DIRECTOR |
 POSTER DESIGNER

Francisco (Franky) Melendez is a dance artist originating from El Paso, Texas. While living in El Paso he trained with Champion Dance Studio and El Paso Conservatory of Dance. He went on to perform with the El Paso Ballet Theatre and

Human Nature Contemporary Ballet. He moved to Chicago in 2019, where he continued his professional development training from the Ruth Page Center For The Arts, Joel Hall Dancers & Center, and from the Chicago Movement Collective as a Claire Bataille Legacy Program student. He then went on to be an apprentice with Cerqua Rivera Dance.



DEREK QUESADA
NEOCORTEX DANCE THEATRE COMPANY (NDTC)
 DANCER

Derek Quesada is a Chicago-based dance artist, performer, and storyteller whose work bridges contemporary movement, musical theatre, and expressive narrative. Originally rooted in a multidisciplinary performance background, Derek developed his artistry through extensive training in dance and theatre, cultivating a movement style grounded in emotional authenticity and musicality.

Since relocating to Chicago, he has continued his professional development through classes, workshops, and collaborative projects across the city's vibrant dance community. Derek has performed in both concert and theatrical settings. He is currently working with Matter Dance Company and Silvita Acrodanza and now Neocortex Dance Theatre Company.

In addition to his performance career, Derek is passionate about interdisciplinary collaboration and the intersection of movement, identity, and storytelling. His artistic interests center on creating work that reflects both character and meaningful expression while fostering connections with audiences. He holds over ten years of

case management where he supported individuals in the world of Developmental Disability; and he continues to advocate for this population as a registered nurse in Chicago.



TIMOTHY TSANG
NEOCORTEX DANCE THEATRE COMPANY (NDTC)
 DANCER

Timothy Tsang is a queer Chinese American dance artist whose work bridges movement, cultural memory, and embodied research. Raised in Shanghai and Chicago, he approaches contemporary dance as a structure that holds

multiple timelines, intersecting identities, and global circulations. His choreography has been commissioned and presented at the Auditorium Theatre, Links Hall, and the Edge Theater, and he has performed with South Chicago Dance Theatre, Mordine & Company Dance Theatre, and The Seldoms. Currently pursuing his MFA in Dance at the University of Michigan, Tsang is a recipient of the Lieberthal-Rogel Center for Chinese Studies Fellowship and Rackham International Research Award. His current research investigates the legacy of Leslie Cheung and the aesthetics of queer Chinese cinema.



FRANZ BETZ
 LIGHT SCULPTOR | LIGHTING DESIGNER
 | LIGHTING ELEMENTS
 1963 born in Sigmaringen, Danube, Germany

In 1989, light sculptor Franz Betz laid the foundations for his artistic work with the spatial installation "Lichtkunst Kunstlicht" on the symbolic value of artificial light. The invention of the light alphabet "Alphabetz" ten years later, the sculpture construction kit "f-io" and the "Lichtbloobs" are

examples of his strong conceptual and transdisciplinary approach. For many years, he was a board member of the Deutscher Werkbund and the BBK Hanover and Lower Saxony.

In his studio "Trafolab", Franz Betz transforms an old transformer station into a light art laboratory and develops new, participatory light art projects there - such as the open light festival "ihme vision", the light installation "Leine de Lights" and the swarm art project "Kleefeld leuchtet".

His works, which consist of neon light, rubber tubes, artificial turf, timber and metal grids, always have a strong relationship to space, material and architecture. By programming artificial networks and virtual spaces, he also creates new spaces and light landscapes.

Exhibitions and symposia at home and abroad
www.franzbetz.com / [@franz.betz](https://www.instagram.com/franz.betz)

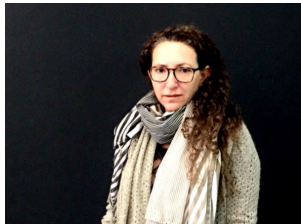


ALLEN RUSSELL

MUSICIAN

Allen Russell is a violinist, composer and instructor based in Milwaukee, WI. He began his musical studies on the violin at age 5, and studied at the String Academy of Wisconsin with Mimi Zweig and David Becker before later going on to study with Jerome Franke and Dr. Bernard Zinck. Allen has

performed with his Hot Swing quartet Swing Chevron at festivals such as the Midwest Gypsy Swingfest, as well as historic venues such as the Green Mill. With the string quartet Tontine Ensemble, Allen has participated in premiering the new works of modern composers and has had his own compositions performed in collaboration with Milwaukee Ballet, UWM Dance, Danceworks Inc., and Water St. Dance. Allen is a registered Suzuki Violin instructor and holds a Master of Fine Arts in String Performance and Pedagogy from UW Milwaukee.



ALEX YASINOVSKY

VIDEO ARTIST

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

Alexandra Yasinovsky is a visual storyteller living in Chicago who has a multicultural background that influences her work. She creates videos for live performances trying to add another dimension to

the show and works with artists in different artistic projects.



ABOUT OCEAN BETWEEN

Led by Marianne Buchwald and other amazing German artists, such as Cem Koc, Kristin Heike, Franz Betz, and Harro Schmidt, Ocean Between is an ongoing international art symposium founded in 2017, fostering US-Germany cross-cultural collaborations among various artists. It intertwines visual artists, dancers, musicians, filmmakers, multimedia artists, and more to share skills, creativity, and interdisciplinary work. The symposium features exhibitions, performances, workshops, and outreach events in cities such as Chicago, Hannover, and Berlin. Ocean Between celebrates its 9th annual addition in Hannover in June 2026.

Main Highlights:

- Interdisciplinary exhibitions and performances (film, dance, music, spoken word, mask theater)
- Community workshops open to families, seniors, and local residents
- Collaborative artmaking across cultures and disciplines
- Inclusive projects such as mail art, installations, and live performance events

SPECIAL THANKS & RECOGNITIONS

You: The Audience
All The Very Talented and Very Supportive Dancers (*Francisco Melendez, Derek Quesada, Timothy Tsang*, and past dance collaborators)
Frank J. Glab (The Great Frankini)
Francisco Melendez (Poster Design and Rehearsal Director for NDTC)
Everyone Involved In This Production
Video Artist: Alex Yasinovsky
Bürgerschule Nordstadt
Allen Russell
Videographers: Spence Warren
Photographer: Michelle Reid
Wolf Ruediger Leister and Volker Dowidat
NDTC Logo Design Collaborations: Angel Cunningham
Ocean Between
All the participants of Ocean Between's *Migrating the Color Fields* Festival
Marianna Buchwald
Kristin Heike
Cem Koc
Franz Betz
Harro Schmidt
Lars Schumacher
Heiner Schlote
The volunteers, videographers, and photographers
All the donors who donated to NDTC for our international Germany travel (as of 26. June 2026): *Andrea Cook, Catherine Aranas, Frank J. Glab, Herminia Chase, Kristin Heike, Maria Elena Roque Irizarry, Nicole Sands, Rainbow Children Dance Collective, Silvita Diaz Brown, Todd Kiech, Paul Johnson, Ginny Ching Yin Lo, Colin Kelty, and Lindsay Bingham*
All donors and audience members who donated from Germany
All the audience members who attended the "From Chicago to Hannover" performance in Evanston, IL, USA.
All the friends, families, and supporters
Sofa Loft
Chicago Ballet Arts
Chicago Danztheatre Ensemble

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR
SUPPORT!

Donations are warmly welcome and will be shared among the performing artists, so that we may continue to share our work with the community!



NEOCORTEX
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NDTC MENTAL
HEALTH
RESOURCES



Mental illness and mental health are individual experiences and sometimes a struggle, but you are not alone. Please take care of yourself and seek additional help and support when needed. I am glad you are here and sending so much care, love, and support!

Medical Assistance in Hannover:

IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE OR INJURY: **Call 112**

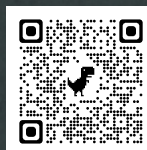
TELEFONSEELSORGE: **Call 0800 111 0 111 OR 0800 111 0 222**

CHILDREN AND TEENS: **Call 116 11**

KRISECHAT: **Text "Start" to WhatsApp or their website of a 24/7 Free**

Counselor

MEDICAL ON-CALL SERVICES: Call 116 117



FESTIVAL
INFORMATION

