

Press Kit
MeenMoves
Come September (2025)



MeenMoves bio



MeenMoves creates socially relevant, quirky, highly technical dance-theater works for stage and film. Under the artistic direction of Sameena Mitta, MeenMoves explores questions of identity, focusing on the unique perspectives of those who check “none-of-the-above.” MeenMoves aims to reflect a diversity of worldviews, collaborate early and often with music makers, offer audiences pay-what-you-can options, welcome audiences who may not otherwise turn to or have access to dance, and to amplify the voices of underrepresented creatives of color, particularly those of Muslim women. MeenMoves has presented choreography at Little Island NYC, NJPAC, 92NY, Judson Memorial Church, BAM Fisher, and at many other venues in the New York City area and around the world, including evening-length alternative f(A)cts to sold-out houses at The Martha Graham Studio Theater. Current projects include *Come September* in collaboration with composer Stephanie Griffin (premiering 2025); *Struwwelpeter*, a ten-year German dance-film project based on the 1845 children’s book (premiering 2026); and the audience-engagement driven *W(h)ine Pairings* set to Nico Muhly and Teitur Lassen’s album *Confessions* (premiering 2023). MeenMoves has received support from Harkness Dance Center, Dance/NYC, Jersey City Arts and Trust Fund, Hudson County Office of Cultural Affairs, DanceNJ, JCAC, and the Ontario Arts Council.

Website: meenmoves.com

Instagram: [/www.instagram.com/meenmoves](https://www.instagram.com/meenmoves)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/MeenMoves

Fractured Atlas: fundraising.fracturedatlas.org/meenmoves

Sameena Mitta bio (Artistic Director)



SAMEENA MITTA is artistic director of dance-theater company MeenMoves and its outreach program MadHops. Mitta was a 2022/23 Artist in Residence at 92NY Harkness Dance Center, an NJPAC Choreography Fellow, and received a 2023 Choreographic Fellowship award from the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation. She has presented works at Little Island, 92NY Mainstage Series, NJPAC, BAM Fisher, Americas Society, Ailey Studio Theatre, Martha Graham Theatre, Judson Church and many other venues around NYC and around the world. Mitta has produced live events including International Women's Day of Dance and co-produced international digital events with 1014 Space for Ideas. Mitta completed an intergenerational dance film Bilateral Quadrennium and continues work on a 10-year site-specific dance film project Struwwelpeter Project. Mitta earned with distinction the Cecchetti Society's Diploma and a MA in Dance Creation from Université du Québec à Montréal focusing on Movement Intervention for South Asian survivors of domestic violence. Under Mitta's artistic direction, MeenMoves explores questions of identity, focusing on the unique perspectives of those who check "none-of-the-above", to create socially relevant, quirky, highly-technical dance-theater works for stage and film. Mitta advocates for diversity in dance and has sat on multiple dance juries for granting agencies in Canada and the USA. Mitta is mentor to the Recanati-Kaplan scholars in dance, the Harkness Dance Center Artistic Advisor, and she is on faculty at the Limón Institute and 92NY.

Website: meenmoves.com

MeenMoves Presents

Come September

Piece description:

One year after the 9/11 attacks, author/activist Arundhati Roy offered her unique perspective on the US “war on terrorism” in a talk at the University of New Mexico. Two decades later, the predicaments Roy cataloged persist, even more intractable in ways Roy could not have foreseen at the time, before hyper-partisan media, Facebook and Twitter helped divide American citizens into echo chambers of opinion and conspired to effect the demise of truth. Constant, however, has been the cynical use of toxic nationalism by politicians subservient to global business to stifle legitimate discourse and ultimately distract citizens from the reality of their declining economic security, the destruction of their environment, and the imminent catastrophe of global warming. Come September highlights women's role in addressing the interconnected challenges of corporate dominance, erosion of democratic institutions, the looming threat of global warming, and the harmful impact of social media.

Fragments of Roy's compelling speech are combined into an original composition for viola, double bass, clarinet, two oboes, and electroacoustic accompaniment, performed live as the soundscore for an evening-length dance-theater performance with six dancers. As the choreography follows the score and the score follows the choreography, a deeply woven artistic rumination on the divisions, power struggles, and avoided conversations all around us gives way to hope that fleeting moments of unity and solidarity can be made permanent if we just answer one question: What does it take for all of us to feel as though we belong?



Selection of MeenMoves Photos

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Z3U8ziIRkFrllvomQRocgPYyJWXJVFyQ?usp=share_link



MeenMoves

Come September

Project Team

Sameena Mitta, **Artistic Director/Choreographer**

Stephanie Griffin, **Composer**

Sarah Timberlake, **Costume Designer**

Karma Chuki, Chelsea Enjer Hecht, Réka Echerer, Sasha Gologorskaya, Paulina Meneses, Chelen Middlebrook, Mark Willis, **Dancers**

Kathy Halvorson (Oboe), Keve Wilson (Oboe), Benjamin Fingland (Clarinet), Hilliard Greene (Double Bass), and Stephanie Griffin (Viola), **Musicians**

BIOS

Sameena Mitta (Artistic Director/Choreographer)

Sameena Mitta is artistic director of dance-theater company MeenMoves and its outreach program MadHops. Mitta's evening-length works include W(h)ine Pairings Al Fresco at Little Island NYC and alternative (f)Acts at the Martha Graham Theatre. Mitta was a NJPAC Choreography Fellow 2019-2022, and has presented works at 92NY, NJPAC, BAM Fisher, Judson Church and many other venues around NYC and around the world. Mitta completed an intergenerational dance film Bilateral Quadrennium and continues work on a 10-year site-specific dance film project Struwwelpeter. Mitta earned with distinction the Cecchetti Society's Diploma and a MA in Dance Creation from Université du Québec à Montréal focusing on Movement Intervention for South Asian survivors of domestic violence. Under Mitta's artistic direction, MeenMoves explores questions of identity, focusing on the unique perspectives of those who check "none-of-the-above", to create socially relevant, quirky, highly-technical dance-theater works for stage and film. Mitta advocates for diversity in dance and has sat on multiple dance juries for granting agencies in Canada and the USA. Mitta is a 2022/23 Artist in Residence at 92NY Harkness Dance Center, she is mentor to the Recanati-Kaplan scholars in dance and is on faculty at the Limón Institute and 92NY.

meenmoves.com

Stephanie Griffin (Composer/Performer)

Stephanie Griffin is an innovative composer and violist with an eclectic musical vision. Born in Canada and based in New York City, her musical adventures have taken her to Indonesia, Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong, England, Ireland, Germany, Belgium, Mexico, and Mongolia. Stephanie founded the Momenta Quartet in 2004, is a member of the Argento Chamber Ensemble and Continuum, and serves as principal violist of the Princeton Symphony and on the faculty of Brooklyn College and Hunter College. She is the recipient of the Jerome Foundation 2017 Emerging Composer Fellowship and the 2016 composition fellowship from the New York Foundation for the Arts. As an improviser, Stephanie was a 2014 fellow at Music Omi and performs with various avant-jazz bands. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from The Juilliard School where she studied with Samuel Rhodes and has recorded for Tzadik, Innova, Naxos, Aeon, New World, and Albany records. www.stephaniegriffinviola.com/

Sarah Timberlake (Costume Designer)

Sarah Timberlake has been costuming in NYC for more than 30 years after receiving a BFA in Dance from UW-Milwaukee and a MA in Costume Technology from NYU-Gallatin School. Her custom costume production shop, Timberlake Studios, Inc. contributed costumes to The Shed's World Premiere Commission Dragon Spring Phoenix Rise. Current clients include Book of Mormon, The Lion King, Martha Graham Dance Company, Big Apple Circus, and numerous theatre productions locally, regionally, and nationally. Timberlake has been proud to collaborate with MeenMoves since 2008.

<http://www.timberlakestudios.com/>

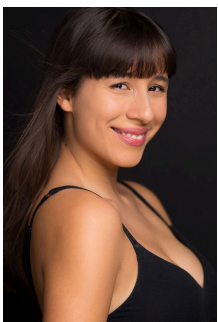
Stephanie Terasaki (Rehearsal Director)

Stephanie Terasaki was born and raised in southern California. She began her formal training at Inland Pacific Ballet Academy while also attending the Orange County School of the Arts. She received her BFA from The Juilliard School under the direction of Lawrence Rhodes. Additionally she has attended summer programs with Cedar Lake Dance Company, Springboard Montreal, and Nederlands Dans Theatre during her time in school. After graduating from The Juilliard School in 2016, Stephanie joined GroundWorks Dance Theater for their 2016 summer and fall season. She currently freelances in New York City and has had the opportunity to work with various companies and choreographers including, Brian Brooks Dance, ZviDance, MeenMoves, Dolly Sfeir, and Kyle Abraham. In recent years, she has had the wonderful opportunity to assist Kyle Abraham in new commissioned works for The Royal Ballet, New York City Ballet, Alvin Ailey American Dance Company, and Vail Dance Festival.



Karma Chuki (Performer)

KARMA CHUKI was born and raised in Thimphu, Bhutan. Chuki is a dancer with New York city based, Dance Entropy/ Valerie Green, MeenMoves, Sandsilk Dance Co/Elisabetta Minutoli, dancer with Rovaco Dance company and apprentices with Oui Danse/Brice Mousset. Karma trained under The Danceworx Performing Arts Academy since 2012 and later became one of the principal dancers of India's leading touring contemporary company, Navdhara India Dance Theatre.



Réka Echerer (Performer)

RÉKA ECHERER hails from Vienna, Austria and has performed with the Vienna State Opera, Sue Bernhard Danceworks, Kizuna Dance and Cornfield Dance. She has performed works by Merce Cunningham, Christopher Wheeldon, Gabrielle Lamb and Aszure Barton as well as currently dances with the Metropolitan Opera Ballet, Megan Williams Dance Projects and MeenMoves. Réka holds a BFA from SUNY Purchase and is a proud member of the Board of Governors at the American Guild of Musical Artists.

Sasha Gologorskaya (Performer)



SASHA GOLOGORSKAYA is a NYC-based dancer and artist, originally from Kiev, Ukraine. She was raised in the San Francisco Bay Area and trained at the San Francisco Ballet School, before attending the Conservatory of Dance at SUNY Purchase, graduating *summa cum laude* with a BFA in Dance Performance. In her senior year at Purchase, Sasha was featured in the NY Times for performances at BAM Fisher, where she danced the featured pas de deux in Luca Veggetti's reimagined version of Jerome Robbins' *Watermill*. Sasha has performed with ARC Dance in Seattle, Eglevsky Ballet, Peninsula Ballet Theatre, Menlowe Ballet, em(body) dance project, and for Norte Maar's *Counterpointe 10*. She has performed repertory by Gabrielle Lamb, George Balanchine, Greg Amato, Ho-Shia Aaron Thao, Kevin Jenkins, Marco Geocke, Margo Sappington, Marika Brussel, Maurice Brandon Curry, Merce Cunningham, Michelle Thompson-Ulerich, Morgan McEwen, and Zachary Kapeluck. She was recently a part of choreographic residencies with MorDance at Vineyard Arts Project and for choreographer Marika Brussel at Moulin/Belle. She is currently dancing with Hudson Ballet Theater and MeenMoves.

Chelsea Enjer Hecht (Performer)



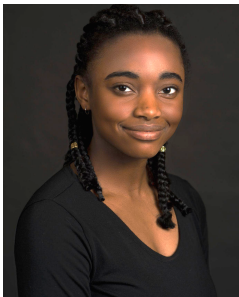
CHELSEA ENJER HECHT (she/they) is a Brooklyn based dance artist and licensed massage therapist with roots in Minnesota and Mongolia. She graduated from Purchase College (a State University of New York) with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in dance performance and Minor in arts management, then Pacific College of Health and Science. They have enjoyed performing and improvising in fashion, films and installations in addition to the stage, most recently with Rachel Gill, POGO Dance, MeenMoves, Amber Sloan, and Megan Williams. She has created and presented work collaboratively at Chen Dance Center, West End Theatre, Fort Greene Park, and Arts on Site, and has guest taught for Middy Movement in Boston and Peridance in Manhattan. Chelsea is interested in how emotions live in the body, and loves to improvise. They would prefer to dance outside for the rest of their days.

Pauline Meneses (Performer)



PAULINA MENESES (she/they) is a Filipino-American dancer hailing from Las Vegas, NV, and a graduate of SUNY Purchase with a BFA in Dance and minor in Arts Management. During her time in college, she performed works by Shannon Gillen, Kimberly Bartosik, Xan Burley, Alexandra Beller, and Trisha Brown. Now based in New York City, they have worked with esteemed artists including Doug Varone and Dancers, Dylan Crossman, Hannah Garner's 2nd Best Dance Company, Johnnie Cruise Mercer, and Kyle Abraham on his New York City Ballet premiere, "The Runaway." In addition to MeenMoves, Paulina currently collaborates and dances for Peter Stathas, Marie Paspe, and Julia Antinozzi.

Chelen Middlebrook (Performer)



CHELEN MIDDLEBROOK (she/they) is a Brooklyn based movement artist and choreographer from Northern Virginia. She completed her BFA in Dance Performance & Choreography at SUNY Purchase in 2021. After graduation, Chelen debuted her professional career in residency with TRIBE under the direction of Marcella Lewis and Shamel Pitts. She has since performed and collaborated in works with Kayla Farrish's Decent Structures Arts and RyderDance Contemporary Dance Company. Middlebrook is proficient in classical and contemporary vocabularies, and actively researches texture, technique, and rigor both in her performance and choreographic work. Proscenium work, film, and site installations are their frequent vessels for creation. Their creative efforts serve as unending investigations of real and imagined ideas that revolve around the spheres of intimacy, structural dynamics, the psyche, and the elements. Middlebrook's ultimate goal is to facilitate communion between the mind and body through vast research and performance practices while offering a constructive disturbance to constraining societal conditions and mainstream standards.



Mark Willis (Performer)

MARK WILLIS is a freelance artist from NYC. He received his B.F.A in Dance from Montclair State University where he was the recipient of Jeanne Wade Henningburg Scholarship and Spirit of Dance Award. Mark has worked with companies such as The José Limón Dance Company, WHITEWAVE Dance, Jody Oberfelder, Douglas Dunn & Dancers, Christina Noel and The Creature, among others. He has taught and performed in the US, Mexico, Canada, South America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. He has been guest faculty at Montclair State University and has taught at The University of Wyoming, Detroit Dance Festival, Gibney Dance, Chung-Ang University, Ningbo Culture and Arts Training Center among others. His other interests include choreographing, composing, singing, and playing the trumpet.

Musicians

Oboe: Kathy Halvorson (Brooklyn, NY)
<http://www.kathyhalvorson.com/contact/>

Oboe: Keve Wilson (NY, NY)
<https://www.kevewilson.com/>

Clarinet: Benjamin Fingland (Bronx, NY)
<http://www.benjaminfingland.com/>

Viola: Stephanie Griffin (Bronx, NY)
<https://www.stephaniegriffinviola.com/>

Double bass: Hilliard Greene (Bronx, NY)
<https://hilliardgreene.com/>

Reviews

92NY Insider

<https://www.92ny.org/insider/dance-as-democracy-in-action>

The Wine Chef

<https://www.thewinechef.com/blog/wines-whines-and-dance-a-flavorful-performance-at-the-92nd-street-y-new-york>

MeenMoves / Sameena Mitta presents "alternative (f)Acts"

Freeform Review:

Sameena Mitta's *alternative (f)Acts* is silly. It's wonderfully crafted. It has an impressive economy of means (a design that succeeds because the revisited movement vocabulary is so fun to watch repeatedly). The movement material is challenging to dance. The dancing is beautiful, lively, energetic and effortless. There's all manner of subversion. The video, text, and live music are as sly and playful as the dancing. Everything's tossed together with charming wit and verve. (Dance Enthusiast; June 8, 2017)

MeenMoves presents "alternative (f) Acts"

Freeform Review:



When one attends a dance concert, one does not know what to expect. I must confess at times of being given over to preconceived notions of what will take place. On seeing *alternative (f)Acts*, which was choreographed by **Sameena Mitta**, with her dance company **MeenMoves**, I was in for a transformative journey. With fluid and beautiful dancers, we were treated to a world of reverie and down to earth choreographic phrasing. What was fascinating was watching Limon technique, used in a way that was current, post-modern, conceptual. Sameena Mitta has taken this dance technique and made it her own. It fits as perfectly as an elegant glove on a hand. What can one say, when a live

quartet of musicians, (Momenta Quartet) dancers, film all come together is a way that is seamless? With live musicians and an incredible music score by **John Adams**, in an age of iPods, this can't be taken for granted. The string quartet was amazing which consisted of two violins, a viola and cello, with music and sounds that reverberated against the walls.

From the film, we heard stories that were honest, and showed the contradiction of who we think we are, and who we really are given any set of challenging circumstances. What is it like to fall in love, and then loss of falling out of love. Beside from the stories from the film, the dancers also act! With movement that is sinewy, graceful and precise. Spirituality, existentialism are heady subjects, but is pulled off with wit and intelligence. A fun fact was that: Jean-Paul Sartre, refused to accept a Nobel Peace Prize!

I also must take my hat off to **Sarah Timberlake**. Well-designed costumes that took us out of our pedestrian setting, that did not encumber the movement, but flowed with it and was appealing to the eyes. It did not take away from the lines of the dancers, but enhanced it.

Also brilliant lighting by **Jay Ryan**, which was also integral asset for the choreography. I left the Martha Graham Studio theatre in another world, and was instantly shocked backed to reality while waiting for the bus on 14th Street on a Friday night. One the program was a quote by Simone de Beauvoir....." I tore myself away from the safe comfort of certainties through my love for truth—and the truth rewarded me." This was just a very full evening of dance and thought. (Dance Enthusiast; June 15, 2017)