

Run-of-the-River: Liminality and Refusal at the Foot of College Hill, A Bicentennial Reflection

A site-specific offering along the Bushkill Creek on the Karl Stirner Arts Trail in Easton.



Curated by Nandini Sikand

The evening invites participants into a shared artistic experience, beginning with an optional offering. Guided by poet Corey Riotz and saxophonist David Antwi, audiences will journey through seven dance performances, culminating in a powerful closing by spoken word poet Lyrical Faith. Detailed information is available through the below link.

SATURDAY
OCT 04

5:30 PM | Karl Stirner Arts Trail • beginning at the “blue bridge”
In the event of rain, the event will be moved to Weiss Theater in Buck Hall (243 N. Third Street)

performance details and map

- 1 • Guided by poet Corey Riotz and saxophonist, David Antwi, *Run-of-the-River* will begin with a gathering at the **Blue Bridge**, where luminaries will be available. Participants are asked to carry these throughout the trail to both light the way and embody the liminal space between audience and performer, becoming part of the shared act of illumination and discovery.

- 2 • **“Let it be me, Lord”** | performed by Christopher Odoms

This piece explores the Prayer of Jabez. During times of pain and sorrow, I hope to bring joy. I am grateful for all those who have poured into my life. This piece is my response to the call to action. Let it be me, Lord.



The Offering is a collective ritual of light and reflection. Each participant will receive (should they choose) a diya, a small lamp, to honor the tradition of offering light. As sacralized flowers and lamps are lowered into the Bushkill Creek, the water will be illuminated with a constellation of floating offerings, marking the beginning of Run-of-the-River with a shared gesture of reverence and renewal.

- 3 • **Red** | performed by Felicia Cruz-Sharpe, Madelyn Kroeper, Marcelina Palmer, Lucille Rudnick

The piece explores the psychological and emotional landscapes of individuals caught in self-imposed cycles—be it of guilt, regret, desire, trauma, but mainly, internalized societal expectations. “What if the thing holding you back was made of your own longing?” Choreographed by Heidi Cruz-Austin.

- 4 • **The Metazoan Medley** | performed by Sahana Hassan Balasubramanya

Set to music by the eclectic music group Shakti, this piece is conceived as a “moving sculpture”, morphing through myriad animals and creatures in our animal kingdom. All life forms are connected in the “circle of life”, and this piece is meant to convey not just the diversity and beauty found in nature, but also this interconnectedness. Humanity’s ability to understand evolution and this symbiosis should be the basis for our compassion and resolve to protect the environment. The piece is performed on a tree stump with the idea that the tree acts as a “pedestal” for the sculpture and also for the open spaces that surround the site.

- 5 • **Crossings** | performed by June Morishige

An exploration of intersectionality, its beauty and its struggles. The sculpture *No More Milk and Cookies* was made by American sculptor Chakaia Booker with recycled tires, twisting, fraying, and weaving together to resemble a massive net. From a distance, the piece has a haunting presence, yet its playful title and unexpected rubber material challenge assumptions and invite viewers to reconsider initial impressions.

6. **On Being Rooted** | performed by Kelly Prentice and Janice Bourdage

The dancers in the Living Willows reflect on how we can find pathways to rootedness in a world that is “slippery slick.” Some approaches may include moving back into our bodies (embodiment), balancing the head and the heart, connecting to the energies of Nature, and letting ourselves give & receive in community. (A continued study through movement of the philosophy in the Bhagavad Gita.)

7. **Pallavi, a flowering** | performed by Nandini Sikand

Pallavi, which means to blossom, builds slowly and increases in rhythmic complexity. Set to Raag Rageshwari, this playful raag (melodic framework) is typically performed during the liminal time when day crosses into the night. Choreographed by Guru Durga Charan Ranbir. The accompanying projection was filmed on Super 8mm film.

8. **Stage performance by Lyrical Faith**

Closing out the performance on the trail, Lyrical Faith delivers a spoken word set that resonates with power and possibility. Her artistry bridges personal truth and community storytelling, offering a fitting finale to a day of connection through the arts.



about the performers (*in order of performance*)

Christopher Odoms, from Hillside, NJ, earned his BFA in Dance from Montclair State University. He began training at Hillside High School in 2013 with Karen Love, focusing on modern, West African, and ballet dances. He received a scholarship to the New Jersey Dance Theater Ensemble in his sophomore year and later joined Umoja Dance Company in 2016. Chris is passionate about choreography and teaching. He aims to inspire others through dance and share kindness.

Heidi Cruz-Austin is an Associate Professor of Dance and Director of the Dance program at Muhlenberg College. She is a former dancer with The Pennsylvania Ballet and Co-director of DanceSpora, a contemporary ballet company.

Sahana Balasubramanya is one of the most promising young artists in Bharatanatyam today, with two decades of experience. She has performed widely as a solo performer and received critical acclaim for the same since 2005. An empanelled artist with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) since 2012, she was selected to be the lead dancer for the Bharatanatyam segment in the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games held at Delhi in 2010. (www.hbsahana.com)

June Morishige is a Sophomore at Lafayette College studying Neuroscience and Chemistry. They have had over 17 years of classical ballet training and have performed in other styles such as contemporary, jazz, tap, modern, and character dancing. June has performed in numerous galas and festivals around the world including in Riga, Latvia, New York City and Japan.

Kelly Prentice is a mama, writer, and mover/dancer with 40 years of ballet training. She's also a registered yoga instructor with training in yoga, meditation, and Vedic philosophy. Kelly likes to interweave ancient discipline with modern-day challenges and her study of ancient texts, such as the Bhagavad Gita, is always helping her unravel the mysteries of life as we know it.

Janice Bourdage (aka Ravi) worked as a professional dancer in NYC, apprenticing with the Jose Limon Dance Company and dancing as a member of the David Gordon Pick-up Company. Ravi has been practicing and teaching Kundalini Yoga and Meditation over the course of four decades. In addition to teaching yoga, Ravi has a Masters in Clinical Social Work and has worked for over thirty years as a holistic psychotherapist.

Imprinted in New Delhi, **Nandini Sikand** (they/she) is a choreographer-dancer, filmmaker, and educator. They have co-founded three dance companies and performed at venues such as India Habitat Centre in New Delhi, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Joyce SoHo, United Nations, and the Brooklyn Museum. A professor at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania, Nandini is

trained in Odissi classical dance and is a certified instructor in Vinyasa and Kundalini yoga.

Lyrical Faith is a Black American Educator, Activist and international award-winning Spoken Word Poet from The Bronx, NY. She has been featured at prominent venues such as the World Famous Apollo Theatre as well as colleges, and universities across the country and globally. She is a three-time Women of the World Poetry Slam finalist, a two-time Bronx Poet Laureate finalist, the 2015 Syracuse University Poet of the Year, and the Inaugural UMass Amherst W.E.B. DuBois Center Poet-In-Residence. In January 2025, she was featured on four episodes of America's favorite game show, Family Feud. She's a graduate of the Public Relations program at Syracuse University, a Masters degree recipient from NYU Steinhardt, and currently, a Social Justice Education PhD Candidate at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her work has been featured on NPR, iHeartRadio, Button Poetry, Write About Now Poetry, Huffington Post Black Voices, and News 12 The Bronx.

David Antwi (He/Him) is a senior at Lafayette College. He has played the alto saxophone since he was 10 and has performed at several live music events around the Lafayette campus. He performs with the band, Quest Collective, through the Lafayette Interdisciplinary Music Society.

Corey Riotz. direct, to the point, and not one to sugarcoat or dream up some cute quotes. As an unapologetic advocate for truth and master wordsmith, Corey takes pride in dropping knowledge, telling his story, and being an inspiration on whatever stage he graces. Corey is originally from New Jersey. In his art, he likes to focus on internal conflicts, shining light on the toxic norms and narratives of today's society. spoken word is his weapon of choice in attacking them. Corey Riotz contact/inquiries: @corey_riotz.

about the Karl Stirner Arts Trail

Mission Statement

Karl Stirner Arts Trail Inc. fosters opportunities for the community to experience the interconnectedness of art with nature, history, and health and wellness in a natural urban environment. KSAT Inc. achieves its mission by encouraging the activation of the Karl Stirner Arts Trail with cultural, environmental, educational, and recreational opportunities.

Vision Statement

The KSAT will be the premier cultural destination in the region that brings art experiences to our natural surroundings and public space. The KSAT will encourage civic dialogue among people present in the wonder of nature and art in an urban environment.

We seek to achieve this vision by showcasing how the arts, our environment, and creativity can transform and revitalize communities through collaborative partnerships with the city of Easton and community members.

Run-of-the River: Liminality and Refusal at the Foot of College Hill

A Bicentennial Reflection

Anniversaries look back, and the Bicentennial of Lafayette College is a unique opportunity to reclaim not only the large, visible moments but also the less visible, the overlooked, the liminal histories that underlie the institution and are embedded in every landscape. Since its founding, Lafayette College has embraced Bushkill Creek as a natural resource and living laboratory through a legacy of practical use and neglect, to an acknowledgment of the ecological importance of healthy waterways and the reclamation of histories and spaces shaped by them.

Artistic performance is another way to seek such a reclamation—and the base of College Hill offers, if we challenge ourselves to look, an ongoing site of imaginative learning. The college and the community of Easton are tied together, and these histories and commemorations along the trail are attempts at a perpetual reclamation, perhaps each time more inclusive, more imaginative, more sustainable than the last. Bushkill Creek has been a constant, a vital artery running through 200 years of Lafayette's history.

In Run-of-the River we imagine and explore liminality as the edge between audience and performer, proscenium stage and outdoor sites, the uncanny twilight moments between day and night, the fluid borders and convergences between college and community, roadway and waterway, and the economies of steel and service industries. Liminality is a threshold between the past and future.

Performance theorist Tina Campt defines refusal as “a rejection of the status quo and highlights the importance of “creative practices of refusal - nimble and strategic practices that undermine the categories of the dominant.” Her work gives us a framework to embrace negation as generative space and a source of power to flow toward the existence of works that are beyond authoritative regimes of visibility but are anchored in relationality and care. Embodied performance works enable such inducements in change—where refusal is practiced and the liminal is recognized, valued, heard, followed, and embraced.

Using these frameworks of liminality and refusal, the artists of the 2025 edition of Performing the Trail along the Karl Stirner Arts Trail in Easton will engage with these themes to create site-specific performances. The curated, site-specific performances enhance, complement, and respond to the art works, the landscape, and locations paralleling the Bushkill. Such offerings by community members in the Lehigh Valley and beyond explore the relationship of body and place in an invitational gesture to reinvigorate this communal space as we are led through a progressively deepening immersion into the lessons of this watery, liminal refusal, long in the shadow, but inseparable from the college.

Many Thanks to:

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THE ARTS
AT LAFAYETTE

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