

WELCOME TO THE 13TH ANNUAL



UTAH DANCE FILM
FESTIVAL



OCTOBER 9 - 10

OREM LIBRARY HALL & ONLINE
UTDANCEFILMFEST.COM

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

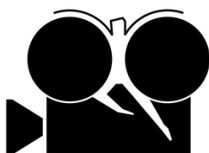
OREM LIBRARY HALL & ONLINE AT
UTDANCEFILMFEST.COM

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- 6:00 PM Screening 1**
90 minutes
- 7:30 PM Screening 2 & Filmmaker Talk**
120 minutes

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

- 11:00 AM Free Workshop**
90 minutes - Mahatu Ori
Rapa Nui & Tahitian Dance Class
- 3:00 PM Feature Screening**
95 Minutes
- 7:00 PM Screening 3**
90 Minutes
- 8:30 PM Awards Showcase**
45 Minutes - Free, Live & Online



UTAH DANCE FILM

• F E S T I V A L •

2026





TALLER DE DANZA GRATUITO
SÁBADO 10 DE OCTUBRE - 11 am
ESCENARIO DE LA BIBLIOTECA DE OREM

Mahatu Ori Polynesian Dance fue creado en 2025 con la necesidad de disfrutar de un espacio acogedor de danzas Polinesias sin las barreras del lenguaje o de habilidades. En cada clase trabajamos la técnica tahitiana y Rapa Nui, para luego aprender parte de una coreografía entendiendo su significado, para darle la interpretación correcta, de esta manera fomentamos la expresión artística, la creatividad, la disciplina en cada clase.

Mahatu Ori es un espacio que se adapta a los distintos niveles de habilidades, y donde juntas aprendemos, practicamos y disfrutamos de aprender una nueva cultura y el arte de la danza

[@mahatu.ori](#)

[@nachi.leon](#)

El taller está abierto a bailarines de todos los niveles.
Se recomienda a los participantes traer cámara.



FREE DANCE WORKSHOP
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10 - 11 am
OREM LIBRARY HALL

Mahatu Ori Polynesian Dance was created in 2025 from the need for welcoming spaces in Polynesian dance without language or skill barriers. In each class, we work on Tahitian and Rapa Nui techniques, then learn part of a choreography, understanding the meaning of each song and giving it the correct interpretation. In this way, we promote artistic expression, creativity and discipline in each student. Mahatu Ori is a space that adapts to different skill levels, where together we learn, practice, and enjoy the art of dance.

[@mahatu.ori](#)

[@nachi.leon](#)

The workshop is open to dancers of all experience levels.
Attendees are invited to bring cameras.

SHORTS SCREENING 1 - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 @ 6 PM



LIENZOS RUNWAY

2 minutes, Mexico

Dance—a vibrant canvas where the body whispers tales and yearnings. The performer, within a boundless void, redefines the elusive. The spectator—a co-creator—intertwines their gaze with the essence. Thus, dance reveals and transforms itself, alive within perception. Time—both frame and creation—whispers of the ephemeral; An art that exists only in the present.

BALLERINA

11 minutes, Iran

Ballerina is the story of an 8-year-old girl who is about to have a dance performance but due to the Iranian rules, her father and other men are prohibited to watch the ballet. It is vital for Mana, the ballerina, to have her father watch her cause she has lost her mother. The ballet starts and children are on the stage but they see no men between spectators. Mana refuses to start the dance and unites with other children to go outside to perform for her father. It is a portrayal of a united civil protest.



BATHE IN LIGHT

3 minutes, China

With every breath, embrace the warm sun; All things endure in perpetual harmony.

Feathers bathed in misty light, serenity without end. Drawing upon the movement elements of the ancient Gulin lanterns—a treasure of intangible cultural heritage—this work transforms the stylistic traits of "playfulness, laughter, playfulness, and revelry" into distinctive artistic imagery and potent dramatic colour.



RISE

4 minutes, Israel

RISE is a site-specific video dance filmed in the heart of the southern Negev Arava desert. Set against a landscape of elemental stillness and vast beauty, three dancers embody themes of emergence, connection, and transformation.



ME IN THE SHADOW

3 minutes, China

Utilizing shadow walls to capture children dancing with their shadows, this project explores the journey from self-doubt, loneliness, and conflict to acceptance and shared movement. Through interaction with their 'shadows.'



SHORTS SCREENING 1 - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 @ 6 PM



BIRTH

2 minutes, UAE

This experimental, movement-driven film aims to poetically celebrate the miracle of being a woman, of birthing life in its various forms, honoring the journey it entails from pain to love.



BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

9 minutes, US

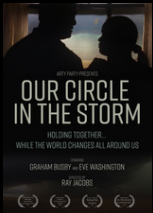
A visceral exploration of perception and memory. Behind Closed Doors unpacks how a shared family trauma fractures into conflicting truths—and ultimately seeks reconciliation through embodied empathy and collective understanding.



KIELO

4 minutes, Finland

Kielo finds it hard to sit still in class. She takes a break venturing into the corridors of her imagination.



OUR CIRCLE IN THE STORM

10 minutes, UK

A group of climate refugees, most of whom have disabilities, have made a home. They live, cook, laugh, cry, eat, dance and work the land together, feeling like a family while feeling vulnerable to the hostile outside climate. A wild storm arrives and one of the group has to leave.



SITTING

5 MINUTES, US

your love: 'sitting' beside me is the second section of a triptych of short dance films that captures the life cycle of love. "Sitting" is a movement story that explores the nuances and awkwardness of a budding relationship.

SHORTS SCREENING 1 - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 @ 6 PM



TPWK

3 minutes, Utah, US

TPWK is an experiment in the technical elements of choreography for the camera. The piece is focused on the dancers as humans in space and it examines how their relationships to themselves, to one another, and to the viewer are transformed through the medium of film.



WHISPERS OF THE CURRENT

13 minutes, Estonia

In a quiet home lined with shadows and light, a woman discovers an old diary tucked away in a drawer — a forgotten fragment of her own past. As she turns its pages, her present begins to dissolve, and she is gently swept into a current of memory, desire, and loss.



SEAL SCRIPT: BIRD WORM

5 minutes, China

This work draws inspiration from the unique oracle bone script of the Chu and Yue regions—the Bird-and-Insect script. Its characters are fluid and intertwined, embodying both form and spirit, carrying the romantic ethos of Chu culture and the aesthetic sensibilities of millennia of civilisation.



WITCHOO

4 minutes, US

A night at the club takes an unexpected turn when the chemistry between a man and a woman is too much to let pass by.

**Scan to cast a vote for
Audience Choice Awards!**



SHORTS SCREENING 2 - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 @ 7:30 PM



EVERYTHING I WANTED TO TELL YOU

15 minutes, Canada

An experimental interactive dance film, this experience puts you in the driver's seat of a twilight reckoning, where you decide the performers' individual paths towards or away from each other.



HYGGE

2 minutes, US

hygge explores a simple, yet contagious act of allowing oneself to find joy in an ordinarily dull task of waiting. In the intimate space of being alone on an elevator, the dancer indulges in bodily expressions of delight. All are invited to discover the endless possibilities for boundless joy and blissful self-expression in the midst of life's most mundane occurrences.



LEGACY IN MOTION

3 minutes, US

A dance/fashion film.



FANTASMA

4 minutes, US

FANTASMA is an experimental performance weaving together movement, fashion, music, and landscape into a sweeping cinematic experience. The work honors the enduring artistry and cultural legacy of New Mexico.



FOYER

5 minutes, Utah, US

In an experiment of putting physical restrictions on liminal spaces, four people find themselves in a setting where the world outside of a box doesn't exist.

SHORTS SCREENING 2 - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 @ 7:30 PM



LOVE UNFOLDING

6 minutes, US

A visual love letter in motion, this dance animation explores the joy, spontaneity, and head-spinning excitement of love's first spark.



GOOD GRIEF

8 minutes, US

A young girl is drawn from the ordered structure of her classroom into a distorted inner world by a haunting sound. In her attempt to escape the chaos, she confronts physical manifestations of her fragmented emotions and conflicting feelings. Blending Hip-Hop's raw energy with rock and modern movement, Good Grief transforms inner turmoil into a disorienting exploration of self-discovery and the fragile first steps toward healing.



SHARED BREATH

8 minutes, Canada

Four dancers wear square skirt-like structures attached to their waists, symbolizing the socially defined shape of their personal spaces. The characters whirl tirelessly within the beautiful, but restrictive forms, such as modern-day dervishes, and add dynamic curves and flows to the rigid straight lines. Defying distance and absence of touch, striving for contact, they break free eventually, all within one shared breath.



THE FLOCK

8 minutes, US

Break free from the binds of the familiar—like a seagull soaring in the wind, embrace the horizon and trust in your knowing to guide you forward.

SHORTS SCREENING 2 - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9 @ 7:30 PM



SHE WANTS TO GO DANCING
4 minutes, US

When the monotony of office life becomes too much to bear, two office ladies celebrate the urge to break free and just dance.



BORN FOR THIS: THE TIA BEE
STOKES STORY
45 minutes, Utah, US

"Born For This" chronicles the inspiring journey of Tia Bee Stokes, a mother of five who, while battling cancer, danced for 15 minutes every day, turning her fight into a powerful testament of resilience and hope.

**Please join us following the
screening for a filmmaker talk!**

**Scan to cast a vote for
Audience Choice Awards!**



FEATURE SCREENING 3 - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10 @ 3 PM

THE SKY WAS ON FIRE: BALLET AND WAR IN UKRAINE



1 hour, 35 minutes, Ukraine

This film tells the story of the Russian cultural genocide against Ukraine—the story of the ballerinas and dancers who must make a choice: to leave the country, to stay and dance, or to pick up arms and fight.

Throughout this harrowing invasion, the Russian state has gone out of its way to destroy Ukraine's cultural institutions, bombing places with no tactical value like the Ivankiv Museum which displayed the work of famous Ukrainian artist Maria Prymachenko. To date, 476 cultural sites have been partially or totally destroyed, and still counting. This war isn't just about taking Ukraine, they intend to erase an entire people group and their rich cultural heritage.

Ballet is one of Ukraine's secret weapons in the war, occupying a central role in articulating the voice of Ukrainian freedom and culture across the globe, in direct contrast to Russia's crumbling control over the artform they've always dominated. The world of ballet is resisting that control at home, abroad, and on the front lines. With this documentary, we intend to amplify their voices and celebrate their courage, preserving as much of their heritage as we can despite their invader's best efforts. Ballet, and art in general, isn't just a way to show joy and hope during this war, it is a way to fight back, directly.

SHORTS SCREENING 3 - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10 @ 7 PM



STILL MOVING

4 minutes, UK

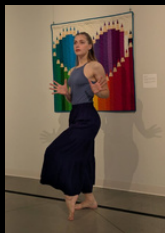
Still Moving is a poetic short film exploring ageing and identity through contemporary dance. Through the eyes of Dawn, a 60-year-old contemporary dancer, the film explores how dance carries the echoes of who we were, and the grace of who we are becoming.



CARMEN

5 minutes, UK

A young woman, dressed in a tracksuit, walks through the backstreets of Sevilla into a housing project. This is Carmen Aviles - the young street superstar of flamenco.



THE BEST IS YET TO COME

3 minutes, Utah, US

Originally created for the stage, videographer and editor Adrienne Whitworth helped reimagine this excerpt of Heaton's larger stage work for the screen, set in several iconic sites within the Orem Library.

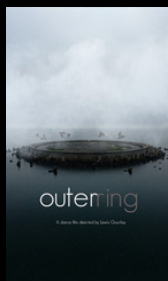


JINSHAN: SEAMS OF GOLD

12 minutes, US

Set against a majestic outdoor rock wall, "JINSHAN: Seams of Gold" is a site-specific vertical dance film that reimagines gravity as a partner in storytelling. Harnessing the power of rock climbing technology, dancers are lifted into the air—not just to defy gravity, but to awaken a sense of flight, freedom, and deep connection. Suspended in space, they soar, tumble, and reach across stone surfaces, turning sheer rock into a canvas for memory, imagination, and transformation.

SHORTS SCREENING 3 - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10 @ 7 PM



OUTERING

4 minutes, UK

Set upon a circular island adrift in a vast, grey sea, Outer Ring unfolds as a haunting meditation on isolation and endurance. A lone dancer moves within the confines of a brutalist structure — part monument, part ruin — as waves crash endlessly against the perimeter. In this post-apocalyptic landscape, movement becomes both ritual and resistance: a physical dialogue between body, concrete, and tide. The choreography oscillates between fragility and force, echoing a world on the edge of collapse and rebirth.



THE BALLAD OF A HOME

8 minutes, Utah, US



MILES

9 minutes, US

A street dancer, faced with his mother's sudden revelation that her time is near, carries the weight of her words into the streets, seeking solace and release through the rhythm and ritual of dance.



ORGANISM

15 minutes, US

Set against the luminous architecture of Leith Symington Griswold Hall, 'Organism' is a dance film that explores the friction between our human essence and the accelerating pace of the modern world. Created in collaboration with The Peabody Dance Ensemble and featuring an original score by award-winning composer Dylan Glatthorn, the film unfolds as a kinetic dialogue between space, sound, and the moving body.

SHORTS SCREENING 3 - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10 @ 7 PM



THE BROKEN CYCLE

3 minutes, Hong Kong

An endless cycle. A dance of stagnation. A relationship's rhythm, caught in a relentless tide, is about to break.



RED FATE

9 minutes, US

Red Fate reimagines the Japanese legend of the Red String of Fate through dance and cinema. Set in Moncalvo, Italy, the film follows a woman caught in an imbalanced relationship, exploring themes of entanglement, loss of self, and the resilience found in reclaiming balance. Blending movement, myth, and modern partnership, Red Fate is a meditation on fate, female empowerment, and the quiet strength of choosing freedom over control.



MELBOURNE HOPAK

10 minutes, Australia

Melbourne Hopak is part of the Lehenda Film series. The origins of Lehenda's film series can be traced back to the global Covid-19 lockdowns—a time when theatres were dark, stages silent, and traditional forms of cultural expression temporarily out of reach. Faced with the absence of live performance, we turned to film as a new medium to preserve and express our identity as Australian Ukrainians.



GROUNDED

5 minutes, Utah, US

Grounded is a dance film set within the vast, rugged landscape of the San Rafael Swell, where movement and environment become inseparable. Through embodied expression shaped by the terrain, the film explores themes of connection, resilience, and the enduring relationship between the human body and the natural world.

AWARDS SHOWCASE - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10 @ 8:30 PM
LIVE IN OREM AND ONLINE

UDFF AWARD CATEGORIES INCLUDE

- Choreography for an Environment
- Choreography for a Lens
- Solo and Duet Performances
- Ensemble Performance
- Costume Design
- Editing
- Sound Design
- Special Effects
- Directing
- Lighting Design
- Documentary
- Cinematography
- Production Design
- Arches Award
- The Humanity Award

MANY KIND AND GENUINE THANKS
TO THE 2026 FESTIVAL JUDGES

TARA RICHARDSON - DANCER & EDUCATOR
FAWAZ AL-MATROUK - FILMMAKER

THANK YOU TO OUR VENUE!

OREM LIBRARY HALL

