

## CLARE SIOBHAN BYRNE

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### EDUCATION

2023 Master of Arts in Religion and Music, Institute of Sacred Music, Yale University, New Haven, CT

#### *Thesis*

"'Throw Your Weight Around': Human and Divine Choreographies in African Methodist Episcopal Dance Ministry" (2023)

#### *Awards and Distinctions*

Full tuition scholarship at the Institute of Sacred Music, 2020-2023  
Selected by faculty: Best Colloquium Project, 2022

Studied with Braxton Shelley (*The Gospel Imagination, Women in Gospel, Music and the Black Church*), Sally Promey, Kathleen Turner (*Dance Ministry in African Methodist Episcopal Churches*), Markus Rathey, Melanie Ross, and Teresa Berger (*Music & Theology, Gender and Identity Studies*)

2005 Master of Fine Arts in Dance, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI

#### *Awards and Distinctions*

Graduate Fellow in Dance, Full Tuition and Stipend Award, 2004-2005  
Chancellor's Awards, 2003-2005

Studied with Janet Lilly (*Yoga, Improvisation, Dance History*), Ed Burgess (*Improvisation, Independent Study*), Simon Ferro (*Composition*), Sara Hook (*Laban Analysis*), Jan Erkert (*Pedagogy through Kinesiology*), Barbara Grubel (*Modern Technique, Composition*), among others

1993 Bachelor of Arts in Dance Performance, Connecticut College, New London, CT

Studied with: Martha Myers (*Composition, Improvisation, Kinesiology*), Jaclynn Villamil (*Ballet Technique*), Ron Brown, Mark Dendy, David Dorfman, Hilary Easton, Laura Glenn, Michael Jahoda, Anne Alex Packard, (*Modern Technique*), Karen Dearborn (*Composition*), Wall Matthews

*(Music for Dance)*, Eugene Gallagher *(Religious Studies)*, Blanche Boyd *(Creative Writing)*

*Awards and Distinctions*

Summa cum laude, 1993

Connecticut College Scholarship, 1989-1993

Winthrop Scholar (upon admission), 1989

Phi Beta Kappa (junior year induction), 1992

## **SELECTED TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

2025-present Adjunct Faculty, Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, CT  
2024-present Affiliated Faculty, Emerson College, Boston, MA  
2021-present Teaching Artist, Neighborhood Music School, New Haven, CT  
2010-2018 Fulltime/Senior Lecturer, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT  
2008-2010 Part-time Lecturer, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT  
2001-2008 Adjunct Faculty, Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY  
2001 Adjunct Faculty, Manhattanville College  
1995-2001 Adjunct Faculty, Muhlenberg College, Allentown, PA

## **COURSES INCLUDE:**

*Lecture/Discussion:* Dance History, Social Issues in Dance, Global Perspectives in Dance, Trends in Contemporary Dance, Gender and Social Dance

*Studio, All Levels:* Contemporary Technique, Ballet Technique, Movement Improvisation, Choreography, Contact Improvisation/Partnering, Site Dance Performance/Practicum, Repertory/Creating Original Work on Students, Artistic Direction of Student Concerts, Dance for Parkinson's Disease

## **SELECTED AWARDS, PRESENTATIONS, AND RESIDENCIES**

Mar. 2025 Hygienic Arts, "Tonka" for Dragon's Egg at Hygienic Showcase  
Feb. 2024 Invited Presentation on dance ministry research at conference: "Igniting Emancipatory Possibilities through African Diaspora Dance," Connecticut College, CT  
Feb. 2024 Duet/Video performance with Ara Fitzgerald "Pilgrimage" at New York Dance Guild Gala, Alvin Ailey Studios  
Nov. 2023 Invited Guest Lecture on research for "Drugs, Demons, and Dancing," University of Vermont, VT  
Nov. 2023 Invited Music and Dance Guest Performance, Space Fest at Greywood Arts Residency Center in Killeagh, Ireland  
July 2023 Music Residency, Arts Connection on Governor's Island, NYC  
May 2023 Research selected for presentation At Yale University's 2nd Annual Black Arts Conference: *Ritual Transformations of Consciousness*, New Haven, CT

2020-2023	Full Tuition Graduate Scholarship at Yale's Institute of Sacred Music, New Haven, CT
2018-2022	Residencies, The Dragon's Egg, Ledyard, CT
2017	Residency, Bogliasco Foundation at The Liguria Center, Bogliasco, Italy
2017	Music and Dance Residency, Greywood Arts, Killeagh, Ireland
2007	White Oak Residency, White Oak, Yulee, FL
2006	Jerome Robbins Fellowship through the Bogliasco Foundation at The Liguria Center, Bogliasco, Italy
2004	Joyce SoHo Space Grant Residency, New York, NY
2004	Clare Byrne Dance Company Residency, The Yard on Martha's Vineyard, Chilmark, MA
2004	Meet the Composer Grant with The Yard and composer Eric Reed, Chilmark, MA
2003	Mondo Cane Commission from Dixon Place for <i>Rend and Sew</i> , New York, NY
2002	New York International Fringe Festival Best Dance Performance Award for <i>Wet Blue &amp; Friends</i> , New York, NY
2002 - 2006	CCDE's Silo Residency at Kirkland Farm, Hellertown, PA
2000	Joyce SoHo Subsidized Performance Grant for <i>The St. Patrick Pageant</i> , New York, NY
2000	Bessie Schönberg Residency, Yard on Martha's Vineyard, Chilmark, MA
2000	Brooklyn Arts Exchange Space Grant, Brooklyn, NY

## SELECTED WORK IN DANCE, SCHOLARSHIP, MUSIC

2025	<i>Tonka</i> , solo choreography for the Hygienic Egg, contemporary adaptation of "Wouldn't It Be Lovely" from <i>My Fair Lady</i>
2023	<i>Throw Your Weight Around: Human/Divine Choreographies in Two African Methodist Episcopal Churches</i> , Graduate Thesis at Yale University
2023	<i>Oh Mother</i> , music and dance collaboration with Paul Besaw
2023	<i>Pilgrimage</i> , film in dance and music, collaboration with choreographer Ara Fitzgerald, film artist Peter Cunningham, and musician Wall Matthews
2023	<i>Tangle</i> , Choreographic collaboration with dance-comedy improvisation artist Amy Larimer and Andrey Ramirez
2019	<i>Celestials</i> , double album of original songs, recorded in Burlington, VT, released and performed in NYC, CT, VT
2018	<i>Appalachian Spring</i> , new choreography to Aaron Copland's score, commissioned by The Burlington Chamber Orchestra and conducted by Yutaka Kono
2017	<i>Song &amp; Dance Man</i> , song and dance project created during sabbatical residencies at Greywood Arts in Cork, Ireland and Bogliasco Foundation, Italy, performed at Phantom Theater in Warren, VT, and toured in Ireland
2016	<i>Seed</i> , original EP album recorded with Vermont and Brooklyn musicians
2011-2013	<i>Poor Sister Clares Traveling Dancing Monk Show</i> , Flynn Theater, UVM,

	Fleming Museum, Phantom Theater
2007-2012	<i>Weekly Rites</i> , weekly online ritual of improvised performance in movement and other media, accompanied by weekly writing
2007-2010	<i>Kneelings</i> : happenings of genuflections in patterns through NYC and VT
2008	<i>Clare Mayfair</i> , series of events around NYC; premiere of <i>Witch Night</i> , evening of solo performance, Panetta Studios, New York, NY
2007	<i>Letter to the Church</i> , Union Seminary, New York, NY
2007	<i>To the Tree</i> , commissioned by Union Theological Seminary, New York, NY
2007	<i>Rounds: The First Last Dance, or The Last First Dance, or An Ordination</i> commissioned/produced by Dance New Amsterdam, New York, NY
2004	<i>Tetrapod</i> , co-produced with the Flea Theater, New York, NY
2003	<i>Rend and Sew, Mondo Cane commission</i> , Dixon Place, New York, NY
2002	<i>Wet Blue &amp; Friends</i> , co-production with Dixon Place, New York International Fringe Festival, New York, NY
2001	<i>The St. Patrick Pageant</i> , Joyce SoHo, New York, NY
1999	<i>Legendys of Hooly Wummen</i> , New York International Fringe Festival

## SELECTED CHOREOGRAPHY FOR STUDENT PERFORMANCE

2025	<i>Vivaldi in D</i> , ballet ensemble repertory for Neighborhood Music School
2016	<i>Premeaningmakers</i> , collaboration with UVM Taiko Drumming, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT
2014	<i>Tetrapod (2004)</i> , re-set on UVM students for travel/performance in Inner Mongolia, China
2014	<i>Flowers Need the Night</i> (Reprise, Site Work), American College Dance Festival, Boston University, Boston, MA
2013	<i>Flowers Need the Night</i> (Site Work), University of Vermont, Burlington, VT
2013	<i>RECKA RECKA fella</i> , University of Vermont, Burlington, VT
2011	<i>Kneelings III</i> (Site Work), University of Vermont, Burlington, VT
2011	<i>White Witch: Legion</i> , University of Vermont, Burlington, VT
2010	<i>Wind May Blow</i> , University of Vermont, Burlington, VT
2009	<i>Bye &amp; Bye</i> , University of Vermont, Burlington, VT

## SELECTED PERFORMANCE VENUES

### *New York City*

Dance Theater Workshop/New York Live Arts	
Dance New Amsterdam	The Flea Theater
Joyce SoHo	Symphony Space, Thalia Theater
Dixon Place	Brooklyn Arts Exchange
Performance Space 122	New York International Fringe Festival
DanceNow Festival	Cunningham Studio
Joe's Pub	Movement Research at Context Studio

University Settlement  
The SoHo Arts Festival  
Local Produce Festival  
The Spider Arts Alliance  
Evolving Arts Theater  
Danspace Project at St. Mark's Church  
Williamsburg Arts Nexus  
Soundance Studio

Chashama  
Marquee Theater at Marion's Restaurant  
John Jay College Theater  
Gershwin Hotel  
The Bridge for Dance  
Connelly Theater  
Panetta Dance

*National and International Performance Venues*

Hygienic Gallery, New London, CT  
Greywood Arts, Killeagh, Ireland  
Flynnspace, Burlington, VT  
UVM Recital Hall, Burlington, VT  
Phantom Theater, Warren, VT  
Hoxie Gallery, Westerly, CT  
Goose Route Dance Festival, Shepherdstown, WV  
The Wagon Train Project, Lincoln, NE  
Merriewold Park, Forestburgh, NY  
The Yard on Martha's Vineyard, Chilmark, MA  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI  
Muhlenberg College, Allentown, PA  
Connecticut College, New London, CT  
The Dragon's Egg, Ledyard, CT  
Manhattanville College, Purchase, NY  
Roger Williams University, RI  
The New Dance Space, Charlottesville, VA

**OTHER RECENT AND CURRENT WORK**

2019-present Freelance Writer, Performing Arts, *Connecticut Examiner*, online paper based in Old Lyme, CT  
2022-2023 Researcher and Student Coordinator, Oral History of American Music Archive, Yale University

**ARTS COMMUNITY SERVICE**

2015-2018 Organization of Vermont improvisation series in music and dance, *The Mixer*  
2007-2018 Selection Committee, Bogliasco Foundation/Liguria Study Center, Dance Panel, Bogliasco, Italy  
2009-2017 Organization of community artists series, *Eat My Art Out*, presenting informal works-in-progress three times a year at different venues in and around northern Vermont

## BIOGRAPHY

Clare Byrne is a dance educator, choreographer, musician, and researcher. Her work in dance, music, and scholarship explores the power of transformation in performance — on concert stages, in music clubs, and in the context of religion and ritual.

Byrne currently teaches in the dance programs at Sacred Heart University, Emerson College, and Neighborhood Music School. Byrne was Senior Lecturer in Dance in the Department of Music & Dance at the University of Vermont before moving to Connecticut to pursue a masters' degree at the Institute of Sacred Music at Yale University. She has also taught in the dance programs at Muhlenberg College, Long Island University in Brooklyn, and Manhattanville College.

In her current creative work, Byrne blends original music and choreography. She writes, choreographs, and performs original songs as part of theatrical, choreographic acts fronting the band *The Celestials* with dance/music artists Amy Larimer and Nicholas Leichter. Byrne's albums *Seed* and *Celestials*, and recent singles *Artemis* and *Shape of Things*, have gathered Vermont and New York City musicians; she has performed in NYC at The Bitter End, Rockwood Music Hall, Governor's Island, and other venues in the United States and abroad.

Byrne was the artistic director of Clare Byrne Dance for ten years in New York City, and later a member of Dance Tramp, a choreographic collective based in Burlington, VT. She toured the world as a founding member of Nicholas Leichter Dance, and has worked with David Neumann, Adriane Fang, Paul Besaw, Avi Waring, and Nayo Takasaki, among many other choreographers.

An important recent avenue of Byrne's work has been scholarship. Her research in dance ministry and gospel music in the Black Church at Yale's Institute of Sacred Music produced a thesis which explored the intersection of choreographed dance ministry and ecstatic improvisation in two African Methodist Episcopal churches in Queens and Washington, D.C. This research was presented at Yale's 2nd Annual Black Sacred Arts Conference: *Ritual Transformations of Consciousness*, and Byrne continues to present this scholarship at conferences and in guest lectures.

Byrne has choreographed many works on student in dance departments around the country. Her full-evening dance projects have included the *Poor Sister Clares Traveling Dancing Show*, *Rounds: The First Last Dance*, *The Last First Dance*, the online improvisation blog *Weekly Rites*; *Pilgrimage*, a duet with Ara Fitzgerald; *White Witch*, exploring sacred and cultural constructions of feminine images; *To the Tree* and *Letter to the Church*, site-specific works created and performed in Union Theological Seminary's chapels. *Kneelings I, II, and III* were pose-poems in the simple gesture of kneeling on streets and parks of New York City and Vermont. Byrne created new choreography for Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring* for the Burlington Chamber Orchestra twice as a Vermont resident.

Byrne has received awards and residences through Yale University, White Oak Residency, Jerome Robbins Fellowship and the Bogliasco Foundation, Joyce SoHo, The Dragon's Egg in Ledyard, CT, Bessie Schönberg Residency at The Yard, Meet the Composer, Mondo Cane commission through Dixon Place, NYC, selection and awards at The New York International Fringe Festival, and a Brooklyn Arts Exchange Space Grant. Her work has been presented at Danspace at St. Mark's Church, Dance New Amsterdam, Joe's Pub, The Flea Theater, Symphony Space, The Flynn Theater in Burlington, VT, and many other venues in New York City, around the country, and internationally. Her work has been previewed, featured, and reviewed multiple times in *The New York Times*, *Village Voice*, *New Yorker*, *Dance Insider*, *Backstage*, *TimeOut NY*, Eva Yaa Asantewaa/*InfiniteBody*, and *Seven Days* in Burlington, VT.

## SELECTED PRESS QUOTES

“Relentlessly creative, Clare Byrne is a modern renaissance woman. As a senior lecturer in dance at the University of Vermont and an accomplished dancer and choreographer, her primary passion is movement. But Byrne’s artistic impulses have led her to other mediums, including art, writing and music. Her debut EP, *Seed*, is something like her varied artistic oeuvre in microcosm...it suggests a curious and expressive mind as well as an artist unafraid of taking risks.”

■ Dan Bolles, *Seven Days*, Burlington, VT

“*Rounds* is an intriguing blend of the forthright and the mysterious, discipline and freedom, reverence and skepticism.”

■ Deborah Jowitt, *Village Voice*, New York, NY

“Clare Byrne, a choreographer with an idiosyncratic and visceral sense of spirituality, hits the sidewalks of New York for a series of devotional genuflections.”

■ Brian Seibert, *New Yorker*, New York, NY

“Her dance reminded me of something a metaphysical teacher said recently: that places that have seen great violence are like bodies in need of healing...*To the Tree* made me feel anything but anxious. I felt the healing.”

■ Eva Yaa Asantewaa, *Infinite Body*, New York, NY

"The music seems to flood through Ms. Byrne and set her dancing the joyous physical equivalent of church-service speaking in tongues."

■ Jennifer Dunning, *New York Times*, New York, NY

"[The St. Patrick Pageant] at Joyce SoHo, written and choreographed by Byrne, has a harum-scarum charm, its unruliness monitored by intelligence. You're never sure what'll happen next, and when it comes you may not instantly be able to fit it into the faintly surreal puzzle, but you can easily fall in love with it."

■ Deborah Jowitt, *Village Voice*, New York, NY

"Ms. Byrne is quietly becoming a major presence in downtown dance, a deceptive wren who only gradually reveals her witty physicality."

■ Jennifer Dunning, *New York Times*, New York, NY