



**10:30 AM | JULY 27, 2025 | RUTH PAGE CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

A professional dance audition is traditionally conducted in a dance studio, behind closed doors. **DanceWorks Chicago** opens doors and illuminates the experience with the hope that today's **SEASON 18+ Open Company Audition** will connect all of us through an appreciation of the work of art.

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## **WELCOME**

Julie Nakagawa

## **BALLET CLASS, BARRE AND CENTER, WITH ELIMINATIONS**

Julie Nakagawa, Pat Spaeth, and Candidates

## **REPERTORY + EXTRAS**

Julie Nakagawa and DWC fam Hannah Mu, Mia Philippon, Claire Binguit, and Ella Kim

## **POST-AUDITION INTERVIEWS**

Following the dance portion of the audition, individual interviews with each of the final candidates will be conducted by Julie Nakagawa.



*"To affect the quality of a day, that is the art of life."  
– Henry David Thoreau*

Welcome to this unique opportunity to go behind-the-scenes as DWC looks for exceptional dancers and humans to join **SEASON 18+**. This innovative approach to an audition is compelling for its exposure to the possibilities of the body, the activation of the mind, and the vulnerability and power of the spirit. DanceWorks Chicago respects and values the

unique individuality, courage, and optimism of each of the young artists you will see on stage. We ask that you, their audience, do the same.

## **DANCEWORKS CHICAGO (DWC)**

Founded in May 2007, **DanceWorks Chicago (DWC)** offers a foundation for early career artists by providing a creative incubator from which dancers and choreographers propel themselves and the art form to a new level of artistry through training, collaboration, mentorship, and performance.

Led by Co-founder and Artistic Director Julie Nakagawa, DWC fills a niche in the dance ecosystem, investing in and shining a spotlight on individual artists. Dancers are encouraged to explore their technical capability as well as their artistic curiosity through a deeply personal approach with the goal of nurturing passionate, articulate artists able to make meaningful contributions to the art form. Choreographically, DWC looks to uncover new voices and support the journey of becoming.

DWC fosters a welcoming and inclusive culture relating to board and staff, artists, works of art, and audience served, believing that the embrace of different perspectives and ideas will unearth a standard of creativity and innovation that cannot be achieved by one.

DanceWorks Chicago is embarking on SEASON 18+, the Glow Up!

"We say we want to be more curious in our own lives, but we consistently make choices that optimize our familiar and established habits and ways of thinking. This is what makes the act of being curious both so highly valued and so uniquely rare. We know exploring the unknown can lead to new discoveries, but we have a hard time rationalizing how to block off the time to do so if it means losing time that would guarantee progress somewhere else." -Amy Stanton

*Always moving.*

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## **SPECIAL MESSAGE from JULIE NAKAGAWA**

I started my relationship with Lou Conte and Lou Conte Dance Studio in 1994. As of 2025, the balance tipped, and I have spent over half my life as an artist(ic) caretaker / creative problem solver / behavioral scientist / party planner / first responder / cheerleader / accountability partner / tour guide / Good Dance Citizen / bus driver.

I am grateful to have shared the gift of time with many wonderful humans.  
**Priceless.**

And speaking of time, it is time to make a change.

I have decided to retire.

And DanceWorks Chicago will sunset.

This past year, I connected with many members of my dance family, some by chance and some by choice, in places near and far. I recognize that investment in the development of unique artistic voices through my work at Lou Conte Dance Studio, Hubbard Street 2, and DanceWorks Chicago has contributed to a generation of inspiring humans. People have started their own blood families, studios, companies, staging careers, social justice endeavors, educational programs, artistic offerings. They are educators / mentors / supporters / leaders / entrepreneurs / board members in a variety of sectors and sharing their spirit across the world. And those are just the things that I know about. They are multi-hyphenate: messy, beautiful, flawed, resilient, powerful vessels of the human experience. I am excited to see what is next.

Through these experiences, I know that this is the time for me to offer an act of love and step away to do my part to offer and hold space for the next generation of leaders in the dance commUNITY. I feel like a proud parent (and even grandma).

So, I am putting on my turn signal, crossing into another lane, and working my way toward the off ramp.

DanceWorks Chicago will continue "business as usual" through the end of calendar year 2025, SAVE the DATE for a Bon Voyage Party of sorts in Chicago on Thursday, October 30, 2025.

**FIND US! Facebook and Instagram: @danceworkschicago**  
**We're on [Eventbrite](#), too!**

**SUPPORT: <https://www.danceworkschicago.org/support/>**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**What exactly is DanceWorks Chicago?**

DanceWorks Chicago is an organization committed to the growth of individual artistry, experience, and responsibility. It is a place where connections happen, relationships are valued and nurtured, and a spirit of excellence binds a vibrant community.

### **Is DanceWorks Chicago a dance company?**

There is a company component to DWC, consisting of 6 dancers, who refine their craft and share their art form through classes, rehearsals, showings, and performances. Because the organization values the process as well as the product, DWC places equal emphasis on the development of artists as well as the creation and presentation of dances.

### **Is DanceWorks Chicago a service organization?**

While not a service organization in the traditional sense, DWC strives to be a good dance citizen by sharing its experiences with the dance community locally, nationally, and internationally.

### **What does it mean to be a good dance citizen?**

DanceWorks Chicago is concerned with creating commUNITY within our own organization and promoting a sense of responsibility within the field to contribute to the art form and move it forward.

### **What kind of dance does DanceWorks Chicago create/perform?**

DWC concentrates on investigating, creating, and sharing a diverse body of work made by contemporary artists. Contemporary in both senses of the word: artists currently creating as well as contemporary in movement sensibilities.

### **What are you looking for in a dancer?**

DanceWorks Chicago looks for dancers with technical ability, mental agility, emotional availability, and a sense of adventure.

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### **SAVE the DATEs:**

**Sunday, September 21 at 4:30pm**

**[Chicago LIVE! at Navy Pier](#)**

**FREE and Open to the Public!**

**#SupportLocal**

**Tuesday, September 30 at 5:30pm**

**[See Chicago Dance 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala](#)**

**2025 Distinguished Service to the Dance Field**

**Awardee: Julie Nakagawa**

# #commUNITY

## SPECIAL THANKS TO

Katie Matteson Campana and the Ruth Page Center for the Arts; Kimberly Dulac and Winston, Licensed Therapy Dog; and Team DWC, including Sara Bibik, Isaiah Cavallero, Emma Lambert, and Vin Reed

