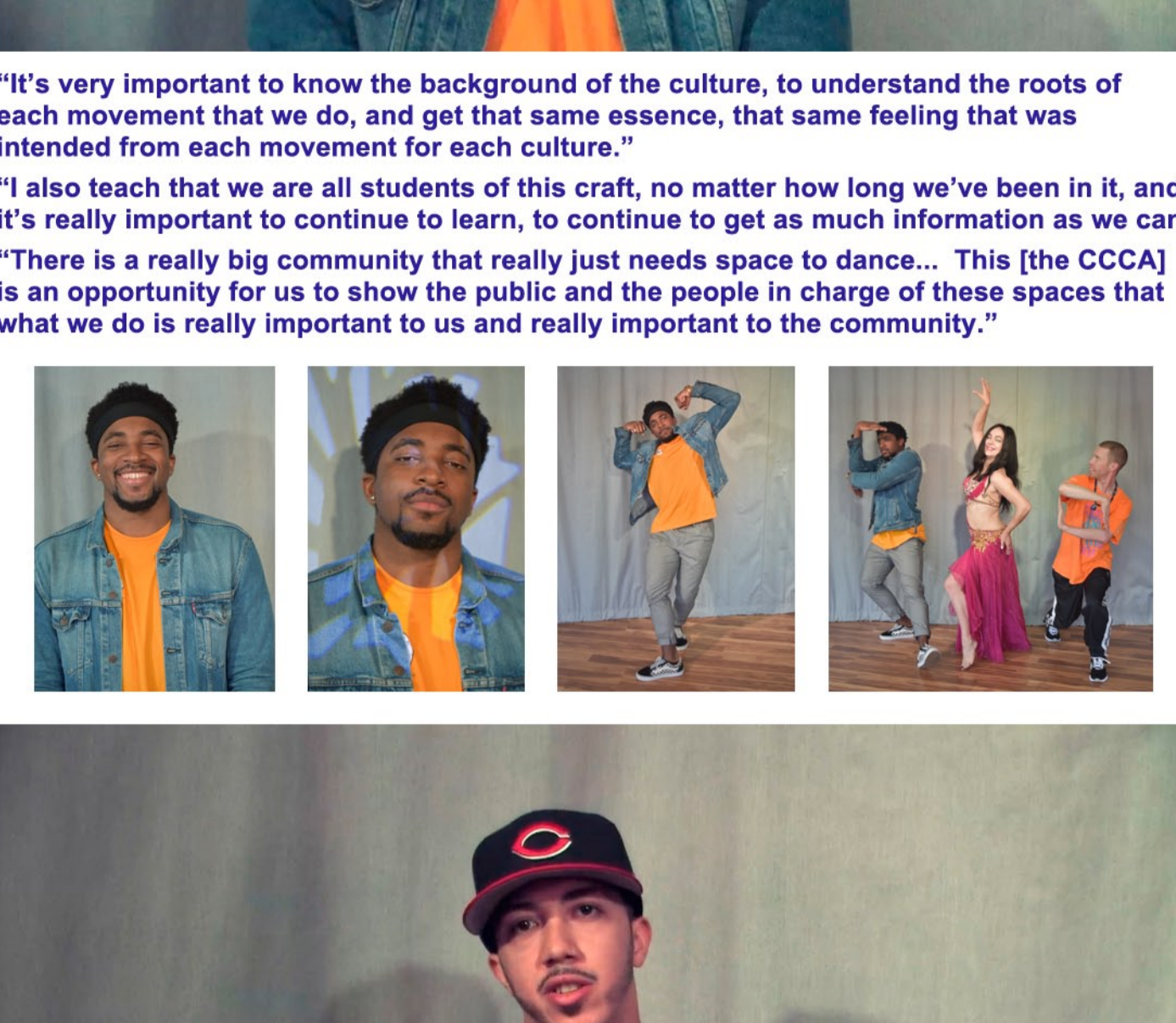


Cambridge Community Center for the Arts

# Artist Testimonials

Right before the pandemic was announced, from March 1st to 3rd, 2020, the CCCA conducted a faculty and staff photo and artist testimonial video shoot produced by Executive Artistic Director, Dan Marshall, to give a voice to the artists/educators, and get our faculty and staff together to share experiences.

The following are photos and testimonial quotes from 9 of the 17 artists, and staff we interviewed. We continue to edit the remaining videos, and hope to resume conducting photo and testimonial shoots after the pandemic is over.

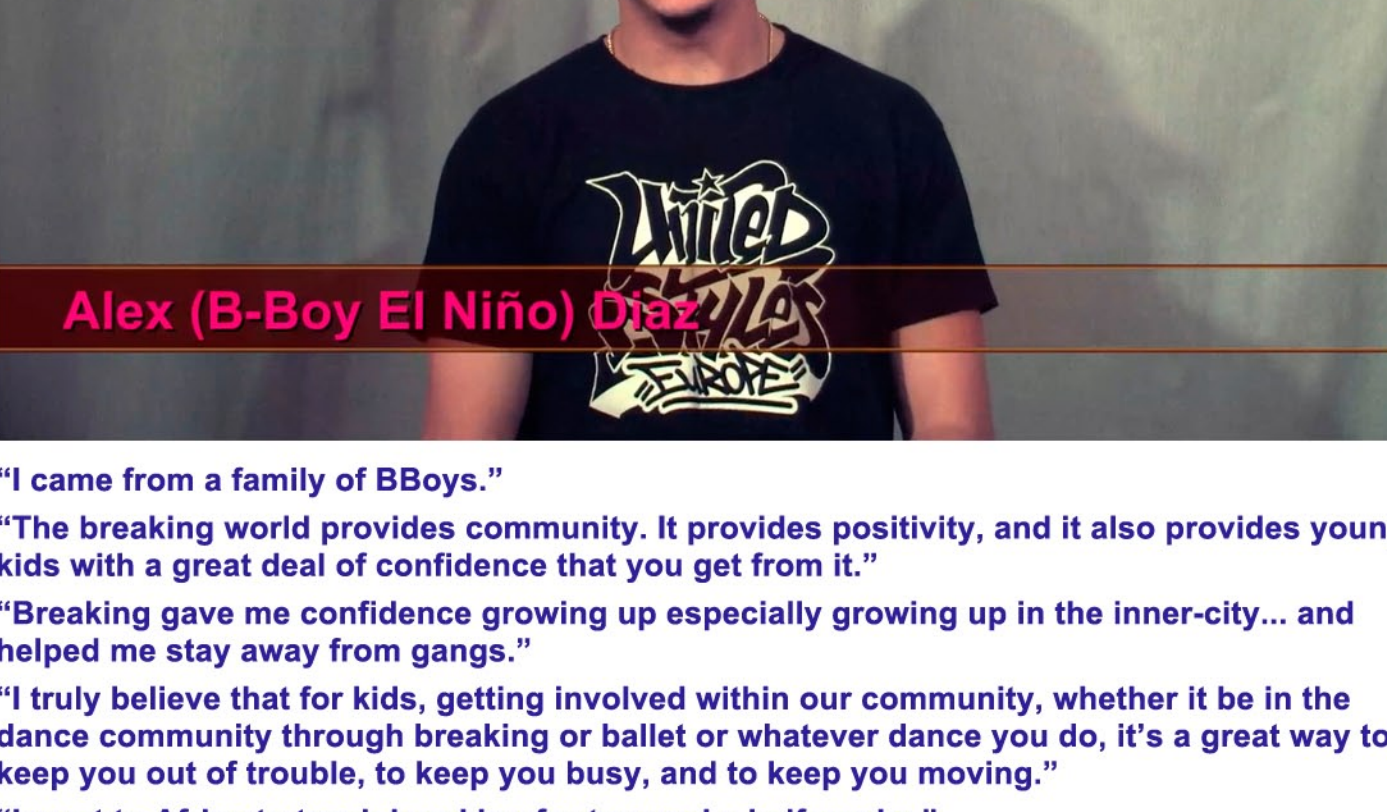
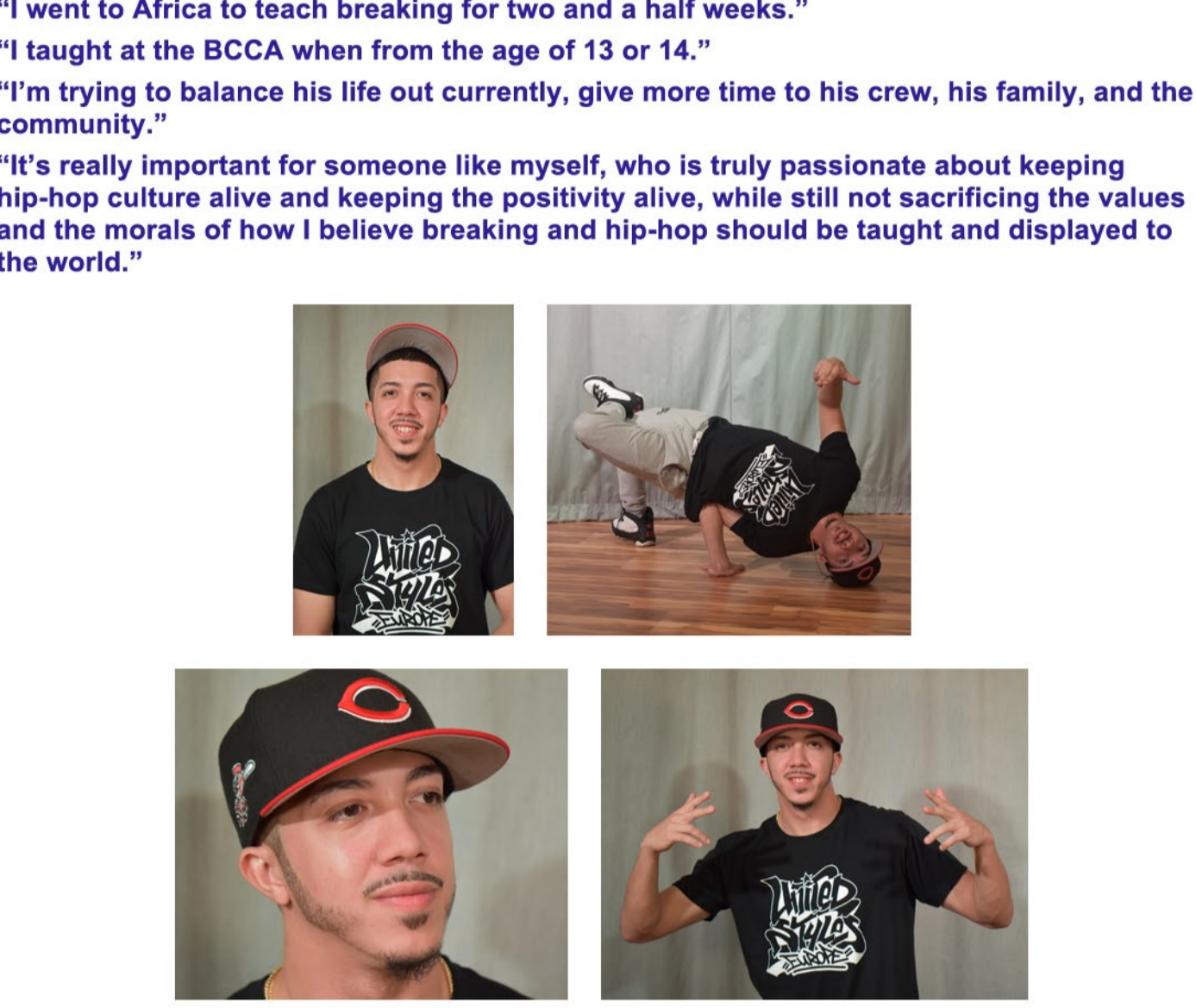


**Alex Ambila**

"It's very important to know the background of the culture, to understand the roots of each movement that we do, and get that same essence, that same feeling that was intended from each movement for each culture."

"I also teach that we are all students of this craft, no matter how long we've been in it, and it's really important to continue to learn, to continue to get as much information as we can."

"There is a really big community that really just needs space to dance... This [the CCCA] is an opportunity for us to show the public and the people in charge of these spaces that what we do is really important to us and really important to the community."

**Alex (B-Boy El Niño) Díaz**

"I came from a family of BBoys."

"The breaking world provides community. It provides positivity, and it also provides young kids with a great deal of confidence that you get from it."

"Breaking gave me confidence growing up especially growing up in the inner-city... and helped me stay away from gangs."

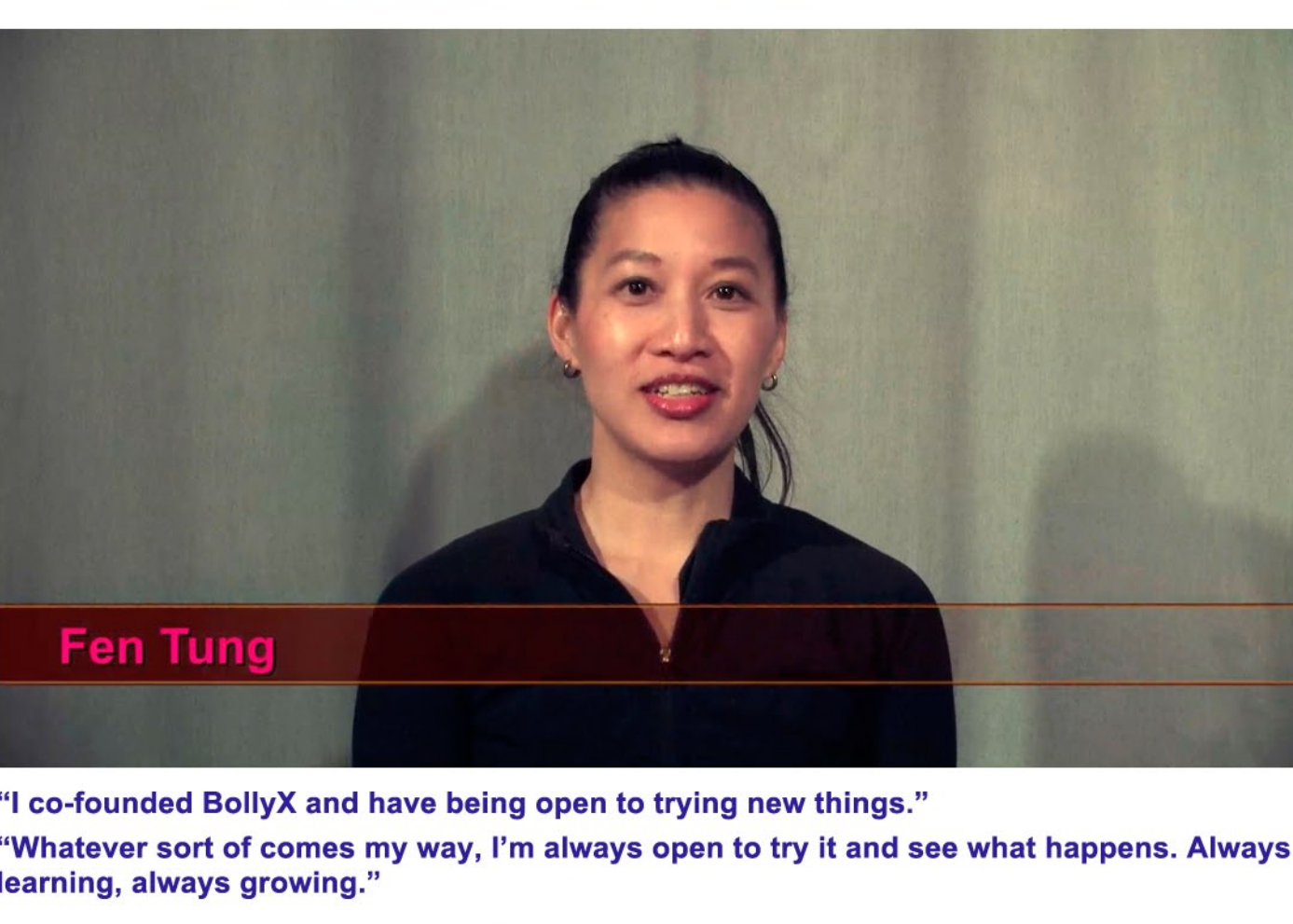
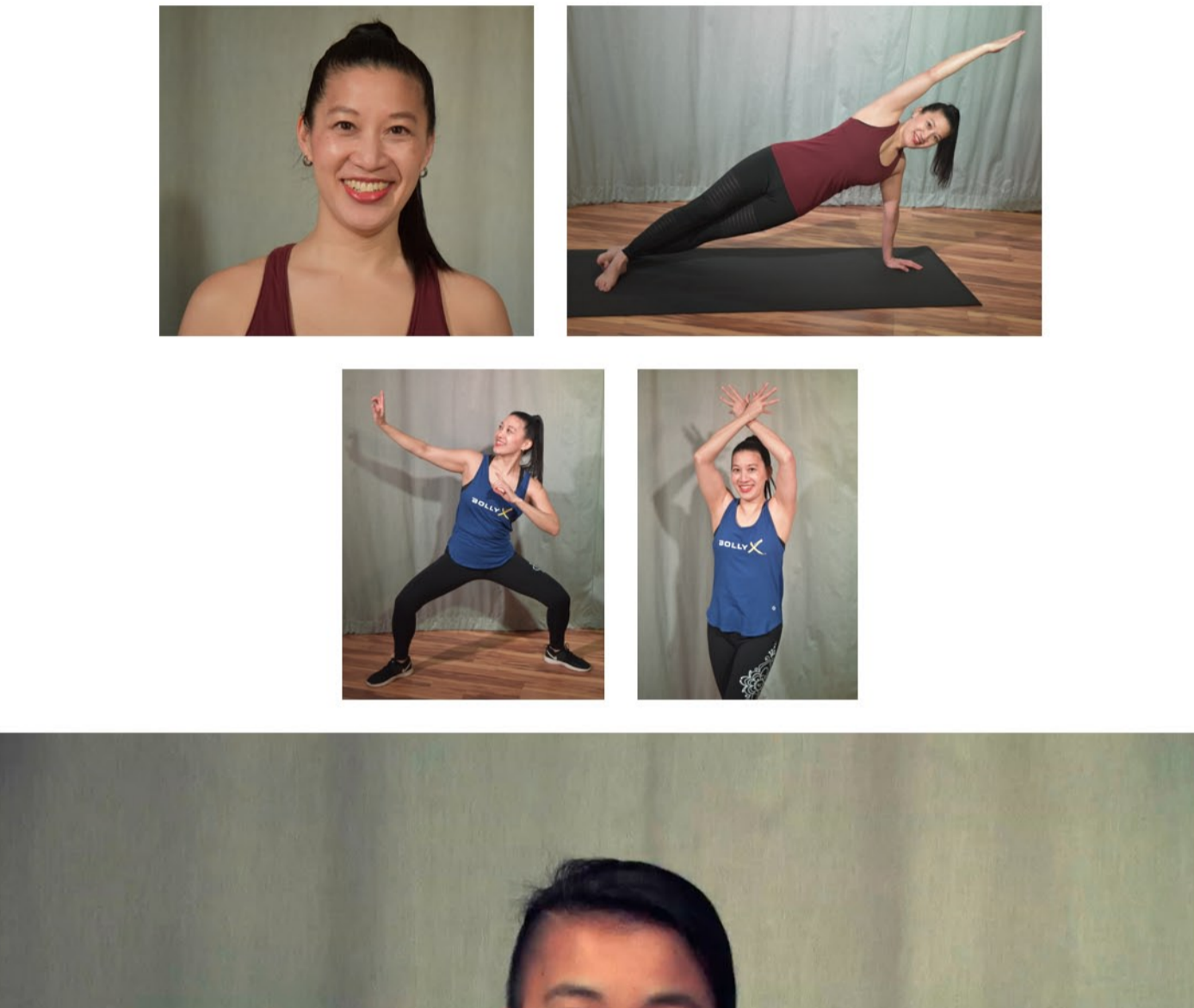
"I truly believe that for kids, getting involved within our community, whether it be in the dance community through breaking or ballet or whatever dance you do, it's a great way to keep you out of trouble, to keep you busy, and to keep you moving."

"I went to Africa to teach breaking for two and a half weeks."

"I taught at the BCCA when from the age of 13 or 14."

"I'm trying to balance his life out currently, give more time to his crew, his family, and the community."

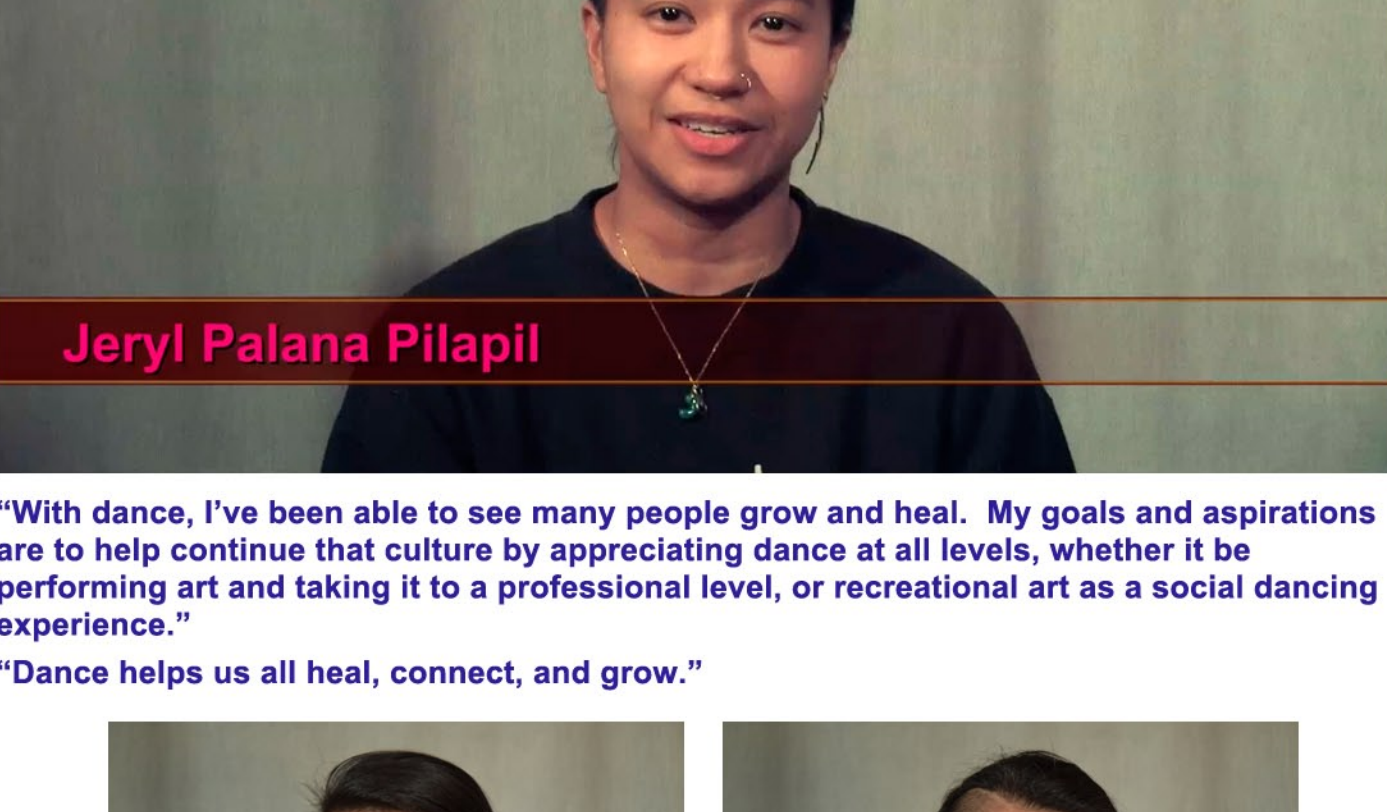
"It's really important for someone like myself, who is truly passionate about keeping hip-hop culture alive and keeping the positivity alive, while still not sacrificing the values and the morals of how I believe breaking and hip-hop should be taught and displayed to the world."

**Fen Tung**

"I co-founded BollyX and have been open to trying new things."

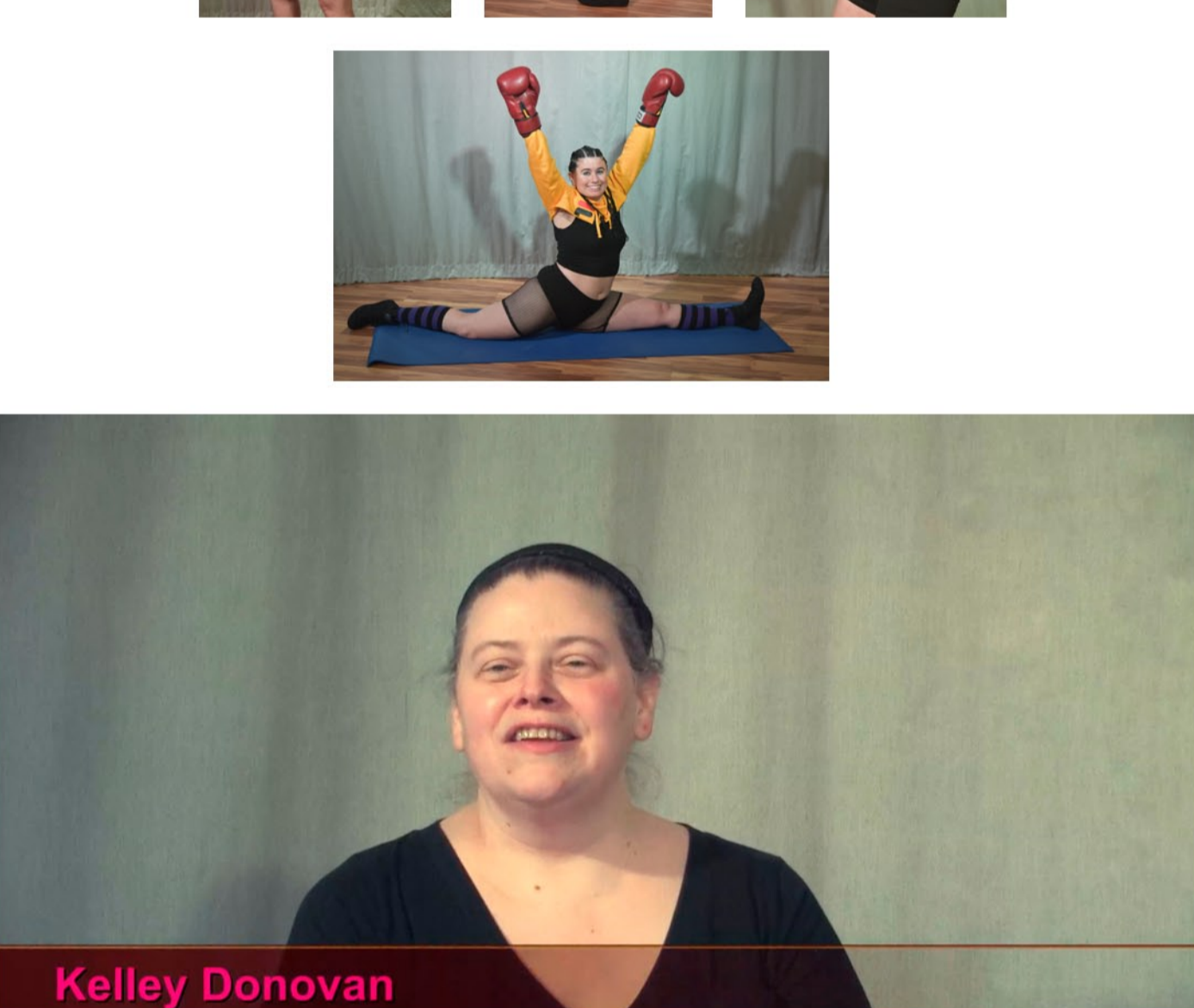
"Whatever sort of comes my way, I'm always open to try it and see what happens. Always learning, always growing."




**Jeryl Palana Pilapil**

"With dance, I've been able to see many people grow and heal. My goals and aspirations are to help continue that culture by appreciating dance at all levels, whether it be performing art and taking it to a professional level, or recreational art as a social dancing experience."


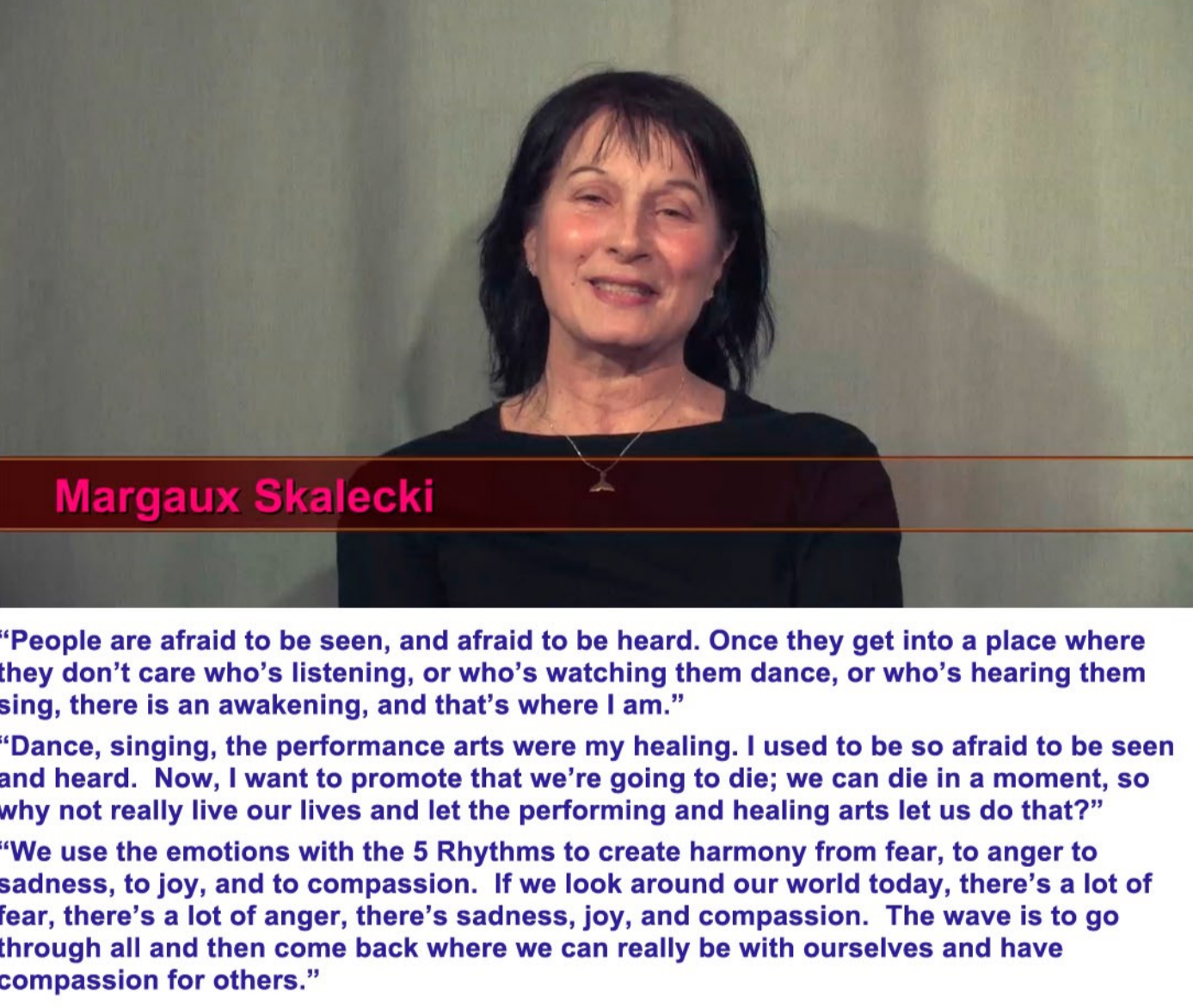
"Dance helps us all heal, connect, and grow."

**Jessica Liggero**

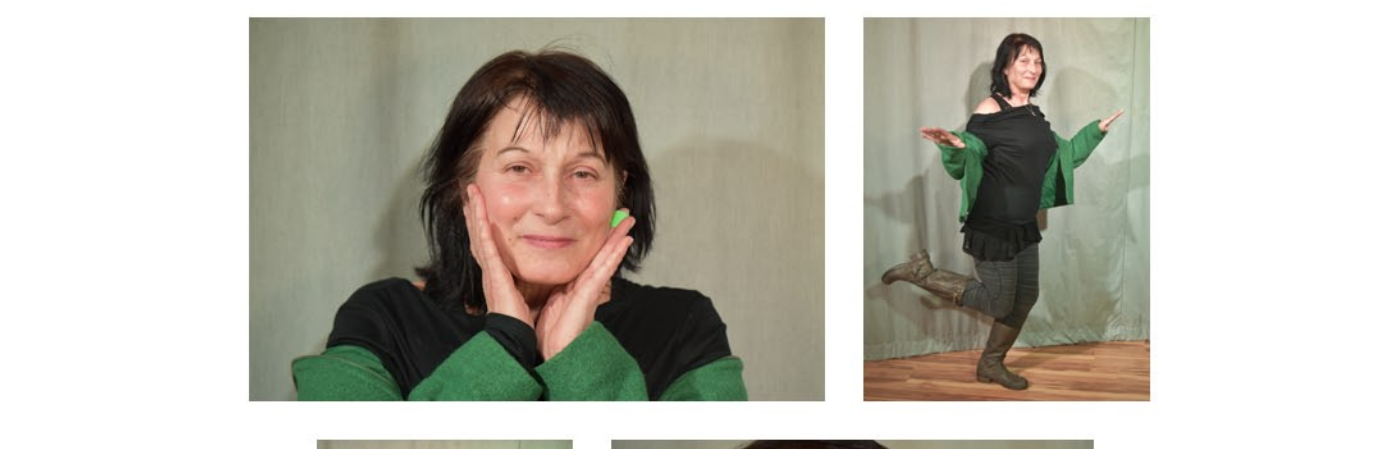
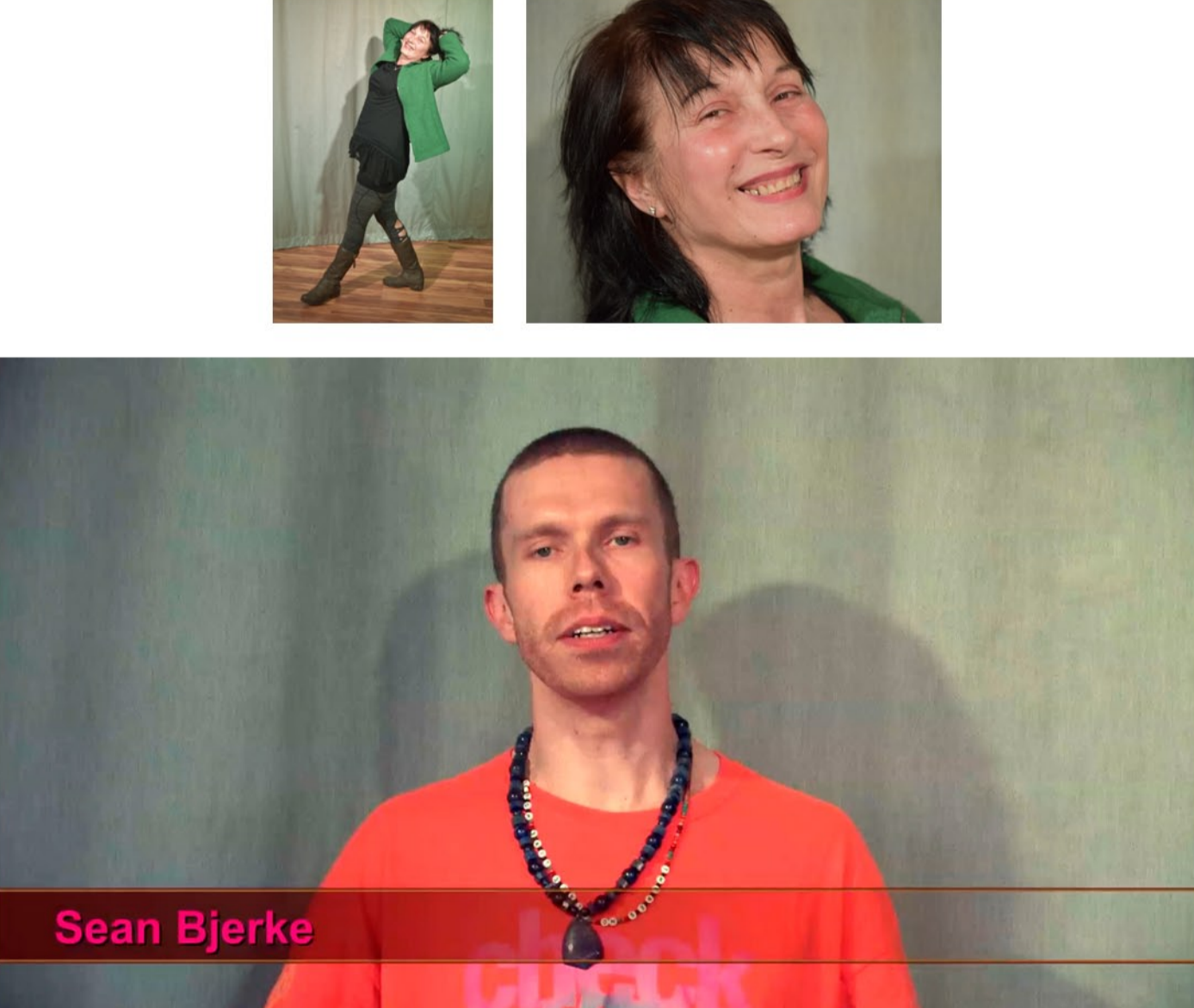
"What I want to do with my brand, Box n' Misbehave, is I want to build a community of people that are able to explore the most complete version of themselves. We all have a masculine side, and we all have a feminine side. Women can be masculine, and men can be feminine."

"The CCCA is great because here we can have classes that are all about community."

**Kelley Donovan**

"I find that [dance] is a really good way to express whatever's going on, whether it's about moving or constant transformation. I feel like that moving into the new decade of 2020 has a lot of change happening in the world. We're constantly having to adapt to change, which I find to be a really interesting theme for my work."

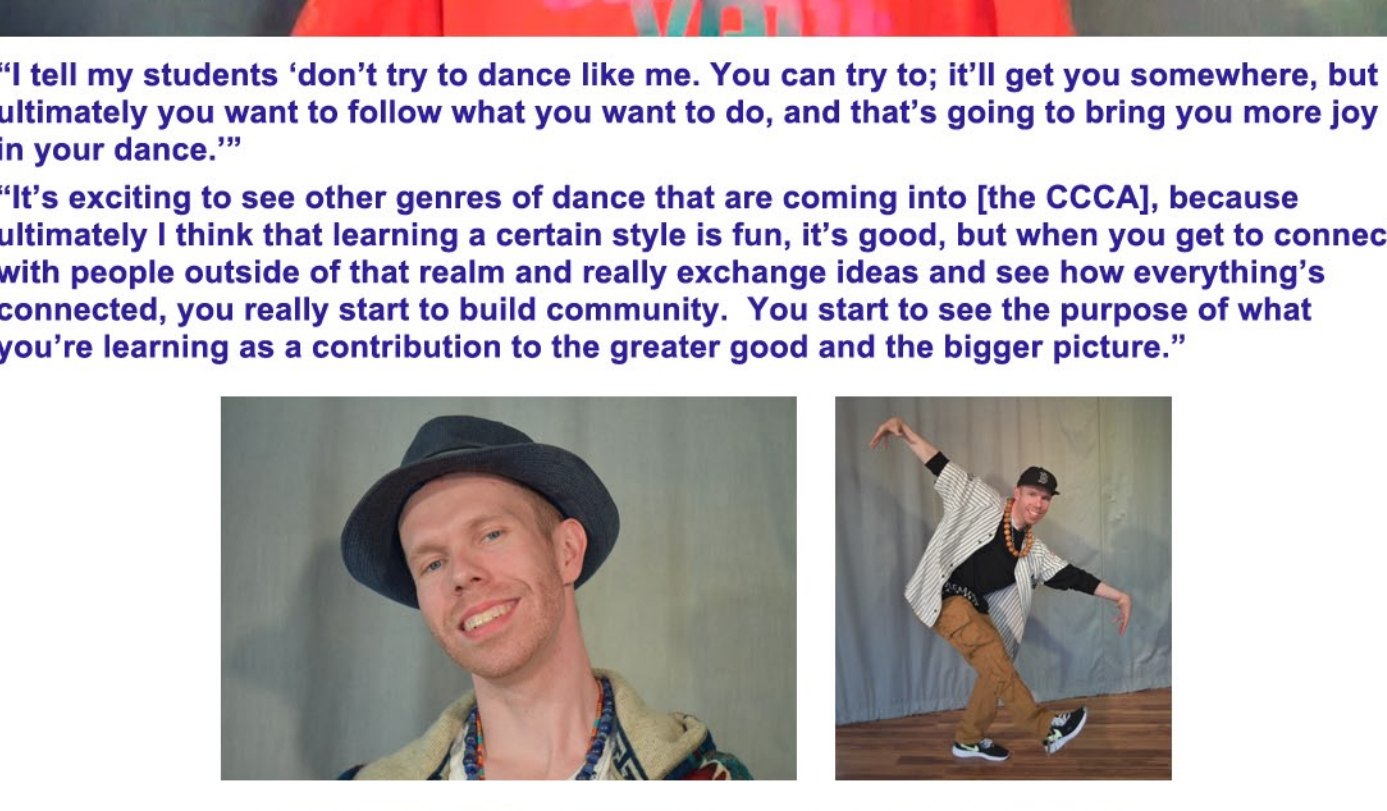




**Margaux Skalecki**

"People aren't afraid to be seen, and afraid to be heard. Once they get into a place where they don't care who's listening, or who's watching them dance, or who's hearing them sing, there is an awakening, and that's where I am."

"Dance, singing, the performance arts were my healing. I used to be so afraid to be seen and heard. Now, I want to promote that we're going to be used to be in a moment, so why not really live our lives and let the performing and healing arts let us do that?"

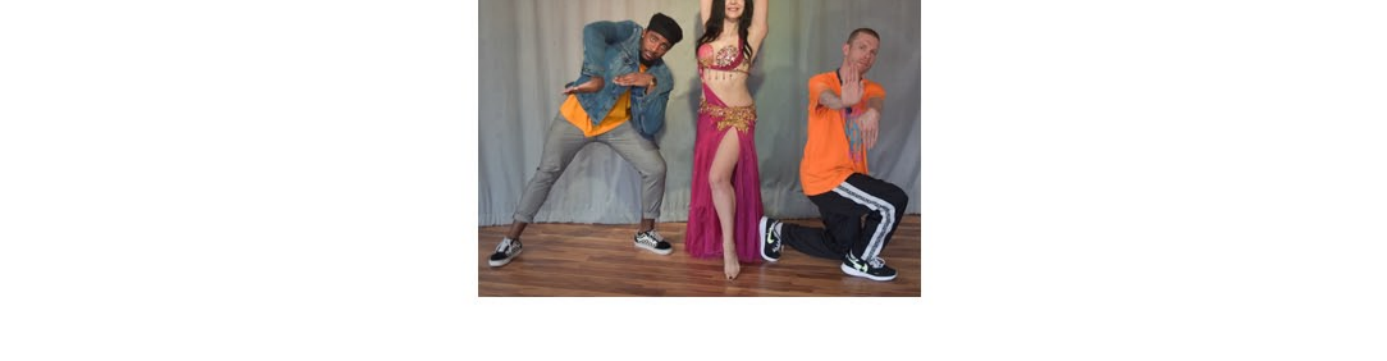
"We use the emotions with the 5 Rhythms to create harmony from fear, to anger to sadness, to joy, and to compassion. If we look around our world today, there's a lot of fear, there's a lot of anger, there's sadness, joy, and compassion. The wave is to go through all and then come back where we can really be with ourselves and have compassion for others."

**Sean Bjerke**

"I tell my students 'don't try to dance like me. You can try to; it'll get you somewhere, but ultimately you want to follow what you want to do, and that's going to bring you more joy in your dance.'"

"It's exciting to see other genres of dance that are coming into [the CCCA], because ultimately I think that learning a certain style is fun, it's good, but when you get to connect with people outside of that realm and really exchange ideas and see how everything's connected, you really start to build community. You start to see the purpose of what you're learning as a contribution to the greater good and the bigger picture."

**Seyyide Sultan**

"We are presenting a dance form from a different culture. I think that's a very good thing to do because we learn to love other cultures, through their art or meeting their people. It's a great message to be inclusive."

"I always get some feedback that some people find [belly dancing] empowering... It helps women find their feminine side."

