

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 28, 2022**

**Contact: Jochelle Pereña**  
**Organization: Luna Dance Institute**  
[jperena@lunadanceinstitute.org](mailto:jperena@lunadanceinstitute.org)  
**510.883.1118**

**NEW LEADER HIRED AT KEY MOMENT IN BAY AREA ARTS**  
*John-Mario Sevilla joins Luna Dance Institute's leadership team*

**Berkeley, CA:** Luna Dance Institute announces the hiring of John-Mario Sevilla to join the leadership team during a dynamic time of growth and change. As Luna turns 30, purchases a permanent home, and transforms its vibrant programs into a new Creativity Center in southwest Berkeley, Sevilla's fresh perspectives, grounded in decades of experience, will lead the organization to a new future.

Sevilla hails from Maui though New York City (NYC) where he directed and produced programs at the historic Harkness Dance Center at the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y (92Y) including the Harkness Dance Festival, Dance Education Laboratory, the Dance Therapy Program, artists' residencies, and collaborative events with musicians and visual artists. As a teaching artist, he has taught to all ages and levels, conducted research and assessment, and initiated early childhood arts curricula with the NYC Department of Education. Prior to 92Y, he was the Director of Education at New York City Ballet overseeing residencies at more than 300 public schools. Although a new resident of the West Coast, he continues as the 2021-22 Visiting Scholar at the Asia | Pacific | American Institute at New York University.

As a dancer, Sevilla performed in the dance companies of Pilobolus, Alison Chase, Murray Louis and Alwin Nikolais, Anna Sokolow, and his choreography has appeared at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, LaMama, Judson Church, Dance Theatre Workshop, and 92Y. He is a hula student of Kumu Hula Hōkūlani Holt (Pā'ū O Hi'iaka) and Kumu Hula June Ka'ililani Tanoue (Hālau I Ka Pono), and a Philippine folk dancer.

"John-Mario is joining our team at just the right time," says Luna Co-executive Director Nancy Ng. Ng adds, "he has curiosity and integrity which are central to Luna's mission, yet he also brings a sense of playful possibility that inspires us to look at 30 years of policies and practices in new ways. This examination is key to adaptation as we return to post-covid programming with a renewed commitment to social responsibility and justice."

Luna invites the public to meet John-Mario Sevilla at upcoming anniversary events: a [Community Gathering and Picnic](#) on May 28<sup>th</sup> at Tilden Park and a fundraising [Soirée](#) on June 2<sup>nd</sup> at the David Brower Center.

**About Luna Dance Institute:** Founded in 1992 in Oakland, California, Luna brings creativity, equity and community to every child's life through the art of dance. This mission is fulfilled through comprehensive professional learning, school and community dance projects, and a studio program that teaches the art of improvisation and choreography. More can be found at [lunadanceinstitute.org](http://lunadanceinstitute.org).

**###**