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Etienne Cakpo Announced as Department of Dance Kawasaki Guest Artist for 2018-2019

Kawasaki gift enters its second year of impact, welcoming award-winning West African director and choreographer to the UW

October 2018, Seattle - Thanks to a generous gift from Glenn Kawasaki, the Department of Dance at the University of Washington is hosting a guest artist for the 2018-2019 school year—West African dancer, choreographer, and musician Etienne Cakpo. Cakpo is the second guest artist supported by Kawasaki's forward-thinking gift aimed at exposing undergraduate dancers to top-tier local and international dance artists. Kawasaki is the chief executive officer and director of Accium BioSciences and a passionate advocate for the arts, specifically dance.

"Glenn's vision to help us create this innovative program continues to be truly transformative for the Department of Dance. The goal of this gift is to focus on direct benefit to undergraduate students while elevating the already strong reputation and viability of the dance arts in Seattle. It also provides the Department with unique networking opportunities for students, local alumni artists and faculty," said Catherine Cole, divisional dean for the arts.

"Cakpo has previously taught African dance in our department and the students adore him," said Jennifer Salk, associate professor and chair of the Department of Dance, who also holds a Donald E. Petersen Endowed Professorship. "He is a consummate teacher who is patient, kind, and passionate. He is also a stunning dancer and performer himself."

During autumn quarter, Cakpo is teaching a repertory/technique class to undergraduates in the Department of Dance. The class is full with 33 students who will perform on the Meany Hall stage as part of the Department of Dance Faculty Dance Concert, January 25 to 27, 2019. In addition, Cakpo will do outreach in the community and across campus sharing his knowledge and passion for dance with diverse audiences.

About Glenn Kawaski

Kawasaki is a dedicated philanthropist and patron of the Arts. In May 2017, ArtsFund recognized him with its Outstanding Contribution to the Arts award. Kawasaki serves as an advisory board member of Pacific Northwest Ballet, Spectrum Dance Theater, zoe | juniper, Khambatta Dance Company. He also served as the board president of Velocity Dance Center from January 2017 to January 2018. He has a Ph.D., MBA, and J.D. from the University of Washington.

About Etienne Cakpo

Cakpo is director and lead choreographer of Gansango Dance Company. He is an award-winning professional dancer, choreographer, and musician from Benin, West Africa. He teaches and performs traditional African dance from Benin as well as contemporary African dance styles, and has been building his dance repertoire for over thirty years. Skilled in both traditional and modern dance styles, Cakpo lives to dance. He teaches African dance classes at Open Flight Studio in Seattle and performs locally, nationally and internationally.

www.gansango.com

About the College of Arts & Sciences

The College of Arts & Sciences, founded in 1861, provides an education of tremendous breadth and depth to more than 21,000 students while advancing research and scholarship in the arts, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences. The College has more than two dozen interdisciplinary centers and ties to many other centers, enabling scholars in diverse fields to collaborate on complex research questions in the humanities, demography, labor studies, human rights, astrobiology, and other areas.

The College's faculty generate more than \$105 million in research funds annually, through public and private grants. The College also serves the community through the more than 300 performances, 60 exhibits and 100 public programs annually offered through the School of Art + Art History + Design, School of Music, School of Drama, Dance Program, Center for Digital Arts and Experimental Media, Henry Art Gallery, Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, and the Meany Center for the Performing Arts.

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