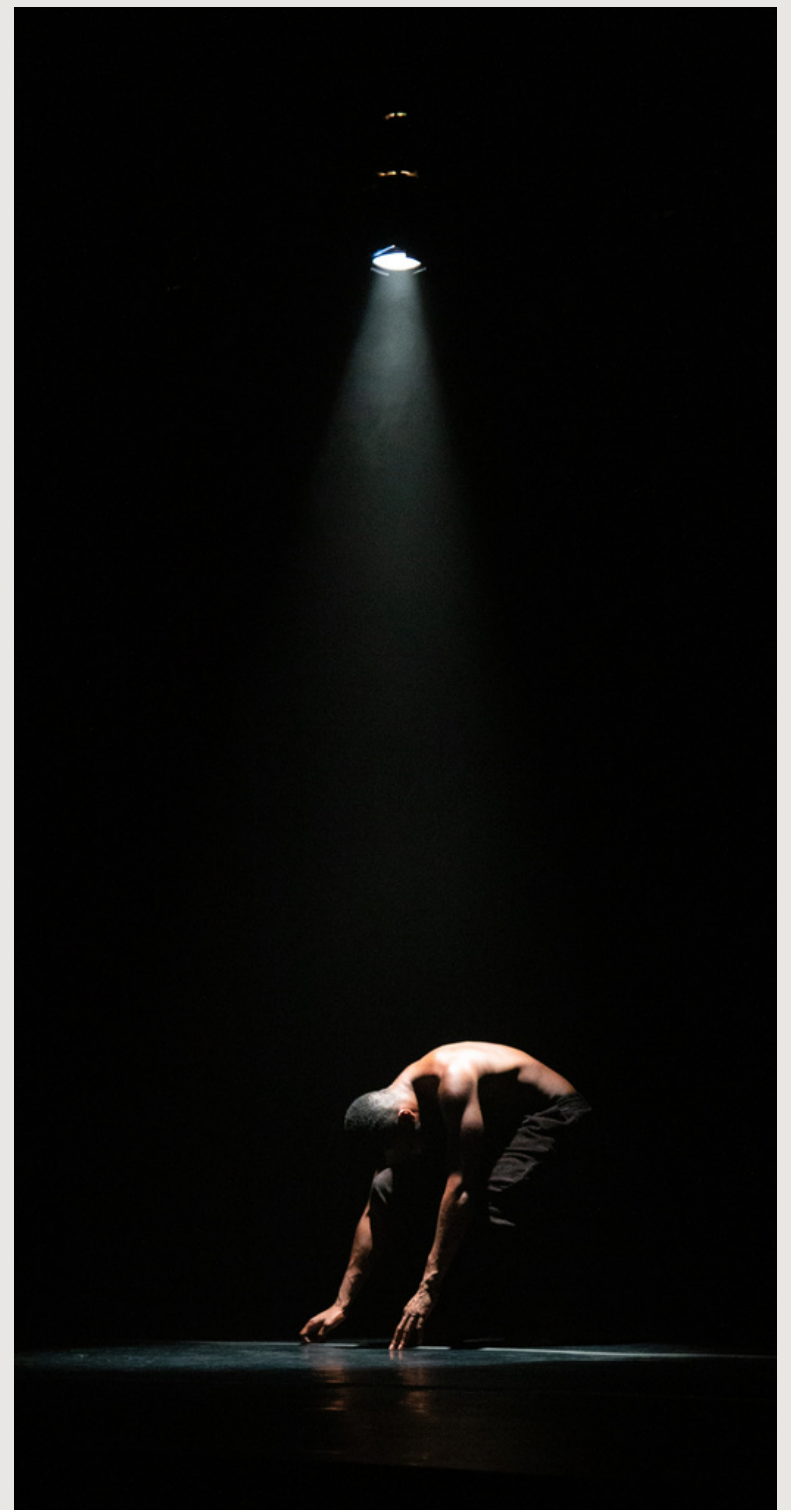


SAO PAULO

The opportunity of having the LUTSF to enable me to travel to Brazil opened doors to an incredible cultural and artistic immersion. This journey expanded my horizons, pushing me to explore and fuse my contemporary dance background with the rich traditions and experiences of the Brazilian contemporary dance network, Afro-Brazilian dance, and indigenous cultures.

Building a Network in Brazilian Contemporary Dance:

Arriving in Brazil, I immediately engaged with the vibrant Brazilian arts community. This allowed me to network, collaborate, and learn from a spectrum of talented individuals. I researched & performed my 20-minute solo 'Echo' at the esteemed Sesc Theatre in Araraquara, São Paulo to an audience of 200 people which was a defining moment in my trip and in my practice.



Collaborative Endeavors

One of the pivotal experiences upon first arriving in Sao Paulo was collaborating with traditional Afro-Brazilian dancer Agata Matos who has deep roots in the Candomblé tradition. Through this collaboration we had many conversations about identity, displacement & home. I contacted renowned photographer/videographer Igor de Paula to create a short film which was shot within the streets of Sao Paulo as a way of archiving this experience and capturing the first of many diasporic connections. This collaboration enabled the fusion of our respective dance backgrounds, the film captures the synthesis of contemporary and traditional movement against the backdrop of central São Paulo. The post-production phase promises a captivating release in 2024, showcasing our cultural and artistic union.

Teaching and Sharing

As well as performing my solo 'Echo', I conducted an intensive workshop at the Escola de Dança in Araraquara during the International Dance Festival 2023 which was yet another enriching experience. Sharing my dance practice with local students & dance professionals allowed for an exchange of ideas, techniques, and artistic perspectives and allowed me to build a new connections for future workshops upon returning to Brazil in the future.



Learning from Indigenous Cultures

At the International Dance Festival I had the opportunity to engage with indigenous communities via workshops & discussions which revealed new insights into community engagement and the interconnectedness between individuals, communities, and the planet. I had the opportunity to attend public discussions and have dinner with writers & indigenous leaders Aliton Krenak and Sidarta Ribeiro which offered a unique and new perspective on the ways we interact with each other and our environment.

Personal Growth and Reflection

My month in Brazil provided a transformative experience, challenging me to reevaluate my artistic practice. It urged me to transcend the boundaries of Western practices, fostering a deeper appreciation for diasporic and indigenous traditions. As a British-born Caribbean queer man, this journey ignited a profound desire to further explore the similarities and differences between my existing lifestyle & artistic practice and those I encountered in Brazil.

A message to new LUTSF awardees

I encourage you to strike a balance between having a plan and embracing the unforeseen opportunities that arise in a new cultural environment. While having a plan is important, don't be afraid to deviate from it or even add to it. Trust your instincts and intuition. Allow yourself to follow uncharted paths, explore new ideas, and engage with opportunities as an addition to the goals that you set out for yourself.

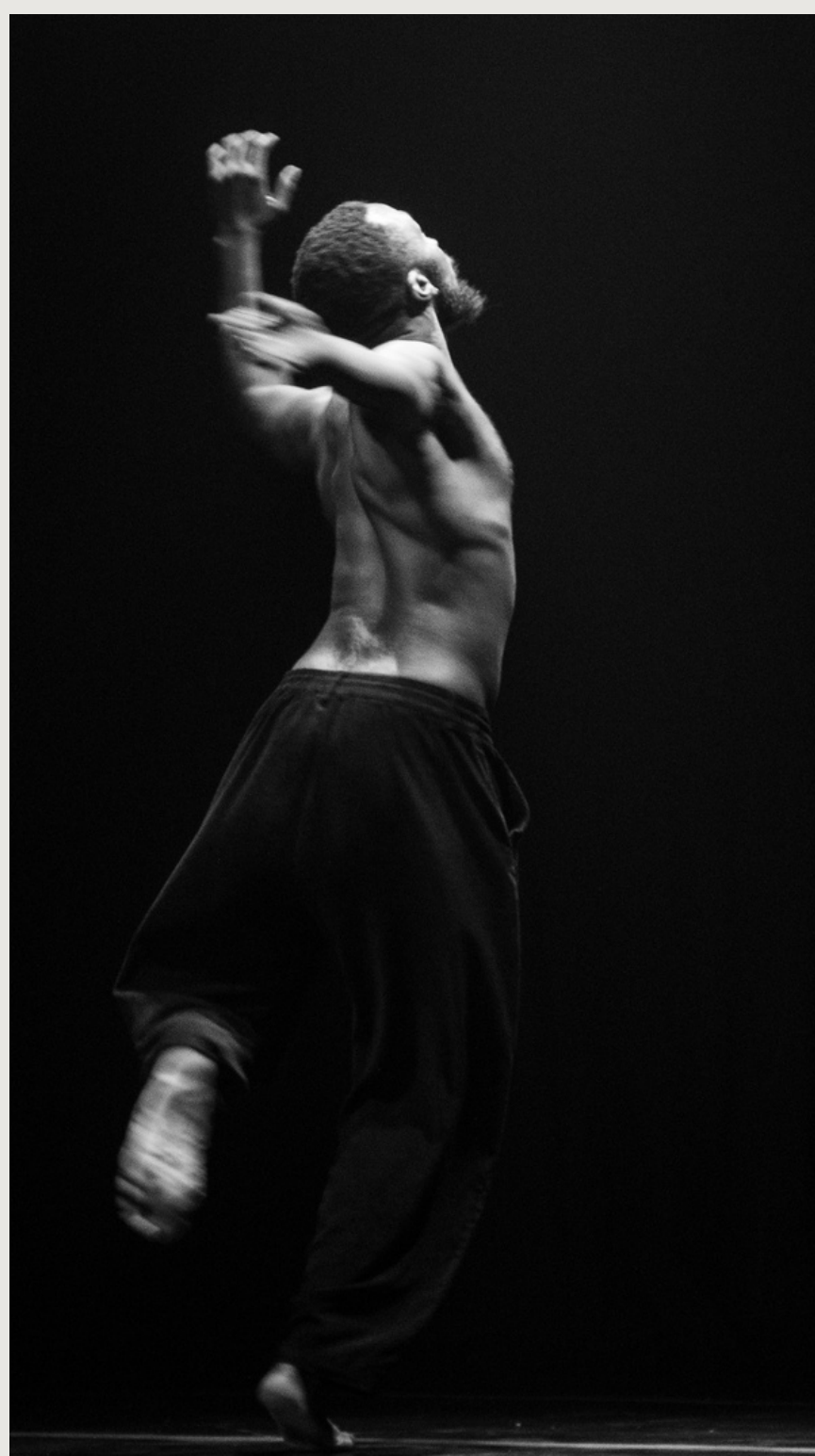
Future Plans Post-Project Exploration in Brazil

My experience in Brazil has ignited a series of exciting and ambitious plans aimed at expanding and enriching my artistic journey.

The first is the development of my solo 'Echo', I will expand my 20-minute performance into a 40-minute production. This extended performance will delve deeper into the fusion of diverse cultural influences encountered during my project in Brazil. I am driven to infuse elements of Afro-Brazilian and indigenous traditions, creating a narrative that resonates with a global audience.

The second is the short film created in collaboration with Agata Matos and Igor de Paula. I will showcase the work online, with screening dates set for early 2024. Thirdly I aim to continue conducting diasporic and Indigenous Research. My passion for exploring diasporic and indigenous traditions has inspired a desire to extend my research to other countries that align with and enrich my practice. I aim to immerse myself in diverse cultural landscapes to further understand and connect with various artistic traditions worldwide. These explorations will serve as a foundation for future collaborative ventures. I will seek out collaborative partners worldwide and forge new partnerships and collaborations by engaging with artists, dancers, and cultural practitioners from various countries with strong African or Indigenous roots. I intend to broaden my network, fostering an environment of mutual learning and cultural exchange.

Thank you to the LUTSF! My journey in Brazil was an invaluable chapter in my artistic growth. It broadened my artistic and cultural understanding, encouraging me to seek new avenues of fusion and exploration in my practice. This experience will continue to influence and shape my journey as an artist, embracing diverse cultural influences and a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of artistic traditions worldwide.



MOMENTS FROM ECHO