FIVEDANCES

Written and Directed by ALAN BROWN

Choreographed by JONAH BOKAER

KIMIYE CORWIN
REED LUPLAU
CATHERINE MILLER
LUKE MURPHY
RYAN STEELE

USA  2013  83 minutes

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SHORT SYNOPSIS

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SYNOPSIS

The coming-of-age tale of an extraordinarily talented young dancer (Ryan Steele, in his first film role) recently arrived in New York City, FIVE DANCES is a visually sensual glimpse of life and first love in the ‘downtown’ modern dance world. Shot mostly in and around a Soho dance studio, the film features original dance by the internationally renowned choreographer Jonah Bokar. Writer-director Alan Brown (Private Romeo; Superheroes; Book of Love) and his cast of five of New York’s most gifted dancers capture the emotional turbulence and excitement of a small dance company during the process of creation.

DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

FIVE DANCES began as an experiment for me, an idea inspired by my lifelong interest in contemporary dance, and also by my strong desire to work within a looser, more improvisational structure. I asked choreographer Jonah Bokaer, whose work I’ve long admired, to create an abstract piece for five of New York’s most talented dancers (all but one non-actors, and all new to film). Then, with only the skeleton of a script, I took them into a studio for a few weeks of shooting, and, day-by-day, created their characters and built a narrative around them. The process was thrilling and intense, and at times harrowing. And it resulted in a film more physically dynamic and impressionistic than any I’ve ever made.

— Alan Brown
Jonah Bokaer, a renowned choreographer, and a longtime friend of the film’s director, created the dance for FIVE DANCES. Brown was drawn to Bokaer’s choreography because of its physical clarity and rigorous beauty. Wanting dance that would exist on its own, independent of the film’s narrative, but that would, Brown knew, be disassembled and reassembled in the editing room to serve the story, Brown did not show Bokaer a script.

Brown and Bokaer did, however, collaborate in the casting process, choosing dancers who would serve both the choreographer’s and director’s need. And they also agreed on some basic perimeters – the dance would be divided into five sections; there would be a challenging solo for Ryan Steele’s character; there would be a duet; etc. Otherwise, the director stayed completely out of the choreographic process.

The week before film production, Bokaer assembled the five dancers at the Center for Performance Research in Brooklyn, and, with Brown looking on, created an approximately twelve-and-a-half minute dance to silence. Bokaer then turned his work over to Brown and the dancers. He was not present during production or the editing process.

Brown and his longtime cinematographer, Derek McKane, used a single camera to shoot the film – most of which was shot at the Bill Young Studio on Grand Street in New York City. In covering the dance, their greatest challenge was working in one room in which one wall was completely mirrored, another lined with windows - and the third had to contain the production staff and crew.

It was during editing that Brown added music – the songs of Scott Matthew, Gem Club, and Perfume Genius to the five sections of the dance. And, for one version of the solo, which Ryan Steele dances twice, an original piece of music by the film’s composer Nicholas Wright.
WRITER & DIRECTOR Alan Brown

Alan Brown’s first film, O Beautiful, won the Future Filmmaker Award at the 2002 Palm Springs International Short Film Festival, and screened at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival. His feature debut, Book of Love, which stars Simon Baker, Frances O’Connor, Greg Smith, and Bryce Dallas Howard, was nominated for a Grand Jury Prize at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival. His second feature, Superheroes, starring Dash Mihok and Spencer Treat Clark, won numerous prizes, including the Feature Filmmaker’s Award at the 2007 Avignon/New York Film Festival, the Maverick Spirit Award (top prize) at the 2008 Cinequest Film Festival, Special Jury Mention at both the 2008 Austin Film Festival and the 2008 Ashland Independent Film Festival, and both the Narrative Feature and Best Film Awards at the 2008 Brooklyn International Film Festival. Alan’s most recent feature, Private Romeo, won a Grand Jury Prize at the 2011 Outfest Film Festival in Los Angeles, and was a Critic’s Pick of The New York Times. Alan is also the author of the acclaimed novel, Audrey Hepburn’s Neck, which won the Pacific Rim Book Prize, and has been translated into eight languages. He is the recipient of many writing and directing awards, including National Endowment for the Arts, Fulbright, and New York State Council for the Arts Fellowships, and numerous residency fellowships, including those to the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, and the Edward Albee and Ucross Foundations. He spent eight years living in Japan, first as a Fulbright Journalist, and then creating radio programs for the BBC, and writing for numerous publications. His journalism assignments have taken him from the Antarctic to the Himalayas. He now lives in New York City. FIVE DANCES is his fifth film.

CHOREOGRAPHER Jonah Bokaer

Jonah Bokaer is an international choreographer, media artist, artist space developer, and social entrepreneur. His work integrates choreography with digital media, resulting from cross-disciplinary collaborations with artists and architects. Bokaer’s choreography has been produced in Belgium, Canada, Cuba, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Holland, India, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Bokaer’s production Replica, was the only American choreography seen at the Athens Festival, and the Festival de Marseille (2010). His recent choreography for Avignon (FUSED, 2011), was awarded the Prix Jeune Talent Chorégraphique by the Société des auteurs et compositeurs dramatiques (SACD) in Paris. Bokaer is also the 2011 recipient of the Bogliasco Foundation Special Fellowship in Choreography. In 2008–2009, Bokaer became the first dance artist to be appointed a Young Leader of the French American Foundation. He led a group of choreographers in the formation of Chez Bushwick (2002). He later founded the Center for Performance Research (CPR), in Williamsburg, New York in collaboration with John Jasperse (2008). Bokaer is a current choreographer for the operas of Robert Wilson.
PRODUCER Agathe David-Weill

Agathe David-Weill worked as the assistant to the Director of Development at Disney and for Hart/Sharp Entertainment before producing her first feature film, Kettle of Fish, a romantic comedy with Matthew Modine and Gina Gershon, which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2006. FIVE DANCES is her third feature film with director Alan Brown, following the award-winning Superheroes in 2007 and the 2011 Private Romeo, winner of a Grand Jury Prize at Outfest.

EDITOR Jarrah Gurrie

Jarrah Gurrie is an Australian editor and director based in Los Angeles. His previous editorial work includes the Palm D’Or nominated short film The Chair, Wasserman award winners La Pileta and Burning Money and the feature film, Pete Smalls is Dead. Jarrah has been twice nominated for the Iris Prize for LGBT short films, and his directing work has been screened in such diverse locations as the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte in Madrid, a rooftop cinema in Brooklyn, and on a parade float at the Sydney, Australia Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY Derek McKane

Derek McKane has an extensive resume of commercials, independent features, shorts and documentaries. His recent work includes Alan Brown’s Private Romeo and Superheroes, Harvey Wang’s The Last New Yorker, and Evan Oppenheimer’s A Little Game. Some of his commercial clients include Microsoft, Adidas, Sony, Advil, and Verizon.

COMPOSER Nicholas Wright

Nicholas R. Wright is a British/American composer and songwriter. His music has been featured in award winning global advertising campaigns such as the American Express Members Project directed by Martin Scorsese and the Nike 2012 London Olympics "Find Your Greatness" campaign. FIVE DANCES is the third feature film Nicholas has scored for Alan Brown.
CASTING Stephanie Holbrook

Stephanie Holbrook’s Associate Casting Director credits include Mona Lisa Smile, “Chappelle’s Show”, The Life Aquatic, Trust the Man, Failure To Launch, We Own the Night, The Squid and the Whale, Margot at the Wedding, Margaret, The Village and Lady in the Water. She was Casting Director on M. Night Shyamalan’s The Happening. Her Indie credits include Daniel Schechter’s Goodbye Bab, Supporting Characters (Tribeca 2012) and Untitled Elmore Leonard project. Stephanie cast “Bar Karma,” the first scripted series for Current TV; SPAZ; Lifeguard; WildLike. Recent releases are Backwards and Alan Brown’s Private Romeo (Grand Jury Prize for Acting, Outfest 2011). Stephanie also cast Brown’s Superheroes (Maverick Spirit Award, Cinequest 2008).

SOUND DESIGNER Julian Evans

Julian Evans is a cinematic and theatrical sound designer, based out of Brooklyn. Building off a background in classical trumpet and music theory, his designs and mixes are informed by a heightened awareness of dynamics, tone, and rhythm. His mixes have been heard locally and internationally, from the Chinese Theatre, to the Cannes Film Festival, to Lincoln Center and Tribeca Cinemas. Julian earned his BA in Music Production from Carnegie Mellon University.
CAST BIOS

**Ryan Steele** (Chip) started dancing when he was five years old in Walled Lake, Michigan. He won countless awards, including the 2007 Youth America Grand Prix and the Best Male Dancer at the 2008 American Ballet Competition, before being tapped, while still in high school, to play ‘Baby John’ in the Broadway revival of ‘West Side Story.’ He is currently dancing in the Broadway hit, ‘Newsies’ (for which he is also Dance Captain). **FIVES DANCES** is Ryan’s first film.

**Reed Luplau** (Theo) hails from Perth, Australia, where he started dancing at his mother’s dance studio at eighteen months old. Reed moved to New York City in 2010 where he joined Aszure Barton & Artists, followed by the Stephen Petronio Company. He is now a member of Lar Lubovitch Dance Company. Reed won Australia’s ‘Outstanding Performance by Male Dancer’ Award in 2010.

**Catherine Miller** (Katie) is a Brooklyn-based dancer, choreographer, and teacher. She is a founding Artistic Director of the dance and performance company WalkingTalking. Cat has also toured extensively in the companies of Dendy Dance Theater, Doug Varone and Dancers, Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company, and Shen Wei Dance Arts. She originated the dance role of Thanatos in the premiere of Telemann’s ‘Orpheus’ at New York City Opera this year.

**Kimiye Corwin** (Cynthia) earned her BFA in dance at the Juilliard School and danced with the Jose Limon Dance Company for 5 years, before deciding to pursue acting, first at the Actors Center, and then earning her MFA at Brown University. **FIVE DANCES** marks Kimiye’s return to the dance world.

**Luke Murphy** (Anthony) hails from Cork, Ireland. He originated the role of McDuff in the acclaimed production of ‘Sleep No More,’ in both Boston and New York City. Murphy has danced in the companies of Kate Weare, Pavel Zustiak, and Janis Brenner, among others. He is also a choreographer whose work has been supported through residencies and commissions from the Arts Council of Ireland, CultureIreland, DanceHouse, Tribeca Performing Arts Center, Duo Multicultural Arts Center and Schloss Broelin in Germany.
CREDITS

Written and Directed by ALAN BROWN

Cast:

KIMIYE CORWIN
REED LUPLAU
CATHERINE MILLER
LUKE MURPHY
RYAN STEELE

Choreography by JONAH BOKAER

Casting by STEPHANIE HOLBROOK
Music composed by NICHOLAS WRIGHT
Director of Photography DEREK McKANE
Sound Design by JULIAN EVANS
Edited by JARRAH GURRIE
Produced by TRACY UTLEY
Produced by AGATHE DAVID-WEILL

Post-production at GOLDCREST POST, NYC.
Colorist, JOHN DOWDELL
MUSIC

FIVE DANCES features an original score by Nicholas Wright, who also composed the music for Alan Brown’s two previous films, PRIVATE ROMEO and SUPERHEROES.

In addition to Wright’s score, sections of the film are set to the following songs:

252
Written by Christopher William Barnes
Performed by Gem Club
Mount Desert Isle Music (ASCAP)
Courtesy of Hardly Art

Put Your Back N 2 It
Written by Mike Hadreas
Performed by Perfume Genius
Courtesy of Matador Records

Dog
Written and performed by Scott Matthew
Courtesy of Partitur Musikverlag / Edition o-pub / Arabella Musikverlag GmbH / Universal Music Publishing Germany
and Glitterhouse Records, Inpartmaint Inc. and Riot Bear Recording Co.

Friends And Foes
Written and performed by Scott Matthew
Courtesy of Partitur Musikverlag / Edition o-pub / Arabella Musikverlag GmbH / Universal Music Publishing Germany
and Glitterhouse Records, Inpartmaint Inc. and Defend Music

Surgery
Written and performed by Scott Matthew
Courtesy of Partitur Musikverlag / Edition o-pub / Arabella Musikverlag GmbH / Universal Music Publishing Germany
and Glitterhouse Records, Inpartmaint Inc., Riot Bear Recording Co. and Groovescooter Records/da dAdA

Sinking
Written and performed by Scott Matthew
Courtesy of Partitur Musikverlag / Edition o-pub / Arabella Musikverlag GmbH / Universal Music Publishing Germany
and Glitterhouse Records, Inpartmaint Inc., Riot Bear Recording Co. and Groovescooter Records/da dAdA