

From Grenada to the World: Dance Grenada Festival Celebrates Six Years of Caribbean Excellence and Cultural Impact

The festival promotes Caribbean arts, preserves Grenada's cultural heritage, and strengthens the creative economy.

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The annual [Dance Grenada Festival](#) returns for its sixth season from October 16–20, 2025, uniting renowned dancers and choreographers from Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States, and beyond for five days of creativity, connection, and cultural celebration.

This year's festival theme, "Caribbean Excellence, Striving For More, Disrupting The Narrative," highlights the island's rich cultural legacy and its influence on global dance styles and movements.



Dr. Shola K. Roberts (seventh from left) with participants and the Ousoo Drummers after a lively Shango dance class led by Keith Williams at the 5th annual Dance Grenada Festival, October 2024.

Festival highlights include:

The First Choreographer's Call, which received nearly 50 entries from around the globe—including submissions from Tanzania, the United Kingdom, and Canada—demonstrates the festival's status as a hub for international artistic exchange and its growing recognition on the world stage.

Workshops and Panel Discussions, offering professional development and conversations on Caribbean storytelling, cultural resilience, and mentorship for the next generation of dancers.

The Second Annual Dance Grenada Concert featuring top-tier performances from local and international artists.

A Community Dance Day in St. David, Grenada; presented in partnership with the island's Office of Creative Affairs, fostering connections between local dancers and international participants.

A tribute to the late Winston T. Fleary, celebrated for bringing the Big Drum of Carriacou to global audiences and preserving the island's dance and drumming traditions.

The Annual Island Tour, exploring the tri-island state of Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique, offering attendees a rich fusion of Caribbean artistry, culture, and authentic local experiences.

"Caribbean people have always punched above our weight. We've contributed globally — in civil rights, education, culture and more. This festival is about making sure that excellence is seen and celebrated," said Dance Grenada Founder and Artistic Director, Dr. Shola K. Roberts, a Caribbean dance expert and an assistant professor in the School of Music, Dance and Theatre at Arizona State University.

The festival plays a crucial role in uplifting and preserving African diasporic dance forms, including Grenadian folk dances like Shango, Afro-Cuban styles, and Grenadian Masquerade. Through thoughtfully curated programming, international dancers not only study these forms but also participate in additional learning opportunities that highlight the importance of the creative economy in Grenada, the Caribbean, and beyond.

A key feature of the festival is its scholarship pipeline, which nurtures next-generation talent from the Caribbean and fosters cultural exchange between dance students in the region and the United States. Demonstrating the career and experiential benefits this scholarship offers students, Josh Robertson, a 2023 Dance Grenada scholarship recipient and now a dance student at the University of Trinidad and Tobago, returns this year as a featured choreographer.

Dance Grenada continues to serve as a global platform for Caribbean dance, nurturing emerging talent and reinforcing the region's influence on the world stage. This year's dance classes will be led by some of the most dynamic professional dancers globally, including Grenada's Keith Williams, who has taught international masterclasses across the Caribbean and the UK; Akosua Akoto, a Traditional Manding dance expert who has toured with Janet Jackson and Busta Rhymes with recent credits including *Coming to America* and *The Color Purple*; and Otis Donovan Herring, who has taught dance internationally with on-screen credits on Netflix and Amazon Prime and a recent nationwide tour with R&B groups Xscape and SWV.

Dr. Roberts emphasizes that Dance Grenada drives dance innovation, fosters community engagement, promotes talent growth, and supports the cultural economy.

"Dance Grenada is about more than performance — it's about preserving our intangible cultural heritage and sharing it with the world. By inviting dancers and visitors to engage directly with our communities, we create experiences that celebrate Grenada's culture while supporting the creative economy, community tourism and empowering the next generation of artists," she said.

For more information on Dance Grenada and how to register, please visit www.dancegrenada.com.

About Dance Grenada

Dance Grenada provides a platform for Grenadian and international dance artisans to share and expand their knowledge of traditional and contemporary dance styles and techniques through workshops, performances, panel discussions, and symposiums while contributing to the larger Grenadian and international dance community.

Melissa Noel
Mel&N Media
[email us here](#)

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