

## Arc and Sound of Dance



© Prague Film Institute

**Logline:** An Oscar-nominated composer, a renowned prima ballerina turned actor, and an international star choreographer suddenly agree to lead a hero's journey of 15 locally celebrated but not yet globally known dancers each competing to appear in an improbable "film-first" modern dance premiere. No one realizes until the very end how their unusual choreography and camerawork will revolutionize the way dance will forever be captured on film.

**Series Format:** 8 hybrid episodes capturing first-ever collaboration to create a digital masterwork everyone believes impossible, including 1) documentary footage as they create, practice, perform, film and edit the "impossible" immersive video; 2) personal commentary about their agony and ecstasy and 3) their backstories.

**Concept Summary:** A human story of emotion, ambition, identity, high-stakes creativity, and technology turned on its head: freelance dancers competing to co-create a new-form screen-native work with an award-winning composer, a world-class choreographer and a prima ballerina already featured in an Amazon Prime series. They're fighting for authorship, visibility, and the chance to define the future of contemporary dance. The series tracks the entire creative arc, the dancers' selection, the choice of the composer's music, new choreography, tough rehearsals, and the filming of a ground-breaking "film-first" immersive dance piece. Everyone's tensions and creative breakthroughs are part of the larger story, especially the dancers who're staking everything on a chance to be seen and innovate in the unforgiving, incredibly competitive landscape of ballet and contemporary dance.

### **Key Characters and Talent:**

- Internationally-commissioned choreographer **Anna Hop**, from Poland, a major creative voice in new form choreography, a skilled performer and storyteller-choreographer now selected as teacher, juror, and more by Paris Opera Ballet Artistic Director Jose Martinez, and whose danceworks have enriched not only Poland's cultural scene but also audiences across the European Union, notably in France and the UK.
- **Constance Devernay**, featured in Amazon Prime's "Etoile", known for stunning movements in classical ballets like Swan Lake, Mayerling, Coppélia, Snow Queen and contemporary works including the phantasmagoric Scottish Ballet productions of "Crucible" and "Odyssey".
- **Anastasiya Kharchenko**, Ukrainian choreographer/dancer/filmmaker, still working out of wartime Kyiv, chosen by Elton John and Britney Spears for their 2022 "Hold Me Closer" video.
- Oscar-nominated Emmy-Grammy-Pulitzer Prize winning composer **David Lang**, one of America's most performed composers, who brings together a passion for invention with a deep understanding of the classical tradition. "...once a post-minimalist enfant terrible, he has solidified his standing as an American master..." (The New Yorker)

**Core Freelancer Cast:** Dancers Manon Servage (Paris/London), Maddie Burnett (Vancouver/NYC), Sandy Cieslak (NY), Joan Dwiartanto (Singapore, NYC), Olivia Ramsey (KY/NYC), Ans Brooks (Utah/NY), Emily Masia (NY), Isabelle Nelson (New Zealand/London), Felicity Chadwick (London), and more.

**Tone & Style:** Think sensuality of bodies in motion, a world of heat, tension, and storytelling without words, tone and style the crisp minimalism of Beyoncé's "Homecoming", the dreamlike fluidity of Wim Wenders' "Pina", cameras weaving and breathing with dancers. Interviews offset by shots of movement, backstories replete with pivot points, flashes of breakthrough and collapse with key sound design: breath, footfalls, creaking floors pulling viewers into each body's pressure and presence.

**Why A Streamer Like Netflix or Hulu:** Arc and Sound of Dance taps directly into the premium docuseries storytelling that Netflix et al helped define: emotional, cinematic, and immersive. It is a hero's journey speaking to the "Shark Tank Phenomenon", the thrill when people get to watch someone taking a risky leap, pitch themselves, and putting it all on the line. It's what drew audiences to "The Apprentice", to "Cheer", and to "Next in Fashion". Like "Chef's Table" and "Move", it offers beauty and discipline. Like "Drive to Survive", it turns a niche world into a universal drama. And like "America's Sweethearts", it introduces a cast of unknowns who audiences will fiercely root for in a world where movement is the language and risk is the rhythm.



Devernay-Laurence in Scottish Ballet's "Odyssey" filmwork. © Scottish Ballet

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