

WINTER/SPRING 2019 DANCE SEASON

# BRAVO

MICHIGAN  
OPERA  
THEATRE

Alessandra Ferri:  
Art of the Pas de Deux  
FEBRUARY 16, 2019

Alvin Ailey  
American  
Dance Theater  
MARCH 15-17, 2019



Jacqueline Green and Jamar Roberts.  
Photo by Andrew Eccles



The 2018-2019 Dance Season is made possible by the Lear Corporation

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# BRAVO

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Dance Season

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Welcome to the 2019 winter/spring dance series at the Detroit Opera House. Though Michigan Opera Theatre has earned an esteemed position among the nation's great opera companies, we are also one of the few opera companies in the country to also present a dance series. Since 1996, the expansive stage of the Detroit Opera



House has welcomed the world's great companies, along with the art form's most celebrated dancers – a tradition of which we are immensely proud.

MOT's commitment to dance programming has resulted in the presentation of companies such as American Ballet Theatre, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Bolshoi Ballet, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Mariinsky Ballet and many others. This year,

we are thrilled to welcome ballet legend Alessandra Ferri as well as her esteemed partners in our Valentine's Day weekend program. We are also excited to welcome back Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater for its 12th visit to the Detroit Opera House, in tandem with its 60th anniversary celebration.

Dance programming is made possible through the continued support and generosity of our sponsors, partners and patrons. These supporters include the Lear Corporation, which has sponsored our dance series since 2015, as well as Ms. Joanne Danto & Dr. Arnold Weingarden, annual supporters of our MOT dance series, as well as Kevin Dennis and Jeremy Zeltzer. I'm also pleased to acknowledge the generosity of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan for their fourth year of supporting our landmark collaboration with the University Musical Society. This support enables us to present significant dance presentations, along with community and educational dance offerings throughout Southeast Michigan, including the upcoming performance of the Martha Graham Dance Company in Ann Arbor this spring.

Most of all we are grateful to you, the thousands of dance patrons who both attend and support the many dance offerings that are presented each season at the Detroit Opera House and throughout the region. We invite your feedback and welcome your suggestions as to how we can make your journey with us even more meaningful. We remain committed to celebrating the masterworks of dance and look forward to exploring that which we may encounter beyond the traditional dance repertoire.

Thank you for joining us today. We appreciate your patronage and look forward to your next visit to the Detroit Opera House.

Regards,

Wayne S. Brown  
President and CEO, Michigan Opera Theatre

Our 2018-19 dance series continues with our celebration of modern dance as well as a special program featuring some of the best ballet dancers in the world.

We open with Alessandra Ferri: The Art of the Pas de Deux. Ms. Ferri, a legend in the dance world, is one of only 11 ballerinas ever to receive the title *prima ballerina assoluta*, a rare honor given to the best among a generation. She performs with principal dancers from renowned ballet companies including American Ballet Theatre, English National Ballet, Boston Ballet and Sarasota Ballet. Just in time for Valentine's Day weekend, the



program features a series of romantic duets from contemporary works and ballet classics like *Swan Lake* and *La Sylphide*.

Following the Bill T. Jones / Arnie Zane Company in October, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is the next in our series celebrating generations of modern dance. Alvin Ailey celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this season, and we are proud to present the company's first two-act ballet, *Lazarus*. Inspired by the life of founder Alvin Ailey, the work explores the racial inequities of this country, beginning with Mr. Ailey's experiences when he founded the company in 1958. It is the completion of a trilogy by acclaimed hip-hop choreographer Rennie Harris, following *Home* in 2011 and *Exodus* in 2015. *Lazarus* is a poignant work that we hope will resonate with you long after the performance has finished.

Our modern series concludes in May with the presentation of the iconic Martha Graham Dance Company. The company, the oldest modern dance company in the country, helped shaped the movement for generations to come. We are proud to partner with University Musical Society to present the company at the Power Center in Ann Arbor.

We invite you to relax and enjoy tonight's performance and hope you can join us for our upcoming presentations as well!

Stephen Lord  
Principal Conductor, Michigan Opera Theatre

# Alessandra Ferri: A *Prima Ballerina Assoluta* Defined

**A**t 55, Italian dancer Alessandra Ferri has enjoyed a ballet career longer than most. The renowned ballerina has performed with the world's most prestigious companies including the Royal Ballet, American Ballet Theatre and La Scala Theatre Ballet, as well as with the best choreographers and dancers in the industry.

"Ballet is not my job, it's not my life," Ferri said. "Being a ballerina is my DNA."

DNA or not, a long, successful career is not the only thing that sets Ferri apart from other dancers. She is also one of the few to be designated as a *prima ballerina assoluta*.

While many are familiar with the term *prima ballerina*, when it comes to a *prima ballerina assoluta*, the title can be as rare as its recipients. *Prima ballerina* literally translates to "first ballerina" from Italian and, in the United States, is better known as someone who is a female principal dancer. These dancers are the best in their companies who perform the lead roles in ballets, along with their male counterparts. Translating to "absolute first ballerina," a *prima ballerina assoluta* is the best of the best, a title so rare that only 11 women have held this honor since it was first recorded in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

"*Prima ballerina assoluta* is given to those whose art exuberates a level of achievement in their interpretation of characters and fame," said Marco Pelle, resident choreographer with New York Theatre Ballet and a director and frequent choreographer with Michigan Opera Theatre. "They have to have an incredible personality on stage to have been awarded this title."

The history of the term goes back to the late 1800s with renowned French dancer and choreographer Marius Petipa. Considered to be one

of the most influential ballet masters in ballet history, Petipa is known for choreographing the now iconic dances in ballets like *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Giselle*. Petipa bestowed the first recorded use of the title to Italian ballerina Pierina Legnani in 1894, whom he considered to be the best in her generation. Legnani was renowned for her perfection of



technique and execution, reputed to be the first dancer to perform 32 *fouetté* turns in a row, a difficult feat requiring a dancer to use their leg to whip themselves around in a circle.

But impressive turns are not what defines a *prima ballerina assoluta*. In fact, there are no definitive regulations on who may hold the title or who has the authority to bestow it. In fact, after Legnani, her contemporary Mathilde Kschessinska received the title from the Imperial Russian Court, a move Petipa attempted to block, considering Legnani to be the superior dancer.

"Most of them have been named after performing at high international

level, above the rest of the prima ballerinas as a result of public and critical opinion," said Sergey Rayevskiy, artistic director of Ballet Detroit."

Since its inception, the title has been awarded by both ballet companies and the government, oftentimes the latter sanctioning the decision of the former. It is not used in the United States but has been awarded by companies including the Marinsky Ballet, Bolshoi Ballet, Kirov Ballet, Royal Ballet and, in the case of Ferri, La Scala Theatre Ballet in Milan. Awarding governments have included the Soviet Union/Russia, South Africa, the Senate of Berlin and the Queen of England.

With Ferri, Pelle said she goes beyond dancing a role, she becomes the role.

"You don't see Alessandra, you see the character she's portraying, you see the feeling, you don't see steps," he said. "You might have your own idea of Giselle or Juliet, but when you see her, you just see Juliet, or Giselle or Carmen; you have an insight on who they are inside."

When it comes to her signature roles, Ferri said she dances them well because she identifies with the characters and the choreography.

"The choreography suits you so well that it permits you to embody that role," she said. "It's not just an idea you have to embody through the choreography, it has to suit you. It's very hard to interpret something, if you have to be concentrated on the technical parts."

While honored by the title, Ferri said its largest impact has been giving her a sense of maturity as an artist and increasing her confidence on stage. "I have total openness and courage and can be totally myself on stage," she said. "I haven't lost touch with the magic of when I dance, so I'm never bored of it."

# PROFILES FROM THE PIT

## Sally Heffelfinger Pituch - Oboist



Michigan Opera Theatre Oboist Sally Heffelfinger Pituch can thank opera for her career path. The Vassar, Michigan native began her musical career playing bassoon as a child but decided to switch to oboe after seeing a performance of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* in sixth grade.

"Amahl plays a wooden flute at the beginning and ending of the opera, but it's really the oboe playing the part down in the pit," she said. "It's a very pretty melody, I fell in love with the sound."

Since then, Sally has honed her craft, receiving a bachelor's degree in Oboe Performance from the University of Michigan and studying with former Detroit Symphony Orchestra Principal Oboist Donald Baker. After graduation, Sally began her musical career with

the Honolulu Symphony where she met and married Detroit Symphony Orchestra Principal Hornist Karl Pituch. Her career continued performing with orchestras all over the country including the Jacksonville and Fort Worth symphonies, as well as the Dallas Opera Orchestra.

After 17 years, Sally returned to her home state in 2000, performing with MOT as well as the Detroit, Flint, Ann Arbor and Toledo symphonies.

"The best thing about moving back to Michigan is that my parents were finally able to come to my performances," she said.

Outside of music, Sally enjoys knitting and yoga and has been a trained dog groomer for more than 20 years.

## Bryan Johnston - Violinist



While a student at the University of Michigan, Michigan Opera Theatre Violinist Bryan Johnston couldn't decide if he wanted to study music or math. Now in his 18th season with MOT, his decision may be surprising: he chose math, a lot of math.

"I finished my doctorate in math in the spring of 2000, and I started playing with MOT in the fall of 2000," he said.

While a devoted math student, Bryan practiced violin and performed throughout his college years, continuing to craft the talent he began at age five. Now he is a professional violinist – and a computer programmer.

"It means you're really busy, but you make it work," he said. "There are other musicians in the pit who are in the same boat. I think for most of us opera comes first, and you make your day job fit around it."

Bryan said he loves to play Puccini and Mozart operas, though one of his favorite experiences was performing in the MOT world premiere of Richard Danielpour's *Margaret Garner* in 2005, featuring opera star Denyce Graves in the title role.

"It was unbelievable," he said. "Being in the pit with a voice like that coming from the stage was wonderful."

Outside of music, Bryan is a self-described nerd who enjoys sci-fi/fantasy TV shows and movies. He also loves running and heavy metal music and has been learning the guitar the past few years.

He is originally from Lansing and now lives with his wife, Nancy, in Royal Oak.

# Alessandra Ferri:

## Art of the Pas de Deux

Artistic Direction - Alessandra Ferri and Marco Pelle  
Conductor - David Lamarche  
Lighting Design - Brandon Stirling Baker

**February 16, 2019**

### DANCERS

Jeffrey Cirio  
Herman Cornejo  
Alessandra Ferri  
Marcelo Comes  
Ricardo Graziano  
Kate Honea  
Misa Kuranaga  
Oksana Maslova



Mary Hollis Hundley, soprano

Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra

### Soloists:

Eliot Heaton, violin  
Andrea Yun, cello  
Brian Bowman, clarinet  
Patricia Terry-Ross, harp  
Ivan Moshchuk, piano



The 2018-2019 Dance Season is made possible by the Lear Corporation

MS. JOANNE DANTO &  
DR. ARNOLD WEINGARDEN

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## Program

### La Sylphide

Dancers: Oksana Maslova, Jeffrey Cirio  
Choreography: August Bournonville  
Music: Jean-Madeleine Schneitzhoeffter

### Mirrors that hang from family trees

Dancer: Marcelo Gomes  
Choreography: Nicholas Palmquist  
Music: Agnes Obel  
Piano: Ivan Moshchuk

### The Dying Swan

Dancer: Misa Kuranaga  
Choreography: Mikhail Fokine  
Music: Camille Saint-Saëns  
Cello: Andrea Yun  
Harp: Patricia Terry-Ross

### Concerto Six Twenty Two

Dancers: Marcelo Gomes, Ricardo Graziano  
Choreography: Lar Lubovich  
Music: W.A. Mozart, Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra  
Lighting Design: Craig Miller  
Clarinet: Brian Bowman

### Witness

Dancers: Alessandra Ferri, Herman Cornejo  
Choreography: Wayne McGregor  
Music: Nils Frahm  
Lighting Design: Clifton Taylor

### White Swan, Pas de Deux from Swan Lake

Dancers: Oksana Maslova, Herman Cornejo  
Choreography: Marius Petipa, Lev Ivanov  
Music: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

### Black Swan, Pas de Deux from Swan Lake

Dancers: Misa Kuranaga, Jeffrey Cirio  
Choreography: Marius Petipa, Lev Ivanov  
Music: Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky  
Violin: Eliot Heaton

### After the Rain

Dancers: Alessandra Ferri, Marcelo Gomes  
Choreography: Christopher Wheeldon  
Music: Arvo Pärt  
Violin: Eliot Heaton  
Piano: Ivan Moshchuk

### Shall I breathe?

Dancers: Ricardo Graziano, Kate Honea  
Singer: Mary-Hollis Hundley  
Choreography: Marco Pelle  
Music: "Mild Und Leise", (*Tristan Und Isolde*), Richard Wagner

### Le Parc

Dancers: Alessandra Ferri, Herman Cornejo  
Choreography: Angelin Preljocaj  
Music: Andante from W.A. Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 23 in A  
Lighting Design: Clifton Taylor  
Violin: Eliot Heaton  
Piano: Ivan Moshchuk

### Brandon Stirling Baker

(Lighting Designer)

Brandon Stirling Baker is a lighting designer working internationally in the areas of ballet, opera and theater.

His lighting can be seen in the repertoires of New York City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Berlin Staatsballet, Joffrey Ballet, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Houston Ballet, Semperoper Dresden, Opera Philadelphia, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Paul Taylor's American Modern Dance, Los Angeles Dance Project and many others.

Brandon's lighting has been presented nationally and internationally by major venues including Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, Walt Disney Concert Hall, Hollywood Bowl, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Theatre du Chatelet (Paris), Sadlers Wells (London), Maison de La Danse (Lyon), Teatro Carlo Felice (Genoa) and the Guggenheim Bilbao (Spain).

Brandon received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the California Institute of the Arts and studied at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow, Scotland.

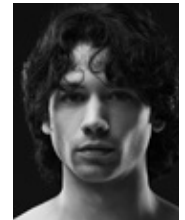
Brandon is the Lighting Director for Boston Ballet. He is a recipient of the 2016 Lotos Foundation Prize and a 2018 Resident Artist at the Center for Ballet and the Arts at New York University.

### Jeffrey Cirio

(Principal: English National Ballet, American Ballet Theatre)

Jeffrey Cirio, Lead Principal with English National Ballet, began his ballet training at the age of nine.

He competed and won awards in numerous ballet competitions including a bronze medal at the age of 15 at the USA International Ballet Competition and a gold medal at the 2009 Helsinki International Ballet Competition, among many others. Jeffrey was also awarded the coveted Princess Grace Award in 2009. Jeffrey became a



member of Boston Ballet in 2009 and was promoted to Principal in 2012. He joined American Ballet Theatre as a Soloist in 2015 and was promoted to Principal Dancer in August 2016. He was nominated for the Benois de la Danse 2017 for his performance of The Son in *The Prodigal Son* and Colas in *La Fille Mal Gardée*. In the fall of 2017, Cirio was Guest Lead Principal with English National Ballet. He joined ENB as Lead Principal in the fall of 2018. Jeffrey has danced a wide variety of classical, neo-classical and contemporary repertoire world-wide.

### Herman Cornejo

(Principal: American Ballet Theatre)

Argentine dancer Herman Cornejo has been a Principal Dancer with American Ballet Theatre since 2003.

He studied at the Instituto Superior de Arte del Teatro Colón.

After receiving a scholarship from the School of American Ballet, he was invited by Julio Bocca to join his company – Ballet Argentino- at the age of 14.

He is a Guest Artist with numerous companies around the world, such as Ballet Estable del Teatro Colón, Teatro alla Scala, Universal Ballet of Korea, National Ballet of Japan, Kremlin Ballet, Dortmund Ballett, New York City Ballet, Boston Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, Martha Graham Dance Company, Ballet Hispánico, and Ballet Contemporáneo de Cuba.

In 2012, he began an artistic collaboration with the Italian Prima Ballerina Assoluta Alessandra Ferri, which evolved into new productions such as "Cheri," "Evolution" and "Trio Concert Dance." In 2015, he debuted in his role as Artistic Director at the "Latin American Stars" Gala, held in the context of the event BalletNow. In 2017, he started a path as an independent producer through his newly created corporation, Herman Cornejo Creating Art.

### Alessandra Ferri

(Prima Ballerina Assoluta: American Ballet Theatre, Teatro alla Scala, Royal Ballet)

Alessandra Ferri is considered to be one of the most talented dramatic

ballerinas of our time. Born in Milan, she began her training at the school of Teatro alla Scala in Milan and then attended the Royal Ballet School in London. In 1980,

Alessandra won the prestigious Prix de Lausanne and joined the Royal Ballet that same year. In 1983, she rose to prominence when Kenneth MacMillan, artistic director of the Royal Ballet, selected her for leading roles in his ballets *Romeo and Juliet*, *Manon* and *Mayerling*. MacMillan went on to choreograph a number of roles for Alessandra, making her, at 19 years old, Principal Dancer with the Company. In 1985, Mikhail Baryshnikov, artistic director for American Ballet Theatre, invited Alessandra to join the Company, where she danced as a principal until 2007. She was named *Prima Ballerina Assoluta* by Teatro alla Scala where she danced from 1992 until 2007.

In 2006 Alessandra was presented the Cavaliere della Repubblica Honoris by the President of the Italian Republic Carlo Azeglio Ciampi. She has also received numerous prestigious international awards, including the Dance Magazine Award, the Benois de la Danse Prix and Olivier Award in 1983 and 2016. She was the Director of Dance Programming at the Spoleto Festival in Italy from 2008 to 2014.

Since 2013, performances include *The Piano Upstairs* (Spoleto, which she also choreographed), *Chéri* (Signature Theatre) *Duse* (Hamburg Ballet) and *Wolf Works* (Royal Ballet), for which she won a National Dance Award and a second Olivier Award.

### Marcelo Gomes

(Principal: The Sarasota Ballet, American Ballet Theatre)

Marcelo Gomes is a Guest Principal dancer with Sarasota Ballet and a former Principal Dancer with American Ballet Theatre. He has performed most of the leading roles in the classical repertoire and has worked with virtually every major choreographer in the last 20 years. Marcelo has also choreographed ballets for American



Ballet Theatre, Teatro alla Scala, Kings of the Dance, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, The Sarasota Ballet and Washington Ballet.

A native of Brazil, Marcelo was born in Manaus and raised in Rio de Janeiro, where he began his dance studies at the Helena Lobato and Dalal Achcar Ballet Schools. He set off alone at age 12 to study at The HARID Conservatory in Boca Raton, Florida, and subsequently at the schools of the Paris Opera Ballet, Houston Ballet, Boston Ballet and CU Ballet. Marcelo was invited to join American Ballet Theatre in 1997 at age 18 and was rapidly promoted to principal dancer in 2002 until 2017. He is the subject of the full-length documentary *Anatomy of a Male Ballet Dancer*.

### Ricardo Graziano

(Principal: The Sarasota Ballet)

Ricardo Graziano is a Principal Dancer with The Sarasota Ballet and the Company's Resident Choreographer. Born in Brazil, Ricardo started his studies in his hometown of Mogi das Cruzes at the Marcela Campos Escola de Bailados, finishing his studies in Germany at the Akademie des Tanzes Mannheim.

He danced with Tulsa Ballet in Tulsa, Oklahoma from 2005-2010 before joining The Sarasota Ballet as a Soloist and being promoted to Principal in 2011. His repertoire includes works by renowned choreographers including Jiri Kylian, Nacho Duato, Hans van Manen, William Forsythe, Kenneth McMillan, Val Caniparoli, Frederick Ashton, George Balanchine, Christopher Wheeldon, Antony Tudor, Twyla Tharp, David Bintley, Sir Peter Wright, Pul Taylor and Marcelo Gomes.

As a choreographer, Ricardo has created eight ballets for The Sarasota Ballet, with three additional smaller works for galas and one ballet for the Margaret Barbieri Conservatory.

Ricardo's ballets have also been performed at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, The Joyce Theatre in New York City and The National Choreographic Festival presented by Ballet West in Salt Lake City.



### Kate Honea

(Principal: The Sarasota Ballet)

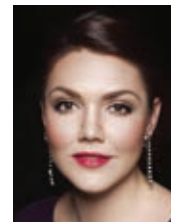
Kate Honea, of Longboat Key, Florida, is a Principal Dancer and Assistant Ballet Mistress at The Sarasota Ballet of Florida under the direction of Iain Webb. She is currently in her 17th season with the company and has been part of The Sarasota Ballet since she started her training in the school in 1995. Kate trained at prestigious summer programs including School of American Ballet and American Ballet Theatre and participated in Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's pre-professional graduate program.

She began her professional career with The Sarasota Ballet in 2002 and was promoted to Soloist in 2006, then to Principal in 2009. Kate has performed lead and featured roles by Sir Frederick Ashton, George Balanchine, Antony Tudor, Paul Taylor, Sir Kenneth MacMillan, Hans Van Manen, Christopher Wheeldon, Twyla Tharp, Matthew Bourne, Jerome Robbins and Martha Graham. Roles were created on Kate by Matthew Hart, Will Tuckett, Dominic Walsh, and Ricardo Graziano.

### Mary-Hollis Hundley

(Soprano)

Mary-Hollis Hundley, soprano, spent the 2017-18 season making company and role debuts as Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Virginia Opera, Zerlina in Opera on the James' *Don Giovanni* and as a cover for Christine Brewer's *Ariadne auf Naxos* at Kentucky Opera. During the summer, she returned to the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis for her second summer as a Gerdine Young Artist, where she covered Susan Graham in the title role of Blitzstein's *Regina*. She spent the remainder of the summer as a Resident Artist at Teatro Nuovo, where she covered Jennifer Rowley in the title role of Mayr's *Medea* in *Corinto*. Mary-Hollis will perform the role of Gertrude in Michigan Opera Theatre's April production of *Hansel and Gretel*.



## Misa Kuranaga

(Principal: Boston Ballet)

Misa Kuranaga began her training at the Jinushi Kaoru Ballet School and later continued at the School of American Ballet. In 2001, Misa joined San Francisco Ballet as an apprentice after winning the professional scholarship award at the Prix de Lausanne. In 2003, Misa was offered a corps de ballet position at Boston Ballet. She quickly rose through the ranks after performing the Sylph in August Bournonville's *La Sylphide* as a corps member. She was promoted to Second Soloist in 2005, Soloist in 2007, and to Principal Dancer in 2009.



Misa is the recipient of numerous awards and honors including a gold medal in the junior division of the Ninth Moscow International Ballet Competition and the gold medal in the senior division of the 2006 USA International Ballet Competition. She was nominated for a Benois de la Danse award for her portrayal of Tatiana in John Cranko's *Onegin* and Medora in Ivan Liška's *Le Corsaire* in 2017.

## David LaMarche

(Conductor)

David LaMarche has been working as a conductor in the dance field for over 30 years. He served as Music Director for the Dance Theatre of Harlem from 1993 to 1998 and conducted many of the company's premieres. In addition, he composed and arranged several scores for the repertory.



As a guest, he has conducted for New York City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, National Ballet of Canada, Houston Ballet, Joffrey Ballet, The Paul Taylor Dance Company, L'Opera di Roma, Het National Ballet, Les Grand Ballets Canadiens, Ballet British Columbia and Ballet West.

The orchestras he has directed include the Houston Symphony, the Lyric Opera Orchestra of Chicago, the Pacific Symphony, St. Luke's Orchestra, the National Arts Center Orchestra of Canada, the Tokyo Philharmonic, the Hong Kong Philharmonic, the Moscow Radio Orchestra, the Tivoli Festival Orchestra and the Orchestre Lamoureux of Paris.

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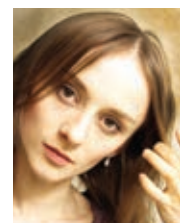
He is currently in his 16th year on the staff of American Ballet Theatre and is Music Director of the Jose Limon Company.

## Oksana Maslova

(Principal: Pennsylvania Ballet)

Ukrainian dancer Oksana Maslova is a Principal Dancer with the Pennsylvania Ballet. She has danced with companies throughout the world, including the Grand Rapids Ballet in Michigan, as well as the

Odessa National Opera House, the Moscow Ballet and the Connecticut Ballet. Oksana's artistic development began early on with rhythmic gymnastics, which eventually led her to an intensive ballet program with Irina Sycheva, former ballerina of St. Petersburg Ballet. Oksana then went on to the Kiev Choreographic College,



where she studied under renowned teachers and artists such as Anna Petrenchuk, Evgenyi Kaigorodov, Yana Gladkih and Dmitriy Kaigorodov. After graduating from Kiev, she became a student at the Institute of Culture and Arts, where she received her master's degree as a choreographer and ballet master. Her repertoire includes leading roles in classics such as *Swan Lake*, *The Sleeping Beauty*, *The Nutcracker*, *Giselle*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Cinderella*, *Le Corsaire* and *Don Quixote*, as well as neoclassical and modern works.

**Marco Pelle**

(Artistic Direction)

Marco Pelle is the resident choreographer with New York Theatre Ballet as well as a director and frequent choreographer for Michigan Opera Theatre. Marco began his career as a choreographer and was introduced to the opera world by MOT Founder David DiChiera.



He has choreographed for some of the best ballet dancers in the world, including Italian ballerina Alessandra Ferri on her comeback show *The Piano Upstairs* and Paris Opera Ballet *étoile* Isabelle Ciaravola, who performed his work *Esprit Libéré*. He also choreographed *Passage*, a short

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movie which opened at the Venice Film Festival for which he later created a theater version. Marco is a 2016 recipient of the PrimiDieci USA Award, under the patronage of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which

honors the 10 most successful Italians in the United States today. He is also a 2013 recipient of the SAIE National Award in Italy for his contribution to the arts.

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**VIOLIN II**

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Velda Kelly  
Anna Bittar-Weller  
Ashley Dyer  
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Elizabeth Rowin  
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Geoffrey Johnson  
Alex Hayashi - English Horn

**CLARINET**

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J. William King - Bass Clarinet

**BASSOON**

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Susan Nelson

**HORN**

Carrie Banfield-Taplin  
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Susan Mutter  
Sean Yancer  
Clinton Webb

**TRUMPET**

David Ammer  
*Principal +*  
Gordon Simmons  
Charles Saenz

**TROMBONE**

David Jackson  
*Acting Principal +*  
Gary Hellick  
Christopher Hernacki

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Matthew Lyon

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Terence Farmer  
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# Dance Education



## MASTER CLASSES OFFER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Learn from professional dancers when they come to Detroit to perform on the Detroit Opera House stage! This is a great opportunity for intermediate to advanced level dancers looking to learn from the professionals. Classes include a class taught by Marcelo Gomes and a member of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Class styles and age restrictions vary from company to company. Information is posted on the Michigan Opera Theatre website.

All classes are open to the public and free with a corresponding ticket stub or \$25 without a ticket stub and take place in the Margo V. Cohen Center for Dance in the Ford Center for Learning at the Detroit Opera House. Pre-registration is required because of space limitations.

For information and to register, please go to [www.michiganopera.org/learning/dance-education/](http://www.michiganopera.org/learning/dance-education/).



## ENJOY DANCE FILM, REFRESHMENTS, AND DISCUSSION!

Dance-lovers from all over Detroit come together for dance films, food, drink and discussion on Tuesday evenings. The Dance Film Series continues for its 12th season March 12 at 7 p.m. with dances to music by Leonard Bernstein. The celebration of dance on film will continue in April and May with works to Peter Tchaikovsky and closing with George Balanchine's ballet, *Jewels*, performed by the Bolshoi Ballet. We hope you can join us to discuss and enjoy these beautiful ballets.

All dance films take place at the Detroit Opera House in the Ford Center for Learning in the Chrysler Black Box Theatre. A \$10 donation is payable at the door, and this includes refreshments. No reservations are required. For more information call 313-237-3251 or go to [www.michiganopera.org/learning/dance-film-series/](http://www.michiganopera.org/learning/dance-film-series/).



## AUDITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Detroit Opera House is a stop for many major dance companies and programs on their nationwide audition tours. If you are looking for a summer program for your budding dancer, watch for audition dates in early 2019 for summer intensive programs including Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School, artÉmotion Summer Intensive, BalletMet Dance Academy's Summer Intensive and many more.

Dates can be found at [www.michiganopera.org/working-with-us/dance-auditions/](http://www.michiganopera.org/working-with-us/dance-auditions/).

## Remembering Irving Nusbaum Michigan Opera Theatre Trustee 2004-2018



Irving Nusbaum was a 14-year member of the Michigan Opera Theatre Board of Trustees. In addition to being a savvy businessman and being the face of New York Carpet World, Mr. Nusbaum was known as a kind and generous philanthropist. Along with MOT, Mr. Nusbaum supported numerous non-profit organizations including Jewish Family Services, the Holocaust Memorial Center, the Yad Ezra kosher food pantry and JARC, an organization that supports people with developmental disabilities. In 2011, he also donated his company's former headquarters in Southfield to the Cleaners Community Food Bank of Southeast Michigan. He will be remembered for his generous support and commitment to MOT. Irving Nusbaum: 1933-2018.

# ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

March 15-17, 2019

Alvin Ailey, Founder  
Judith Jamison, Artistic Director Emerita

**Robert Battle, Artistic Director**

Masazumi Chaya, Associate Artistic Director



Jacqueline Green and Jamar Roberts.  
Photo by Andrew Eccles



The 2018-2019 Dance Season is made possible by the Lear Corporation

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## COMPANY MEMBERS

Riccardo Battaglia  
Hope Boykin  
Jeroboam Bozeman  
Clifton Brown  
Khalia Campbell  
Sarah Daley-Perdomo  
Chrai DeVore  
Solomon Dumas  
Samantha Figgins

Vernard J. Gilmore  
Jacqueline Green  
Daniel Harder  
Jacquelin Harris  
Michael Jackson, Jr.  
Megan Jakel  
Yazzmeen Laidler  
Yannick Lebrun  
Michael Francis McBride

Rachael McLaren  
Chalvar Monteiro  
Akua Noni Parker  
Danica Paulos  
Belén Pereyra-Alem  
Jessica Amber Pinkett  
Jamar Roberts  
Samuel Lee Roberts  
Kanji Segawa

Glenn Allen Sims  
Linda Celeste Sims  
Courtney Celeste Spears  
Constance Stamatou  
Jermaine Terry  
Fana Tesfagiorgis  
Christopher R. Wilson

Matthew Rushing, Rehearsal Director & Guest Artist

**Bennett Rink, Executive Director**

Major funding is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts; the New York State Council on the Arts; the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; American Express; Bank of America; BET Networks; Bloomberg Philanthropies; BNY Mellon; Delta Air Lines; Diageo North America; Doris Duke Charitable Foundation; FedEx; Ford Foundation; Howard Gilman Foundation; Prudential; The SHS Foundation; The Shubert Foundation; Southern Company; Target; The Wallace Foundation; and Wells Fargo.

## Program

### Friday, March 15 at 7:30pm:

#### *Lazarus Act 1 & Lazarus Act 2*

CHOREOGRAPHER: Rennie Harris  
 MUSIC & SOUND: Darrin Ross  
 Rehearsal Director: Nina Flagg  
 Rehearsal Associate: Millie Heckler  
 Costumes by Mark Eric  
 Lighting by James Clotfelter  
 PREMIERE:  
 World: New York City Center, 2018

#### *Revelations*

CHOREOGRAPHER: Alvin Ailey  
 MUSIC: Traditional  
 Décor and Costumes by Ves Harper  
 Costumes for "Rocka My Soul" redesigned by Barbara Forbes  
 Lighting by Nicola Cernovitch  
 PREMIERE:  
 Company: New York, Kaufman Concert Hall, 92nd Street YM-YWHM, 1960  
 World: New York, Kaufman Concert Hall, 92nd Street YM-YWHM, 1960

### Saturday, March 16 at 7:30pm:

#### *Lazarus Act 1 & Lazarus Act 2*

CHOREOGRAPHER: Rennie Harris  
 MUSIC & SOUND: Darrin Ross  
 Rehearsal Director: Nina Flagg  
 Rehearsal Associate: Millie Heckler  
 Costumes by Mark Eric  
 Lighting by James Clotfelter  
 PREMIERE:  
 World: New York City Center, 2018

#### *Revelations*

CHOREOGRAPHER: Alvin Ailey  
 MUSIC: Traditional  
 Décor and Costumes by Ves Harper  
 Costumes for "Rocka My Soul" redesigned by Barbara Forbes  
 Lighting by Nicola Cernovitch  
 PREMIERE:  
 Company: New York, Kaufman Concert Hall, 92nd Street YM-YWHM, 1960  
 World: New York, Kaufman Concert Hall, 92nd Street YM-YWHM, 1960

### Sunday, March 17 at 2:30pm:

#### *Stack Up*

CHOREOGRAPHER: Talley Beatty  
 RESTAGING: Masazumi Chaya  
 MUSIC: Earth, Wind and Fire; Grover Washington, Jr.; Fearless Four; Alphonze Mouzon  
 Costumes by Carol Vollet Kingston  
 Décor adapted from "Under the Bridge," a painting by Romare Bearden  
 Lighting by Chenault Spence  
 PREMIERE:  
 Company: New York City Center, 1982;  
 World: New York City Center, 1982

#### *Juba*

CHOREOGRAPHER: Robert Battle  
 Staged by Elisa Clark  
 MUSIC: Original Score Composed by John Mackey  
 Costumes by Mia McSwain  
 Lighting by Burke Wilmore  
 PREMIERE:  
 Company: New York City Center, 2003;  
 World: New York City Center, 2003

#### *Shelter*

CHOREOGRAPHER:  
 Jawole Willa Jo Zollar  
 MUSIC: Junior "Gabu" Wedderburn and Victor See Yuen  
 Rehearsal Assistants: Maria Bauman, Jaimé Dzandu, Marjani Forté, Paloma McGregor, Samantha Speis, Bennalldra Williams  
 Texts by Hattie Gossett, Carl Hancock Rux, Laurie Carlos, Paloma McGregor, and Jawole Willa Jo Zollar  
 Text recorded by Carl Hancock Rux and Jawole Willa Jo Zollar  
 Lighting by Susan Hamburger  
 PREMIERE:  
 Company: 1992;  
 World: 1988

#### *Revelations*

CHOREOGRAPHER: Alvin Ailey  
 MUSIC: Various Artists  
 Décor and Costumes by Ves Harper  
 Costumes for "Rocka My Soul" redesigned by Barbara Forbes  
 Lighting by Nicola Cernovitch  
 PREMIERE:  
 Company: New York, Kaufman Concert Hall, 92nd Street YM-YWHM, 1960  
 World: New York, Kaufman Concert Hall, 92nd Street YM-YWHM, 1960

### ABOUT THE COMPANY: 60 YEARS AILEY ASCENDING

When Alvin Ailey and a small group of African-American dancers took the stage on March 30, 1958 at New York City's 92nd Street Y, the engagement was for one night only, but it turned out to be the start of a new era in the arts. Mr. Ailey envisioned a company dedicated to enriching the American modern dance heritage and preserving the uniqueness of the African-American cultural experience. He became one of the trailblazers of modern dance, and the work of his Company grew to encompass education, community outreach, and cultural diplomacy. To date, the Company has gone on to perform for an estimated 25 million people at theaters in 48 states and 71 countries on six continents - as well as millions more through television, film, and online. More than 235 works by over 90 choreographers have been part of the Ailey repertory. In 2008, a U.S. Congressional resolution designated the Company as "a vital American cultural ambassador to the world." Before his untimely death in 1989, Mr. Ailey named Judith Jamison as his successor, and over the next 21 years, she brought the Company to unprecedented success. Ms. Jamison, in turn, personally selected Robert Battle to succeed her in 2011, and *The New York Times* declared he "has injected the company with new life."

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater gratefully acknowledges **The Joan & Sandy Weill Global Ambassador Fund**, which provides vital support for Ailey's national and international tours.

## Alvin Ailey

### FOUNDER

Alvin Ailey was born on January 5, 1931, in Rogers, Texas. His experiences of life in the rural South would later inspire some of his most memorable works. He was introduced to dance in Los Angeles by performances of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and the Katherine Dunham Dance Company, and his formal dance training began with an introduction to Lester Horton's classes by his friend Carmen de Lavallade. Horton, the founder of one of the first racially integrated dance companies in the United States, became a mentor for Mr. Ailey as he embarked on his professional career. After Horton's death in 1953, Mr. Ailey became director of the Lester Horton Dance Theater and began to choreograph his own works. In the 1950s and 60s Mr. Ailey performed in four Broadway shows, including *House of Flowers* and *Jamaica*. In 1958 he founded Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater to carry out his vision of a company dedicated to enriching the American modern dance heritage and preserving the uniqueness of the African-American cultural experience. He established the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center (now The Ailey School) in 1969 and formed the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble (now Ailey II) in 1974. Mr. Ailey was a pioneer of programs promoting arts in education, particularly those benefiting underserved communities. Throughout his lifetime he was awarded numerous distinctions, including the Kennedy Center Honor in 1988 in recognition of his extraordinary contribution to American culture. In 2014 he posthumously received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the country's highest civilian honor, in recognition of his contributions and commitment to civil rights and dance in America. When Mr. Ailey died on December 1, 1989, *The New York Times* said of him, "you didn't need to have known [him] personally to have been touched by his humanity, enthusiasm, and exuberance and his courageous stand for multi-racial brotherhood."

## Robert Battle

### ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Robert Battle became artistic director of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in July 2011 after being personally selected by Judith Jamison, making him only the third person to head the Company since it was founded in 1958. Mr. Battle has a longstanding association with the Ailey organization. A frequent choreographer and artist-in-residence at Ailey since 1999, he has set many of his works on Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Ailey II, and at The Ailey School. The Company's current repertory includes his ballets *Ella*, *In/Side*, *Mass*, *No Longer Silent*, and *Juba*. In addition to expanding the Ailey repertory with works by artists as diverse as Ronald K. Brown, Rennie Harris, Jessica Lang, and Wayne McGregor, Mr. Battle has also instituted the New Directions Choreography Lab to help develop the next generation of choreographers. Mr. Battle's journey to the top of the modern dance world began in the Liberty City neighborhood of Miami, Florida. He showed artistic talent early and studied dance at a high school arts magnet program before moving on to Miami's New World School of the Arts, under the direction of Daniel Lewis and Gerri Houlihan, and finally to the dance program at The Juilliard School, under the direction of Benjamin Harkarvy, where he met his mentor, Carolyn Adams. He danced with The Parsons Dance Company from 1994 to 2001, and also set his choreography on that company starting in 1998. Mr. Battle then founded his own Battleworks Dance Company, which made its debut in 2002 in Düsseldorf, Germany, as the U.S. representative to the World Dance Alliance's Global Assembly. Battleworks subsequently performed extensively at venues, including The Joyce Theater, Dance Theater Workshop, American Dance Festival, and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. Mr. Battle was honored as one of the "Masters of African-American Choreography" by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in 2005, and he received the prestigious Statue Award from the Princess Grace Foundation-USA in 2007. He has honorary doctorates from The University of the Arts and Marymount

Manhattan College. Mr. Battle was named a 2015 visiting fellow for The Art of Change, an initiative by the Ford Foundation. He is a sought-after keynote speaker and has addressed a number of high-profile organizations, including the United Nations Leaders Programme and the UNICEF Senior Leadership Development Programme.

## Masazumi Chaya

### ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Masazumi Chaya was born in Fukuoka, Japan, where he began his classical ballet training. Upon moving to New York in December 1970, he studied modern dance and performed with the Richard Englund Repertory Company. Mr. Chaya joined Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 1972 and performed with the Company for 15 years. In 1988 he became the Company's rehearsal director after serving as assistant rehearsal director. A master teacher both on tour with the Company and in his native Japan, he served as choreographic assistant to Alvin Ailey and John Butler. In 1991 Mr. Chaya was named associate artistic director of the Company. He continues to provide invaluable creative assistance in all facets of its operations. Mr. Chaya has restaged numerous ballets by Alvin Ailey, including *Flowers* for the State Ballet of Missouri (1990) and *The River* for the Royal Swedish Ballet (1993), Ballet Florida (1995), National Ballet of Prague (1995), Pennsylvania Ballet (1996), and Colorado Ballet (1998). He has also restaged *The Mooche*, *Stack-Up*, *Episodes*, *Bad Blood*, *Hidden Rites*, and *Witness* for the Company. At the beginning of his tenure, Mr. Chaya restaged Ailey's *For 'Bird' – With Love* for a Dance in America program entitled *Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater: Steps Ahead*. In 2000 he restaged Ailey's *Night Creature* for the Rome Opera House and *The River* for La Scala Ballet. In 2002 Mr. Chaya coordinated the Company's appearance at the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree-lighting ceremony, broadcast on NBC. In 2003 he restaged *The River* for North Carolina Dance Theatre and for Julio Bocca's Ballet Argentina. Most recently Mr. Chaya restaged *Bad Blood*, *Blues Suite*, *Love Songs*, *Masekela Langage*, *Pas de Duke*, and *Vespers* for the Company. As a performer, Mr. Chaya appeared



on Japanese television in both dramatic and musical productions. He wishes to recognize the artistic contribution and spirit of his late friend and fellow artist, Michihiko Oka.

### Judith Jamison

#### ARTISTIC DIRECTOR EMERITA

Judith Jamison joined Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 1965 and quickly became an international star. Over the next 15 years, Mr. Ailey created some of his most enduring roles for her, most notably the tour-de-force solo *Cry*. During the 1970s and 80s she appeared as a guest artist with ballet companies all over the world, starred in the hit Broadway musical *Sophisticated Ladies*, and formed her own company, The Jamison Project. She returned to Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 1989 when Mr. Ailey asked her to succeed him as artistic director. In the 21 years that followed, she brought the Company to unprecedented heights—including two historic engagements in South Africa and a 50-city global tour to celebrate the Company's 50th anniversary. Ms. Jamison is the recipient of numerous awards and honors, among them a prime time Emmy Award, an American Choreography Award, a Kennedy Center Honor, a National Medal of Arts, a Bessie Award, the Phoenix Award, and the Handel Medallion. She was also listed in "The *TIME* 100: The World's Most Influential People" and honored by First Lady Michelle Obama at the first White House Dance Series event. In 2015 she became the 50th inductee into the Hall of Fame at the National Museum of Dance. In 2016 she received the Douglas Watt Lifetime Achievement Award from the Fred and Adele Astaire Awards. As a highly regarded choreographer, Ms. Jamison has created many celebrated works, including *Divining* (1984), *Forgotten Time* (1989), *Hymn* (1993), *HERE... NOW*. (commissioned for the 2002 Cultural Olympiad), *Love Stories* (with additional choreography by Robert Battle and Rennie Harris, 2004), and *Among Us (Private Spaces: Public Places, 2009)*. Ms. Jamison's autobiography, *Dancing Spirit*, was edited by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and published in 1993. In 2004, under Ms. Jamison's artistic directorship, her idea of a permanent

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home for the Ailey company was realized and named after beloved chairman emerita Joan Weill. Ms. Jamison continues to dedicate herself to asserting the prominence of the arts in our culture and she remains committed to promoting the significance of the Ailey legacy—using dance as a medium for honoring the past, celebrating the present, and fearlessly reaching into the future.

### Bennett Rink EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Bennett Rink became executive director of Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation in 2013. Mr. Rink first joined Ailey as manager of special events in 1994, became development director in 1998, and then worked as senior director of development and external affairs from 2007 to 2012. In his tenure overseeing Ailey's development, Mr. Rink led a \$75 million capital campaign supporting Ailey's first permanent home, The

Joan Weill Center for Dance which opened in 2005, and established an endowment to support major program areas. When the Company celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2008, Mr. Rink supervised an 18-month celebration, including events, promotions, collaborations, and special performances, bringing public awareness of the Ailey organization to new heights. Mr. Rink also oversaw "The Next Step Campaign," which grew the organization's endowment to \$50 million. As Executive Director, Mr. Rink launched a five-year strategic plan in 2014 to realize Robert Battle's creative vision, expand Ailey's educational offerings, and enhance technology to extend the reach of the organization. Central to the plan has been the expansion of The Joan Weill Center for Dance, which attracts more than 200,000 visitors each year. In the fall of 2017, Ailey unveiled the Center's Elaine Wynn and Family Education Wing, providing much-needed additional studios and classroom space to meet the growing demand for Ailey's programs. The building now comprises 87,000 square feet and is the largest destination for dance in New York City. Mr. Rink also conceived The Campaign for Ailey's Future, a \$50 million initiative to support the Center's expansion and the ongoing implementation of other long-range strategic priorities. During Mr. Rink's tenure, the Company deepened its presence in New York City by establishing a spring season at Lincoln Center to complement its New York City Center winter season, while also extending its role as America's "Cultural Ambassador to the World" with tours to Africa, Europe, and South America. In order to reach audiences beyond live performances, the Company has broadened its commitment to creating film and digital content, including its first-ever theatrical movie release as part of *Lincoln Center at the Movies: Great American Dance*. Mr. Rink is a graduate of Syracuse University and holds a B.F.A. in theater.

### **MATTHEW RUSHING REHEARSAL DIRECTOR AND GUEST ARTIST**

Matthew Rushing was born in Los Angeles, California. He began his dance training with Kashmir Blake in Inglewood, California, and later continued his training at the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts. He is the recipient of a Spotlight Award and a *Dance Magazine* Award and was named a Presidential Scholar in the Arts. He was a scholarship student at The Ailey School and later became a member of Ailey II. During his career Mr. Rushing has performed as a guest artist for galas in Vail, Colorado, as well as in Austria, Canada, France, Italy, and Russia. He has performed for Presidents George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama, as well as at the 2010 White House Dance Series. During his time with the Company, he has choreographed three ballets: *Acceptance In Surrender* (2005), a collaboration with Hope Boykin and Abdur-Rahim Jackson; *Uptown* (2009), a tribute to the Harlem Renaissance; and *ODETTA* (2014), a celebration of "the queen of American folk music." In 2012 he created *Moan*, which was set on Philadanco and premiered at The Joyce Theater. Mr. Rushing joined the Company in 1992 and became rehearsal director in June 2010.

### **WHO'S WHO IN THE COMPANY**

**RICCARDO BATTAGLIA** (Pescara, Italy) began dancing at the age of eight at Scuola D'Arte New Step in his hometown. He is a three-time winner of the "Expressions" competition held in Florence as part of the Danzainfiera event and won the Tip Tap Show competition in Rome. At 19, Mr. Battaglia moved to the United States and trained at The Ailey School as a scholarship student. He has worked with choreographers including Danielle Agami, Darrell Grand Moultrie, Kevin O'Day, Jennifer Archibald, Kate Skarpetowska, Manuel Vignouille, and Ryan Heffington. Mr. Battaglia has been a member of Elisa Monte Dance, Ailey II, and Visceral Dance Chicago and performed with Lydia Johnson Dance, Earl Mosley's

Diversity of Dance, CelloPointe, and Jennifer Muller The Works. He has danced in the 2015 #ENDHIV New York Gala, Moncler's 2016 NY Fashion Week, and Kenzo H&M Fashion Show and was featured in commercials for Quaker Oatmeal and Swarovski. Mr. Battaglia was on faculty at the Ailey Extension in New York, the Joffrey Ballet School in Chicago, and has taught in several dance studios around the United States and Italy.

**HOPE BOYKIN** (Durham, NC) is a three-time recipient of the American Dance Festival's Young Tuition Scholarship. She attended Howard University and, while in Washington, D.C., performed with Lloyd Whitmore's New World Dance Company. Ms. Boykin was a student and intern at The Ailey School. She was assistant to the late Talley Beatty and an original member of Complexions. Ms. Boykin was a member of Philadanco and received a New York Dance and Performance Award (Bessie). She has choreographed three works for the Company: *Acceptance In Surrender* (2005), in collaboration with fellow Ailey company members Abdur-Rahim Jackson and Matthew Rushing; *Go in Grace* (2008), for the Company's 50th anniversary season with music by the award-winning singing group Sweet Honey in the Rock; and *r-Evolution, Dream*. (2016), inspired by the speeches and sermons of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., with original music by Ali Jackson. Most recently, Ms. Boykin was selected as a 2018-19 Urban Bush Women Choreographic Center Fellowship Candidate. Find Ms. Boykin on Twitter and Instagram at hbdance and Facebook as HopeBoykinDance. Ms. Boykin joined the Company in 2000.

**JEROBOAM BOZEMAN** (Brooklyn, NY) began his dance training under Ruth Sistaire at the Ronald Edmonds Learning Center. He later joined Creative Outlet, and was granted full scholarships at the Joffrey Ballet School and Dance Theatre of Harlem. Mr. Bozeman is a gold-medal recipient of the NAACP ACT-SO Competition in Dance. He performed in Elton John and Tim Rice's Broadway musical *Aida* (international tour in China) and was a part of Philadanco, Donald Byrd's

Spectrum Dance Theater, and Ailey II. During the fall of 2016 Mr. Bozeman performed as a guest artist with The Royal Ballet, and *Dance Magazine* nominated him as one of "25 to Watch" in 2018. Mr. Bozeman recently received a bachelor's degree in psychology concentrating in industrial organization from Argosy University. Mr. Bozeman joined the Company in 2013. Instagram: @Jeroboamb

**CLIFTON BROWN** (Goodyear, AZ) began his dance training at Take 5 Dance Academy and continued in the first class of the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program in Dance. Mr. Brown began his professional career when he joined the Ailey company in 1999 and served as choreographic assistant to Judith Jamison. He has also danced with Earl Mosley's Diversity of Dance and Lar Lubovitch Dance Company, and was a founding member and rehearsal director for Jessica Lang Dance. He was nominated in the U.K. for a Critics Circle National Dance Award for Best Male Dancer and received a Black Theater Arts Award as well as a New York Dance and Performance Award (Bessie). As a guest artist Mr. Brown has performed with Miami City Ballet, Rome Opera Ballet, Nevada Ballet, and Parsons Dance Company. He has set the work of Alvin Ailey, Earl Mosley, and Jessica Lang on various companies around the world. Television appearances as a guest artist include *So You Think You Can Dance* and *Dancing with the Stars*. He has had the privilege of performing at the White House for President Obama. Mr. Brown rejoined the Company in 2017.

**KHALIA CAMPBELL** (Bronx, NY) is a graduate of Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts. She began her formal dance training at Uptown Dance Academy. Ms. Campbell also studied at Dance Theatre of Harlem and as a scholarship student at The Ailey School. In 2012 Ms. Campbell was a part of the international tour of the musical *Aida*. She has performed with Kymera Dance, Dance Iquail, and in the 40th anniversary of *The Wiz* at Summerstage. Ms. Campbell also danced as a guest artist with Richard Siegal's Ballet of Difference in Munich,

Germany. In 2016 she was featured in the Christian Dior commercial for the fragrance Poison. She was a member of Ailey II and joined the Company in 2018.

**SARAH DALEY-PERDOMO** (South Elgin, IL) began her training at the Faubourg School of Ballet in Illinois under the direction of Watmora Casey and Tatyana Mazur. She is a 2009 graduate of the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program in Dance. Mrs. Daley-Perdomo trained at institutions such as the Kirov Academy, National Ballet School of Canada, The San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, and intensives at Ballet Camp Illinois and Ballet Adriatico in Italy. She is a recipient of a Youth America Grand Prix Award and an ARTS Foundation Award. She was a member of Ailey II and joined the Company in 2011.

**GHRAI DeVORE** (Washington, D.C.) began her formal dance training at the Chicago Multi-Cultural Dance Center and was a scholarship student at The Ailey School. She has completed summer programs at the Kirov Academy, Ballet Chicago, Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, American Ballet Theatre, and Alonzo King LINES Ballet. Ms. DeVore was a member of Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, Deeply Rooted Dance Theater 2, Hubbard Street 2, Dance Works Chicago, and Ailey II. She has received the Danish Queen Ingrid Scholarship of Honor and the Dizzy Feet Foundation Scholarship, and she was a 2010 nominee for the first annual Clive Barnes Award. Ms. DeVore joined the Company in 2010.

**SOLOMON DUMAS** (Chicago, IL) was introduced to dance through AileyCamp. He later began his formal training at The Chicago Academy for the Arts and the Russell Talbert Dance Studio, where he received his most influential training. Mr. Dumas studied at New World School of the Arts and was a fellowship Level 1 student at The Ailey School. He has performed with companies including Garth Fagan Dance; Ronald K. Brown/Evidence, A Dance Company; and Labyrinth Dance Theater and was a member of Ailey II. Mr. Dumas joined the Company in 2016.

**SAMANTHA FIGGINS** (Washington, D.C.) began dancing at Duke Ellington School of the Arts under the tutelage of Charles Auggins and Sandra Fortune-Greene and attended summer intensives at Dance Theatre of Harlem under the direction of Arthur Mitchell. She continued her education at SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Dance. There she performed works by George Balanchine, Bill T. Jones, Paul Taylor, and Twyla Tharp. Upon graduating cum laude, Ms. Figgins became a member of Complexions Contemporary Ballet, performing works by Dwight Rhoden, Jae Man Joo, and Camille A. Brown. She also performed at the 2014 DanceOpen Festival in St. Petersburg, Russia. Ms. Figgins was featured both on the cover of *Dance Spirit* magazine and in *Pointe* magazine's "10 Careers to Watch" in 2013. She has worked with Beyoncé and can be seen in the film *Enemy Within* alongside Tiler Peck and Matthew Rushing. Ms. Figgins joined the Company in 2014.

**VERNARD J. GILMORE** (Chicago, IL) began his training at Curie Performing and Creative Arts High School in Chicago under Diane Holda. He later studied at the Joseph Holmes Chicago Dance Theater with Harriet Ross, Marquita Levy, and Emjly Stein. He received first place in the all-city NAACP ACT-SO competition in 1993. He attended Barat College under scholarship and tutelage of Rory Foster and Eileen Cropley. He then studied as a scholarship student at The Ailey School and was a member of Ailey II. In 2010 he performed as part of the White House Dance Series. Mr. Gilmore is a choreographer whose work has been a part of the Ailey Dancers Resource Fund, Fire Island Dance Festival 2008, Jazz Foundation of America Gala 2010, and he produced the *Dance Of Light* project in 2010 and 2015. An excerpt of Mr. Gilmore's work *La Muette* was performed in 2017 as part of the "Celebrating the Men of Ailey" program. Nimbus Dance Works performed a new work by Mr. Gilmore in 2018. Mr. Gilmore is a certified Zena Rommett Floor-Barre instructor. He teaches workshops and master classes around the world. Mr. Gilmore joined the Company in 1997.

**JACQUELINE GREEN** (Baltimore, MD) began her dance training at the age of 13 at the prestigious Baltimore School for the Arts. She is a 2011 cum laude graduate of the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program under the direction of Denise Jefferson. During that time she also received training at the Pennsylvania Regional Ballet, the Chautauqua Institution for Dance, and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. In her career she has performed works by a wide range of choreographers, including Wayne McGregor, Jiří Kylián, Elisa Monte, Ronald K. Brown, and Kyle Abraham. In 2016 she performed as a guest artist with The Royal Ballet. Ms. Green is a 2018 Bessie nominee for sustained achievement with the Company, a 2014 Dance Fellowship recipient of the Princess Grace Foundation-USA, a 2015 Clive Barnes Award nominee, a 2009 recipient of the Martha Hill Fund's Young Professional Award, and a 2010 recipient of the Dizzy Feet Foundation Scholarship. In 2018 she performed on BET's *Black Girls Rock* honoring Judith Jamison. She was a member of Ailey II in 2010 and joined the Company in 2011.

**DANIEL HARDER** (Bowie, MD) began dancing at Suitland High School's Center for the Visual and Performing Arts in Maryland. He is a graduate of the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program in Dance where he was awarded the Jerome Robbins/Layton Foundation Scholarship and participated in the Holland Dance Festival with the School and as a member of the Francesca Harper Project. Mr. Harder has worked with and performed works by Nacho Duato, William Forsythe, Donald McKayle, Debbie Allen, and Christopher L. Huggins. After dancing in the European tour of *West Side Story*, Mr. Harder became a member of Ailey II. He joined the Company in 2010.

**JACQUELIN HARRIS** (Charlotte, NC) began her dance training at Dance Productions Studios under the direction of Lori Long. Ms. Harris received a silver ARTS award from the National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts and was a Presidential Scholar in the Arts semifinalist. She has studied at Joffrey Ballet School and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. She graduated with honors from the Ailey/Fordham BFA

Program in Dance. In 2016 Ms. Harris was named one of the "25 to Watch" by *Dance Magazine*. Most recently she received a 2017 dance fellowship from the Princess Grace Foundation-USA. She was a member of Ailey II and joined the Company in 2014.

**MICHAEL JACKSON, JR.** (New Orleans, LA) began his dance training at age 14 at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, D.C., under the direction of Charles Augins. He became a member of Dance Theatre of Harlem Dancing through Barriers Ensemble in 2005. In 2006 he joined Dallas Black Dance Theatre, and in 2008 joined Philadanco, where he also worked as artistic director of D3. Mr. Jackson joined the Company in 2011 and rejoined in 2015.

**MEGAN JAKEL** (Waterford, MI) trained in ballet and jazz in her hometown. As a senior in high school, she spent a year dancing with the City Ballet of San Diego. In 2005 Ms. Jakel was an apprentice and rehearsal director for the Francesca Harper Project. She graduated with honors in May 2007 from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program in Dance. She was a member of Ailey II and joined the Company in 2009.

**YAZZMEEN LAIDLER** (Miami, FL) graduated from New World School of the Arts. She trained at Mrs. Traci Young-Bryon's Young Contemporary Dance Theatre and The Ailey School summer intensive. Ms. Laidler received her B.F.A. from University of the Arts and was a company member of Eleone Dance Theatre. Ms. Laidler is the 2016 award-winning Pennsylvania Choreographer, setting work for Pennsylvania Ballet II. She has performed works by Jae Man Joo, Dwight Rhoden, Tommie Waheed-Evans, Doug Varone, Juel D. Lane, and Darrell Moultrie, to name a few choreographers. She has performed as a guest artist with Owen/Cox Dance and is a former company member of Ailey II. She is thrilled to be joining the company this season.

**YANNICK LEBRUN** (Cayenne, French Guiana) began training in his native country at the Adaclam School under the guidance of Jeanine Verin. After graduating high school in 2004, he moved to New York City to study at

The Ailey School as a scholarship student. Mr. Lebrun has performed works by choreographers Troy Powell, Debbie Allen, Scott Rink, Thaddeus Davis, Nilas Martins, Dwight Rhoden, and Francesca Harper. He was named one of *Dance Magazine's* "25 to Watch" in 2011, and, in 2013, *France-Amérique* magazine highlighted him as one of the 50 most talented French in the United States. In November 2016 Mr. Lebrun was a guest performer with The Royal Ballet in Wayne McGregor's *Chroma*. Mr. Lebrun was a member of Ailey II and joined the Company in 2008.

**MICHAEL FRANCIS McBRIDE** (Johnson City, NY) began his training at the Danek School of Performing Arts and later trained at Amber Perkins School of the Arts in Norwich, New York. Mr. McBride attended Earl Mosley's Institute of the Arts for two consecutive summers and was also assistant to Mr. Mosley when he set the piece *Saddle UP!* on the Company in 2007. In January 2012 Mr. McBride performed and taught as a guest artist with the JUNTOS Collective in Guatemala. Mr. McBride graduated magna cum laude from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program in Dance in 2010. Follow him on Instagram at mickey.mc. Mr. McBride joined the Company in 2009.

**RACHAEL McLAREN** (Manitoba, Canada) began her dance training at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School and continued at the Ailey School in New York under the direction of Denise Jefferson. She has been a guest artist with Armitage Gone! Dance and the Francesca Harper Project. Ms. McLaren was most recently a guest artist with Royal Ballet of London for Wayne McGregor's tenth anniversary season in a production of *Chroma*. Her theater credits include ensemble/understudy for the role of Ali in the Toronto production of *Mamma Mia!* (Royal Alexandra Theater/Mirvish Productions). Ms. McLaren was a member of Ailey II and joined the Company in 2008. She is currently on maternity leave, eagerly anticipating the birth of her daughter, affectionately known by the company as "sweet pea."

**CHALVAR MONTEIRO** (Montclair, NJ) began his formal dance training at Sharron Miller's Academy for the Performing Arts and went on to study at The Ailey School. He received his B.F.A. in dance from SUNY Purchase, where he performed works by Merce Cunningham, Helen Pickett, Doug Varone, Dianne McIntyre, Kevin Wynn, and Paul Taylor. Since graduating Mr. Monteiro has worked with Sidra Bell Dance New York, Elisa Monte Dance, Keigwin + Company, BODYTRAFFIC, and most extensively with Abraham. In.Motion. He has assisted Kyle Abraham in setting and creating work for Barnard College, Princeton University, Emory University, NYU Tisch School of the Arts, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and Wendy Whelan's *Restless Creature*. Mr. Monteiro was a member of Ailey II and joined the Company in 2015.

**AKUA NONI PARKER** (Kinston, NC) began professional dance training at the Academy of the Dance in Wilmington, Delaware. After graduating high school she joined Dance Theatre of Harlem, where she performed principal roles in George Balanchine's *Agon*, *Serenade*, and *The Four Temperaments*, as well as the title role in Michael Smuin's *St. Louis Woman*. Ms. Parker was also a company member with the Cincinnati Ballet and Ballet San Jose, and had the honor of being the first African-American ballerina to dance the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy in Ballet San Jose's *The Nutcracker*. Since joining the Company in 2008, Ms. Parker has performed featured roles in Mr. Ailey's *Blues Suite*, *Night Creature*, *Masekela Langage*, *The River*, and *Cry*. She has also performed featured roles in Jiří Kylián's *Petite Mort*, Wayne McGregor's *Chroma*, and the title role in Geoffrey Holder's *Prodigal Prince*. To see Ms. Parker's outside projects and interests, follow her on Instagram at onlyupward.

**DANICA PAULOS** (Huntington Beach, CA) began dance training at Orange County Dance Center and continued studying at world renowned institutions such as The Juilliard School, San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Kirov Academy of Ballet, Bolshoi Ballet Academy, Hubbard Street Dance

Chicago, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Yuri Grigoriev School of Ballet, and The School at Jacob's Pillow. Ms. Paulos graduated from the Professional Performing Arts School in New York, where she trained at The Ailey School as a scholarship student. Ms. Paulos is a National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts Level 1 YoungArts finalist award winner. In addition to originating several roles and being featured in the Company's repertory, Ms. Paulos is also very passionate about her role as photographer for the Company's Instagram account, sharing a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the life of an Ailey dancer. She has modeled and been featured in *Elle Magazine*, *Double Magazine*, *Refinery29*, and graced the cover of *Dance Magazine*, where she was named "25 to Watch" in 2015. She was a member of Ailey II prior to joining the Company in 2014.

**BELÉN PEREYRA-ALEM** (Lawrence, MA) began her formal dance training at the Boston Arts Academy, where she graduated as valedictorian. She was also a member of NIA Dance Troupe, at Origination Cultural Arts Center in Boston. Upon moving to New York City, Mrs. Pereyra-Alem was closely mentored by Earl Mosley and danced with Camille A. Brown & Dancers for three years, during which time she performed at The Joyce Theater, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, and Dancers Responding to AIDS' annual events Dance from the Heart and The Fire Island Dance Festival. Mrs. Pereyra-Alem was an apprentice for Ronald K. Brown/Evidence, A Dance Company, and has performed with Lula Washington Dance Theater, Nathan Trice, and Roger C. Jeffrey. She assisted Matthew Rushing with his ballet *Uptown* for the Ailey company in 2009. Mrs. Pereyra-Alem joined the Company in 2011.

**JESSICA AMBER PINKETT** (Baltimore, MD) began her dance training at Baltimore Dance Tech under the direction of Stephanie Powell. Ms. Pinkett is a proud graduate from George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology. She is a bronze medal recipient from the NAACP ACT-SO competition in Dance. Ms. Pinkett has worked with choreographers including

Linda-Denise Fisher-Harrell, Kirven Douthit-Boyd, Ray Mercer, Darrell Grand Moultrie, and others. She has performed as a guest artist with The Black Iris Project and was a member of Ailey II. From Towson University, she graduated with honors and earned a B.F.A. in dance performance and choreography. She concluded her second season with Ailey II in 2018 and began touring with Jussie Smollett, under the creative direction of Frank Gatson. Ms. Pinkett joined the company in fall of 2018. Instagram: @jessica.a.pinkett

**JAMAR ROBERTS** (Miami, FL) graduated from the New World School of the Arts. He trained at the Dance Empire of Miami, where he continues to teach, and as a fellowship student at The Ailey School. Mr. Roberts was a member of Ailey II and Complexions Contemporary Ballet. *Dance Magazine* featured Mr. Roberts as one of "25 to Watch" in 2007 and on the cover in 2013. He performed at The White House in 2010, and as a guest star on *So You Think You Can Dance*, *Dancing with the Stars*, and *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*. In 2015 he made his Ailey II choreographic debut with his work *Gêmeos*, set to the music of Afrobeat star Fela Kuti. His first work for the Company, *Members Don't Get Weary*, premiered in 2017. Mr. Roberts won Outstanding Performer at the prestigious New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Awards and was a guest star with London's Royal Ballet. He first joined the Company in 2002.

**SAMUEL LEE ROBERTS** (Quakertown, PA) began his dance training under the direction of Kathleen Johnston and attended The Juilliard School. He performed in the first international show of *Radio City's Christmas Spectacular* in Mexico City and danced with the New York cast from 1999-2004. Mr. Roberts performed during the award ceremony at the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics, worked with Corbin Dances and Keigwin + Company, and was a founding member of Battleworks Dance Company. In May 2006 Mr. Roberts was named *Dance Magazine's* "On the Rise" dancer. He performed several roles in Julie Taymor's film *Across the Universe*

and the original opera *Grendel*. Mr. Roberts joined the Company in 2009. Follow him on Instagram at samuellee.me.

**KANJI SEGAWA** (Kanagawa, Japan) began his modern dance training with his mother, Erika Akoh, and studied ballet with Kan Horiuchi and Ju Horiuchi in Tokyo, Japan. In 1997 Mr. Segawa came to the U.S. under the Japanese Government Artist Fellowship to train at The Ailey School. Mr. Segawa was a member of Ailey II from 2000-02 and Robert Battle's Battleworks Dance Company from 2002-10. Mr. Segawa worked extensively with choreographer Mark Morris from 2004-11, repeatedly appearing in Mr. Morris' various productions with Mark Morris Dance Group, including as a principal dancer in John Adams' *Nixon in China* at The Metropolitan Opera. In addition, Mr. Segawa has assisted and worked closely with choreographer Jessica Lang since 1999. Mr. Segawa joined the Company in 2011.

**GLENN ALLEN SIMS** (Long Branch, NJ) began classical dance training at the Academy of Dance Arts in Tinton Falls, New Jersey, and was a scholarship student to The Ailey School's Summer Intensive. Mr. Sims attended The Juilliard School under Benjamin Harkarvy. In 2004 Mr. Sims was the youngest person to be inducted into the Long Branch High School's Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame. He has been featured on several network television programs, including *BET Honors*, *Dancing with the Stars*, *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, and *So You Think You Can Dance*. Mr. Sims is a master teacher, certified Zena Rommett Floor-Barre instructor, and certified pilates mat instructor. He has performed as an international guest artist for galas in Rome, Italy, and Mexico City, Mexico, as well as the White House Dance Series and for the king of Morocco. Mr. Sims was featured on the cover of and wrote a featured guest blog for *Dance Magazine*. He has originated featured roles by Carmen de Lavallade, Judith Jamison, Lynn Taylor Corbett, Mauro Bigonzetti, Rennie Harris, and Ronald K. Brown. Mr. Sims joined the Company in 1997.

**LINDA CELESTE SIMS** (Bronx, NY) began training at Ballet Hispanico School of Dance and graduated from LaGuardia High School of the Performing Arts. Ms. Sims has received the 2016 Inspiración Award from Ballet Hispánico, has won Outstanding Performance at the 2014 New York Dance and Performance Award ("The Bessies") and most recently, she received the 2017 *Dance Magazine* Award. Ms. Sims has been featured on the cover of *Dance Magazine* and on *So You Think You Can Dance*, *Dancing with the Stars*, *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, *The Mo'Nique Show*, *LIVE with Kelly and Michael*, and *The Today Show*. Ms. Sims has appeared at the White House Series, Youth America Grand Prix, Vail International Dance Festival, and galas in Budapest and Vienna, and originated featured roles by Judith Jamison, Donald Byrd, Alonso King, Dwight Rhoden, Ronald K. Brown, Mauro Bigonzetti, Jennifer Muller, Karole Armitage, Lynn Taylor Corbett, Rennie Harris, Christopher L. Huggins, and Azure Barton. She teaches master classes worldwide and is a certified Zena Rommett Floor-Barre instructor. Ms. Sims joined the Company in 1996 and is currently the assistant to the rehearsal director.

**COURTNEY CELESTE SPEARS** (Baltimore, MD) of Bahamian descent, began formal training at the Baltimore School for the Arts under the direction of Norma Pera. She is a graduate of the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program, where she graduated summa cum laude with degrees in dance and communications. Ms. Spears has attended summer intensives at The Juilliard School, Cedar Lake, and American Ballet Theatre, where she was named the National Training Scholar for two consecutive years. She has performed works by Ray Mercer, Jae Man Joo, Marcus Willis, Bridget Moore, and Dwight Rhoden. She was recognized on the cover of *Howard Magazine* as a "Rising Young Star" and received The Denise Jefferson Memorial Scholarship. Ms. Spears is the recipient of a 2015 Dance Fellowship from the Princess Grace Foundation-USA and is the founder and director of ArtSea Dance, an outreach program and dance management

company based in the Bahamas. She was a member of Ailey II and joined the Company in 2018. Find Ms. Spears on Instagram @bahamaballerina.

**CONSTANCE STAMATIOU** (Charlotte, NC) began her dance training at Pat Hall's Dance Unlimited and North Carolina Dance Theatre. She graduated from NorthWest School of the Arts and studied at SUNY Purchase before becoming a fellowship student at The Ailey School. In 2009 Ms. Stamatiou received the Leonore Annenberg Fellowship in the performing and visual arts. She performed at the White House Dance Series and has been a guest performer on *So You Think You Can Dance*, *Dancing with the Stars*, *Logo's Trailblazer Honors*, and *The Today Show*. Ms. Stamatiou has also danced in the films *Shake Rattle & Roll* and in Dan Pritzker's *Bolden*. Ms. Stamatiou was a member of Ailey II and a guest artist for Dance Grand Moultrie and Caroline Calouche & Co. She is a certified Gyrotonic and Gyrokinesis instructor and a mother of two. Follow her on Instagram at constancestamatiou. Ms. Stamatiou first joined the Company in 2007 and rejoined in 2016.

**JERMAINE TERRY** (Washington, D.C.) began his dance training in Kissimmee, Florida, at James Dance Center. He graduated cum laude with a B.F.A. in dance performance from the University of South Florida, where he received scholarships for excellence in performance and choreography. Mr. Terry was a scholarship student at The Ailey School and a member of Ailey II, and he has performed with Buglisi Dance Theatre, Arch Dance, Dance Iquail, and Philadanco and as a guest artist on the television show *So You Think You Can Dance*. In 2013 he received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from USF for outstanding service to the arts. He has made costumes for the Company, Ailey II, Philadanco, Jessica Lang Dance, and The Black Iris Project, to name a few. His evening wear has been in *Essence* online as well as shot by the late Bill Cunningham for the style section of *The New York Times*. Please follow Mr. Terry on Instagram at Jerms83. Mr. Terry joined the Company in 2010.

**FANA TESFAGIORGIS** (Madison, WI) is a graduate of the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program in Dance, with a minor in journalism. She began training at Ballet Madison under the direction of Charmaine Ristow and attended Interlochen Arts Academy High School. Ms. Tesfagiorgis also trained at summer and winter intensives at Earl Mosley's Institute of the Arts, Alonzo King LINES Ballet, and Lar Lubovitch Dance Company. Professionally she has danced with Ailey II, Brian Harlan Brooks' Continuum, Alenka Cizmesja's Art DeConstructed, Dance Iquail, Freddie Moore's Footprints, and Samuel Pott's Nimbus Dance Works. Ms. Tesfagiorgis has been a rehearsal assistant for Hope Boykin, Earl Mosley, Pedro Ruiz, Matthew Rushing, and Sylvia Waters. She joined the Company in 2013.

**CHRISTOPHER R. WILSON** (Augusta, GA) is a graduate of John S. Davidson Fine Arts Magnet School and most recently graduated cum laude from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program in Dance. He has studied at Colton Ballet School, Alonzo King LINES Ballet, and The School at Jacob's Pillow. He began his professional career with *BHdos*, the second company of Ballet Hispánico and has performed at The World Monument Fund's Hadrian Gala honoring Queen Sofia of Spain as well as the 2017 *Essence* Festival in New Orleans. He has performed works by choreographers Matthew Rushing, Kyle Abraham, Emily Molnar, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, and Eduardo Vilaro, to name a few. He has performed as a guest artist with The Black Iris Project and was a member of Ailey II. Mr. Wilson joined the Company in 2018. Follow his tour and dance adventures @christopher.r.wilson on Instagram.

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Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

The Joan Weill Center for Dance

405 West 55th Street, NY, NY 10019

Tel: 212-405-9000

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# Alvin Ailey: A Cultural Icon Marks its 60th Anniversary

BY ERICA HOBBS



**A**lvin Ailey American Dance Theater, a favorite among local audiences, has been performing regularly at the Detroit Opera House since Michigan Opera Theatre's second dance series in 1998. In addition to being their 12<sup>th</sup> visit to the Opera House, this season the company marks its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, celebrating a history of pushing boundaries, defining modern dance and inspiring personal reflection.

Founded by Alvin Ailey in 1958, the company's work celebrates the uniqueness of the African-American cultural experience and the preservation and enrichment of the American modern dance heritage. From works championing Civil Rights, like *R-evolution*, *Dream*, inspired by speeches from Martin Luther King Jr., to an ode to Southern gospel churches in *Revelations*, Alvin Ailey both explores African-American experiences and shares the culture with the larger world.

"These are really honest explorations of Alvin Ailey's experience as a black person in this country," said Debra Bernstein-Siegel, a dance professor at Oakland University and an MOT Trustee, "the good, the bad and the ugly."

Born in rural Texas in 1931, Ailey grew up in poverty during a period of intense racial segregation and violence against African-Americans, experiences that would later be reflected in his creative work. His mother moved them to Los Angeles when he was 12, where he was introduced to dance. He studied and performed with Lester Horton, founder of one of the first racially-integrated dance companies in the United States, where he trained in styles ranging from classical ballet to Native American Dance. Following Horton's death in 1953, Ailey took over the company and began choreographing his own works. When he founded his own company five years later, he had a vision of preserving the African-American

cultural experience through modern dance.

Though Ailey himself choreographed nearly 80 works for his company, more than 90 choreographers have contributed to its repertory, which now includes more than 235 works.

"Alvin Ailey started the company to provide a place for his friends to dance, but it was always a repertory company," Bernstein-Siegel said. "He was always bringing in white choreographers and brown choreographers, it wasn't just his stuff. It transcends boundaries, it's just about human beings dancing."

Within the United States, Alvin Ailey's accolades have reached far and wide. The founder received a Presidential Medal of Freedom and the Kennedy Center Honor for Lifetime Contribution to American Culture. He also received the NAACP's Spingarn Award for an outstanding achievement by an African-American and the Samuel H. Scripps American Dance Festival Award for a lifetime contribution to American modern dance.

Internationally, the company has been an American ambassador since its earliest years. In 1962, Alvin Ailey was chosen to go on an extensive tour of the Far East, Southeast Asia and Australia as part of President John F. Kennedy's progressive "President's Special International Program for Cultural Presentations." Since then, the company has taken numerous tours across the world, including a 10 country tour of Africa in 1967 and a tour of North Africa and Europe in 1970. In 1985, Alvin Ailey became the first modern dance company to go on a U.S. government-sponsored tour of the People's Republic of China since the normalization of Sino-American

relations. In 2008, a U.S. Congressional resolution designated the company as "a vital American cultural ambassador to the world."

Bernstein-Siegel said the company's global appeal is its exploration of humanity, beyond the African-American experience.

"Anybody who felt enslaved or under somebody else's thumb can relate to that feeling," she said. "They were Ambassadors for America trying to be better, that we were trying to understand and be better human beings through dance."

As part of their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary tour, the company commissioned their first two-act ballet, *Lazarus*, which celebrates the life of their founder with a work inspired by his own experiences. It examines Civil Rights through time and questions how much has changed or hasn't changed since Ailey formed his company in the late 50s. It is the third in a series of works by acclaimed hip-hop choreographer



Rennie Harris, following *Home*, about the club culture around AIDS, and *Exodus*, about police brutality and activism.

In an interview with the New York Times, Harris said *Lazarus* is about resurrection and Ailey's continual influence on different generations.

"He's still affecting folk: black, brown, white, indifferent, whatever," he said. "He's still affecting the world on a massive scale."



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# MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

## AVANTI SOCIETY

### Ensuring the Future

Imagine a gift that outlives you, allowing future generations to experience and enjoy the world of opera and dance. That's the goal of the Avanti Society, Michigan Opera Theatre's Planned Gift Recognition Program.

The Italian word "avanti" means "ahead," or "forward." The Avanti Society at Michigan Opera Theatre represents a designated group of friends of Michigan Opera Theatre who have made plans to include the organization in their estate plans – whether by will, trust, insurance, or life income arrangement. Membership in the Avanti Society is open to all.

In thanks for their generous support, Avanti Society members are given special benefits and recognition for their heartfelt commitment to Michigan Opera Theatre.

#### Avanti Society Members are Recognized:

In "Bravo" opera and dance program books and the Annual Report.

#### Avanti Society Members are Invited:

To an exclusive annual Avanti Society event, previews and other special events. Michigan Opera Theatre is honored that so many patrons have chosen to declare their membership in the Avanti Society and designed a small lapel pin for members to wear proudly at Michigan Opera Theatre events.

#### AN AVANTI FOR TOMORROW

The growth of Michigan Opera Theatre's permanent Endowment Fund ensures the growth and future vitality of one of the region's greatest cultural assets. You are invited to create your own legacy – your Avanti – through Michigan Opera Theatre.

To make your gift, contact Frankie M. Piccirilli, Chief Development Officer, at 313.237.3238 or [fpiccirilli@motopera.org](mailto:fpiccirilli@motopera.org).

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# Historic Path to a Bold Future

## *The Campaign for Michigan Opera Theatre*

Pursuant to a comprehensive strategic plan, the Board and Trustees of Michigan Opera Theatre have launched a *Historic Path to a Bold Future* campaign to invest \$50 million in exceptional artistic experiences, broad-based community initiatives, enhanced institutional efficiencies, and facilities improvement. This campaign is designed to ensure that the David DiChiera legacy thrives beyond his tenure by positioning MOT for continued artistic success and community engagement well into the future. The following individuals, businesses, and foundations have declared their initial leadership gifts to the campaign. As of October 31, 2018, more than \$25.7 million has been committed.

### **\$1 Million and above**

Sarah and Doug<sup>†</sup> Allison  
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Ford Motor Company  
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John S. and James L. Knight Foundation  
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### **\$100,000 - \$249,999**

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World Heritage Foundation-Prechter Family Fund

<sup>†</sup> = Avanti Society

# MICHIGAN OPERA THEATRE

## VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION

Greetings from the MOT Volunteer Association.

I have been a music lover for many years and Michigan Opera Theatre is very important to me. Our MOTVA volunteers provide the company a tremendous level of support. We have over 700 members who serve as ushers, tour guides, and Boutique volunteers. Our Divas and Divos provide artist hospitality, and the Opera League and Dance Council members host parties to celebrate events such as opening night performances. Last year our members logged almost 20,000 volunteer hours. Bravi!

If you are hearing about our volunteer programs for the first time and you would be interested in joining us, please give us a call. Volunteering is a great way to meet other interesting and involved patrons. Membership information is located on the MOTVA web page at [michiganopera.org/get-involved/volunteers/](http://michiganopera.org/get-involved/volunteers/) or call Colin Knapp at (313) 965-4271 or email [cknapp@motopera.org](mailto:cknapp@motopera.org). Colin will be happy to speak with you and connect you with a volunteer opportunity to meet your needs.



I offer my sincere thanks to all of our current volunteers. You are THE BEST!

Sincerely,

Terry Shea, President, MOTVA

### MOTVA Committees, Chair(s)

Dance Films, Larry Glowczewski  
Divas and Divos, Helen Arnoldi-Rowe  
Opera House Tour Guides, Myrna Mazure  
Opera League, Dodie David  
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### Past Presidents

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## General Information

### PHOTOGRAPHY, RECORDING & COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES

Photography or recording during any performance is strictly prohibited. You are welcome to take photographs in the lobby before or after a performance and during intermission. As a courtesy to our guests, please switch all electronic devices to silent mode and refrain from using them during the performance.

### IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Doctors and parents are advised to leave their seat location (located on ticket) and our emergency number, (313) 237-3257, with their service or sitter in case of an emergency. Please observe the lighted exit signs located throughout the theater. In the event of an emergency, please remain calm and walk - do not run - to the nearest exit. Our ushers are trained to lead you out of the building safely. A trained Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) is onsite during most events. Please see an usher or staff member to contact the EMT.

### RESTROOMS

Ladies' restrooms are located off the Ford Lobby (Broadway Street entrance), down the stairs; and on the third floor (Madison Street entrance) - press "3R" on the elevator to reach this facility. Gentlemen's restrooms are located under the Grand Staircase and also on the third floor (Broadway Street side) - press "3" on the elevator to reach this facility. All third floor restrooms are wheelchair accessible. A unisex, wheelchair accessible restroom is located in the Cadillac Opera Café.

### NO SMOKING

The Detroit Opera House is a smoke-free facility.

### USHERS

Ushers are stationed at the top of each aisle. If you have a question or concern, please inform an usher, who will contact management. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer usher, please call the House Manager at (313) 237-3252.

### LOST & FOUND

Lost and Found is located in the Safety and Security Department. Please see an usher if you have misplaced an article, or call (313) 961-3500 if you have already left the theater. Items will be held in Lost and Found for 30 days.

### SERVICES

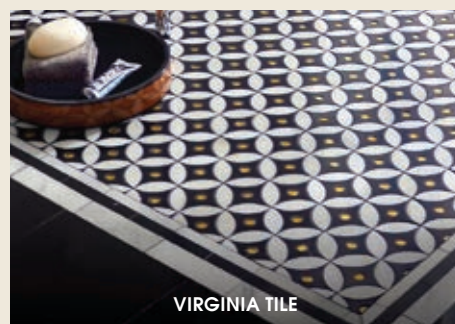
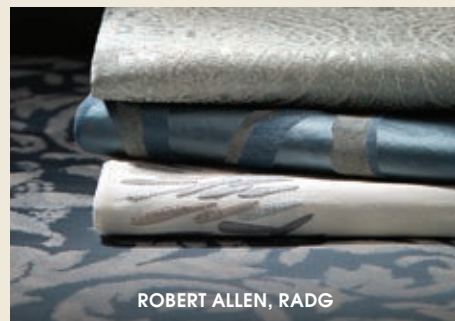
Concessions stands are located on all levels. Please note that food and drinks are not permitted in the auditorium at any time. Coat Check is located at the Guest Services desk in the Vincent Lobby (Madison Street side). Please note that the Detroit Opera House does not accept responsibility for any personal articles that are not checked at the coat check.

### IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Website ..... [www.MichiganOpera.org](http://www.MichiganOpera.org)  
EMERGENCIES ..... (313) 237-3257  
Michigan Opera Theatre ..... (313) 961-3500  
General Information ..... (313) 961-3500  
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Ticket Office ..... (313) 237-7464  
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