



North Carolina Museum of Art



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North Carolina Museum of Art to Host American Dance Festival Performances

Raleigh, N.C.—The [North Carolina Museum of Art](#) (NCMA) and [American Dance Festival](#) (ADF) have partnered to present Together We Dance, an outdoor festival in the Joseph M. Bryan, Jr., Theater in the Museum Park from September 9 to 16.

“After a difficult year and a half, we are thrilled to bring the community together again at our first-ever outdoor festival for eight performances by some of the finest dance companies dazzling audiences today,” said Jodee Nimerichter, executive director of ADF. “And we couldn’t ask for a better partner than the North Carolina Museum of Art.”

In reimagining a dance festival in a post-COVID-19 world, ADF looked to bring performances outside, so audiences could spread out in fresh air. The award-winning Museum Park Theater of the state’s art museum, which has hosted bluegrass, pop, and rock acts; orchestras; puppet shows; and movies for more than 20 years, was the perfect local venue. While smaller dance performances, including ADF activations, have been hosted inside the Museum galleries and in the Museum Park, a festival of this scale has not taken place at the NCMA before.



Presale tickets for ADF and NCMA members go on sale Wednesday, August 4; nonmember and general public tickets go on sale Thursday, August 5. Performances last approximately 60 minutes with no intermission.

(continued)

“We are honored to host American Dance Festival’s annual season through this exciting activation of the Museum Park Theater,” said Valerie Hillings, NCMA director. “We’re bringing together art, nature, and people through dance.”

See the full schedule and details below:

Thursday, September 9

7:30 pm

A.I.M by Kyle Abraham

A.I.M by Kyle Abraham is a Black-led contemporary dance company whose work is informed by and made in conjunction with artists across a range of disciplines. It entwines a sensual and provocative vocabulary with a strong emphasis on music, text, video, and visual art. The company’s program includes *Big Rings*, an A.I.M–commissioned dynamic, team-based group work choreographed by company member Keerati Jinakunwiphat. *Nina Simone Suite* (working title) is a new ADF–commissioned ensemble work composed of a series of solos and duets set to some of Simone’s most intimate songs. *The Pass* (working title) is a new, whisperingly playful work created as an in-conversation duet inspired by Merce Cunningham’s 1972 ensemble work *Landrover* and commissioned by the Baryshnikov Arts Center in partnership with the Merce Cunningham Trust. *Drive* is a high-energy, propulsive work set to thumping club beats that was created in 2017 for eight dancers.

Friday, September 10, and Saturday, September 11

7:30 pm

Pilobolus



Pilobolus, the remarkable company that secured an iconic place in American culture in the early 1970s, is still wowing audiences with its irresistible mix of wit, sensuality, and stunning physical acumen. The company performs *Megawatt* (2004), made in the last decade of founder and choreographer Jonathan Wolken’s life. This revival of the work, made possible in part by ADF, is updated to expand its unfettered exuberance and frenetic expression of life-affirming creative drives and resistance to stagnation by casting dancers in roles that gently subvert stereotypical gender-associated movement vocabulary. *Shizen* (1978) means nature, and this dance explores coupling as a biomorphic reflection of the natural world. The shakuhachi music was composed by renowned flutist Riley Lee. *Walklyndon* (1971), one of Pilobolus’s very first works, is a silent dance owing much of its physical humor to slapstick and vaudeville. In the solo from *The Empty Suitor* (1980), a man flummoxed by seduction comically attempts to

regain his footing in life. Nothing seems to go right for the hapless, hopeful beaux as he tries to win the affections of a calculating femme fatale.



Sunday, September 12

[3:30 pm](#) and [7:30 pm](#)

State of Darkness

Originally commissioned by ADF in 1988, Molissa Fenley's *State of Darkness* challenges Stravinsky's cacophonous *Le Sacre du Printemps* (*The Rite of Spring*) with an intense 35-minute solo performance of relentless fervency, technical precision, and fearless abandon. Fenley reimagined the commanding score as the sonic landscape for a solo journey rather than the usual ensemble interpretations. Anniqve Roberts of Ronald K. Brown/EVIDENCE performs the solo at 3:30 pm and Michael Trusnovec of the Paul Taylor Dance Company performs at 7:30 pm. Each program is followed by a Q and A with Molissa Fenley and the artist.

Tuesday, September 14

7:30 pm

[Reggie Wilson/Fist and Heel Performance Group](#)

Brooklyn-based dance company Reggie Wilson/Fist and Heel Performance Group's works display rigor, structure, and craft in a postmodern dance vernacular. The company presents *CITIZEN* (excerpt), a series of solos that asks: What does it mean to belong and what does it mean to NOT want to belong? *INTRODUCTION* (a solo performed by Reggie Wilson) is a contemporary experimental performance



theater work in which Wilson shares a very personal account about his experience of the Spiritual Baptist religion in Trinidad and Tobago. The dance *the duet* is a seemingly more traditional contemporary work where Wilson weaves an interesting story while playing with and investigating more deeply the idea of duets.

Wednesday, September 15

7:30 pm

BODYTRAFFIC

Internationally acclaimed for its “wonderfully precise dancers” (*New York Times*), BODYTRAFFIC returns to ADF with a program highlighting the artistry of three of today’s most engaging contemporary dance choreographers. On tap is the world premiere of a duet by Brian Brooks, created during his recent ADF residency, that is certain to reveal his characteristic “kinetic thrill and visual power” (*Washington Post*). Also featured is Matthew Neenan’s *A Million Voices*, a piece set to the nostalgic songs of the great Peggy Lee that explores eternal notions about life, love, and war. Rounding out the program is Micaela Taylor’s engaging *SNAP*, a piece capturing her take on the Los Angeles experience that urges us to “snap out of” the social pressure to conform.



Thursday, September 16

7:30 pm

Paul Taylor Dance Company

The Paul Taylor Dance Company closes out ADF’s season at the North Carolina Museum of Art. Founded in 1954 the company remains one of the most famous and dynamic modern dance ensembles of our time. The program includes *A Field of Grass* (1993), with songs sung by Harry Nilsson, a dance evoking America in the 1960s where a central character experiences love, drugs, rebellion, and hope through his counterculture community. *Duet* (1964), last performed by the Taylor Company in 1992 and made after Taylor’s lyrical 1962 masterpiece *Aureole*, is a testament to his craft with simplicity, beauty, purity, and gentleness. *Esplanade* (1975), the definitive Paul Taylor work, is at once playful, somber, romantic, and explosive—a pillar of modern dance that instantly affirms Paul Taylor as one of history’s greatest choreographers.



More information and tickets at ncartmuseum.org/adf2021 and americandancefestival.org.

Image captions (top to bottom):

Photo courtesy of A.I.M by Kyle Abraham

Pilobolus photo by Juliana Sohn

State of Darkness photo 1 by Art Davison

State of Darkness photo 2 by Mohamed Sadek

Photo of Reggie Wilson by Aitor Mendilibar

BODYTRAFFIC photo by Kevin Perry

Paul Taylor Dance Company photo by Paul B. Goode

American Dance Festival Sponsors

ADF's *Together We Dance* outdoor festival is made possible with support from SHS Foundation, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, North Carolina Arts Council, City of Durham, North Carolina Museum of Art, Robert and Mercedes Eichholz Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, Durham Arts Council, Fox Family Foundation, The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation, Jody and John Arnhold/Arnhold Foundation, and Duke Health.

A.I.M by Kyle Abraham

Nina Simone Suite (working title) by Kyle Abraham is commissioned by ADF with support from the Doris Duke/SHS Foundations Award for New Works.

PILOBOLUS

The restaging of *Megawatt* by Pilobolus is supported by SHS Foundation and in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

BODYTRAFFIC

New Work by Brian Brooks is commissioned by ADF with support from the Doris Duke/SHS Foundations Award for New Works and in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The presentation of *SNAP* by Micaela Taylor is made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Molissa Fenley

The presentation of *State of Darkness* by Molissa Fenley is supported in part by Ann and Lex Alexander.

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North Carolina Museum of Art Presenting Sponsor: First Citizens Bank



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About the North Carolina Museum of Art

The North Carolina Museum of Art's permanent collection spans more than 5,000 years, from antiquity to the present, making the institution one of the premier art museums in the South. The Museum's collection provides educational, aesthetic, intellectual, and cultural experiences for the citizens of North Carolina and beyond. The 164-acre Museum Park showcases the connection between art and nature through site-specific works of environmental art. The Museum offers changing special exhibitions, classes, lectures, family activities, films, and concerts.

The Museum, located at 2110 Blue Ridge Road in Raleigh, opened West Building, home to the permanent collection, in 2010. It is the art museum of the State of North Carolina, Roy Cooper, governor; an agency of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources under the direction of Secretary D. Reid Wilson; and led by Director Valerie Hillings.

About American Dance Festival

Throughout its 88-year history, ADF has been a nationally recognized leader in our indigenous art form of modern dance. Generations of dancers and choreographers have come to ADF as students, taught as faculty, and created and performed work as professional artists. Each summer ADF has been the beating heart of the dance world. The best companies in the world premiere work on ADF's stage, much of it commissioned by the festival. Other festivals and season programs are measured against ADF. Over 25,000 people see performances by more than 20 companies each season. The festival has commissioned 442 works and premiered over 700 pieces, including dances by Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham, and Paul Taylor. Each summer at ADF, more than 300 students from some 28 countries and 38 states study with ADF's 70 faculty members. They come as kids in leotards with as many doubts as dreams. They leave as dancers and artists—and sometimes even new members of companies. Lives change in those five and a half sweaty weeks. Beyond the summer ADF maintains year-round dance studios offering movement classes to over 650 participants, provides over 180 free classes to almost 4,000 local dancers, and offers choreographic residencies providing artists with the necessary space and time to create americandancefestival.org.