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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:  
Ramona Logan  
(214) 871-2376 Ext. 411  
(214) 882-2451 cell  
[r.logan@dbdt.com](mailto:r.logan@dbdt.com)

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## DALLAS BLACK DANCE THEATRE RETURNS TO NEW YORK FOR SIXTH SEASON THREE NEW YORK PREMIERES HIGHLIGHT THE SERIES

Dallas, Texas – **Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT)** returns to New York City for its sixth season on May 2-3, 2019 in the **Ailey Citigroup Theater**, located at 405 West 55<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY. The series entitled **Spirit of Now** showcases three New York premieres of works that encompass the theme by choreographers **Juel D. Lane**, **Tommie-Waheed Evans**, and **Claude Alexander III**, as well as the iconic works of **Elisa Monte & David Brown** and **Christopher L. Huggins**. The presenting sponsor for the series is American Airlines.

Highlighting the series **Spirit of Now** is *How to Kill a Ghost* choreographed by **Juel D. Lane**. He also wrote the lyrics set to original music by **Quentin EQ Johnson**. The work tackles the haunting effects of holding onto something that no longer exists. The dance is a mixture of modern, African, hip hop, and jazz styles set to R&B and New Age music.

*Bodies as Site of Faith and Protest* by choreographer **Tommie-Waheed Evans** draws on fierce physical language through dance set to iconic speech excerpts by **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** Evans transcribed King's "We Shall Overcome" speech with body movements capturing the spirit of the Civil Rights Movement. The performance takes on added theatrics as the dancers sing during the performance.

*Face what's facing you!* by **Claude Alexander III** is an honest, soul-stirring exploration of how challenges to one's spirit can make one victorious. Building on a nine-year career at DBDT, Alexander makes his New York choreographic debut with this work for the full company.

Choreographer **Christopher Huggins** dedicated *Essence* to the spirit of Dallas Black Dance

Theatre Founder **Ann Williams** and other women in his life who have “inspired me with their strength, passion, humor, commitment, and unconditional love.” The solo work captures the intensity of the issues in their lives.

Completing the program is the iconic work *Absolute Rule*, a collaborative duet choreographed by **Elisa Monte** and **David Brown** of New York City. *The New York Times* describes the dance as, “...a virtuosic duet with entangled acrobatics that cleverly describes a male-female relationship.”

The dancers of Dallas Black Dance Theatre have mesmerized 4.2 million arts patrons across 16 countries, including two Olympic Cultural events, the Lincoln Center, and the Kennedy Center. Most recently, in April of this year, DBDT dancers performed in the Dance Fest Skopje in Skopje, Macedonia. The **National Endowment for the Arts** designated the 42-year-old-company as an **American Masterpiece Touring Artist** in 2008. The company is the 10th largest minority arts organization in America and the fourth largest black dance company in the nation. DBDT is the old and largest professional dance company in Dallas.

## **PERFORMANCE DETAILS**

### **Thursday and Friday evening**

May 2-3, 2019, 8:00 p.m.

Ailey Citigroup Theater

405 West 55<sup>th</sup> Street

New York City, NY

## **TICKETS**

Performance tickets are \$35.

For details visit [www.attpac.org](http://www.attpac.org) or call 214-880-0202.

Discount group tickets for 10 or more people are available by calling 214-871-2376 ext. 413. The deadline to get the discount for group ticket sales is April 30, 2019.

## **2018-2019 | Spirit of Now Presenting Sponsor**

American Airlines

## **2018-2019 | Spirit of Now Choreography Sponsors**

Nancy A. Nasher and David J. Haemisegger

The Kaleta A. Doolin Foundation

## 2018-2019 | DBDT Season Sponsors

Legacy Sponsor: Simmons Sisters Fund of The Dallas Foundation

Season Sponsors: Office of Cultural Affairs – City of Dallas, Texas Instruments, International Association of Blacks in Dance, NBC 5, *I Messenger*, *The Downtown Business News*, TACA, *The Dallas Morning News*, *PaperCity*, American Airlines, *The Dallas Weekly*, and DART.

## 2018 – 2019 | DBDT Season Supporters

Season Supporters: Texas Commission on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, Lexus, OverseeMyIT, *The Dallas Examiner*, *The Dallas Post Tribune*, *Elite News*, AT&T Performing Arts Center, *Trendy Africa*, and *Arts+Culture*.



**ABOUT DALLAS BLACK DANCE THEATRE:** Dallas Black Dance Theatre is an internationally recognized professional dance company that engages the cross-cultural community through contemporary modern dance presented from the African-American experience. Founded by **Ann Williams** in

1976, the company has been designated as an **American Masterpiece Touring Artist** by the **National Endowment for the Arts** in 2008 and received the **Texas Medal of Arts Award for Arts Education** in 2017. **Melissa M. Young** was named *Artistic Director* in 2018 after starting at the company as a dancer in 1994. **Zenetta S. Drew** has led the administrative side of the company since 1987 as *Executive Director*.

*The mission of Dallas Black Dance Theatre is to create and produce contemporary modern dance at its highest level of artistic excellence through performances and educational programs that bridge cultures and reach diverse communities. The company is the 10th largest minority arts organization in America and the fourth largest black dance company in the nation. Dallas Black Dance Theatre is the oldest and largest professional dance company in Dallas. The virtuosic dancers of Dallas Black Dance Theatre have mesmerized 4.2 million arts patrons across 16 countries, including two Olympic Cultural events.*

*Dallas Black Dance Theatre is comprised of five performing companies and its training*

Academy. 2.7 million students, grades K-12, have experienced the dance company's performances and educational outreach programs.

**Dallas Black Dance Academy**, the official school of Dallas Black Dance Theatre celebrates 45 years of delivering dance instruction to a community of diverse backgrounds. More than 550 students participate weekly in 50 dance classes, which include ballet, jazz, tap, modern, and African. Classes are held at DBDT's studios and are open to children starting at age four and adults. The academy has three performing ensembles: **Allegro Performing Ensemble**, DBDT's premier academy ensemble, **Senior Performing Ensemble**, and **Junior Performing Ensemble**.

Dallas Black Dance Theatre is located in the historic Moorland YMCA building in the Dallas Arts District, which serves as the primary home for its dance studios, training facilities, and administrative offices. Dallas Black Dance Theatre is a resident company of the **AT&T Performing Arts Center** and its performance home is the **Dee and Charles Wyly Theatre**.

For more details visit [www.DBDT.com](http://www.DBDT.com) and [www.dbdt.com/academy](http://www.dbdt.com/academy).



*DBDT dancers Sean J. Smith and McKinley Willis performing How to Kill a Ghost choreographed by Juel D. Lane. Photograph by Clarence Alford-Courtesy of Lula Washington Dance Theatre.*

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*Dallas Black Dance Theatre performing Bodies as Site of Faith and Protest by Tommie-Waheed Evans. Photograph by Amitava Sarkar*



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Dallas Black Dance Theatre 2700 Ann Williams Way, Dallas, TX 75201