



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 8, 2020

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

DBDT Presents its Petit Performance
Live Across the Dallas Arts District

Dallas, TX – **Dallas Black Dance Theatre** takes its virtual events to a new level presenting its ***Petit Performance*** live across the **Dallas Arts District** for patrons to enjoy virtually from their homes. The performance includes three works that will be performed at the **Nasher Sculpture Center** and Dallas Black Dance Theatre studios. This multi-faceted live performance will take place on Friday, July 10, 2020, 7:30-9:00 pm CDT.

Dallas Black Dance Theatre is among the first professional dance companies nationally and internationally to consistently present paid virtual performances as a new business model after the closing of live performances due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While others in the dance industry have been streaming their video content for free to raise donations after the pandemic began, DBDT planned a different strategy. “Recognizing early that this crisis was a new opportunity to create a paradigm shift toward resiliency, expand audiences and generate earned income, Dallas Black Dance Theatre decided early on that paid virtual performances needed to be part of our new model,” said Zenetta Drew, DBDT Executive Director.

The live *Petit Performance* includes a trio of DBDT audience favorites. Aerial work ***What to Say? Notes on Echo and Narcissus*** choreographed by **Jamal Story** is a mesmerizing duet. ***Awassa Astrige/Ostrich*** by choreographer **Asadata Dafora** is a powerful male solo that imitates the magnificent movements of the Ostrich. ***Essence*** is a tribute to strong women choreographed by **Christopher L. Huggins**.

Patrons will be able to experience *What to Say? Notes on Echo and Narcissus* as it unfolds live from the rehearsal studio at Dallas Black Dance Theatre. Choreographed by **Southern**

Methodist University alum and former DBDT dancer Jamal Story, the work is filled with grace and power, featuring DBDT dancers **Claude Alexander III** and **Hana Delong**. Story has been a dancer with **Cher** for 17 years and her dance/aerial supervisor for the past six years. Story is also the Chairman of the National Dance Committee for SAG-AFTRA.

For decades, audiences across the country have been enthralled by the male solo *Awassa Astringe/Ostrich* as the embodiment of the metaphor of this warrior-like bird, which has left an indelible impression on all. DBDT dancer **Zion Pradier** will perform the majestic work at the Nasher Sculpture Center. **Asadata Dafora** choreographed the work in 1932 as a dance that imitates the graceful, but powerful movements of the Ostrich. Dafora, a Sierra Leone native, was one of the first Africans to introduce African drumming music to the United States in the early 1930s.

DBDT dancer **McKinley Willis** takes us on a journey in tribute of strong women when she dances *Essence*. She will also perform the work in the Nasher Sculpture Center for this virtual performance. DBDT premiered *Essence* in 2005. Willis grew up taking dance lessons at Dallas Black Dance Academy and had seen *Essence* performed before by current DBDT: *Encore!* Artistic Director **Nycole Ray**. Choreographer **Christopher L. Huggins** explains, “This piece is dedicated to the women in my life like **Ann Williams** (DBDT Founder), who have inspired me with their strength, passion, humor, commitment and unconditional love.”

Artistic Director, **Melissa M. Young** shares, “Creating art in this digital space has been an eye-opening experience. DBDT is constantly trying new things and learning how to push our creativity far beyond what we imagine could be possible. We want our patrons to stay connected as we continue to design unique ways to present our work with our high standards of artistic excellence.”

Choreographer Jamal Story and DBDT dancers will be a part of the live virtual *Petit Performance* to engage with viewers and answer their questions.

Live *Petit Performance* Details

Friday, July 10, 2020 - 7:30-9:00pm CDT.

RSVP Here <https://bit.ly/2ZhlXz6>

Details at DBDT.com.

2019-2020 | DBDT Season Sponsors

Legacy Sponsor: Simmons Sisters Fund of The Dallas Foundation

Season Sponsors: Office of Arts and Culture – City of Dallas, Texas Instruments, International Association of Blacks in Dance, NBC 5, *The Downtown Business News*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *I Messenger*, NorthPark Center, TACA, American Airlines, The Shubert Foundation Inc., DART, and *The Dallas Weekly*.

2019 – 2020 | DBDT Season Supporters

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

ABOUT DALLAS BLACK DANCE THEATRE: *Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT) is an internationally recognized professional dance company that engages the cross-cultural community through contemporary modern dance presented from the African-American experience. The National Endowment for the Arts designated the 44-year-old company as an American Masterpiece Touring Artist in 2008. The company also received the Texas Medal of Arts Award for Arts Education in 2017. As Dallas' oldest and largest professional dance company, DBDT ranks as the 10th largest minority arts organization in America and the fourth largest black dance company in the nation.*

Ann Williams founded Dallas Black Dance Theatre in 1976. **Melissa M. Young** took over the helm as Artistic Director in 2018 after starting with 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 virtuosic dancers of Dallas Black Dance Theatre have mesmerized 4.3 million arts patrons across 16 countries, including two Olympic Cultural events.

Five performing companies comprise Dallas Black Dance Theatre and its training Academy. DBDT consists of 13 full-time salaried dancers performing a mixed repertory of modern, jazz, African, and spiritual works by national and international choreographers. DBDT: Encore! features eight artists of rising excellence from across the nation who support DBDT's growing local and regional educational outreach. 2.7 million students, grades K-12, have experienced the dance company's performances and educational outreach programs.

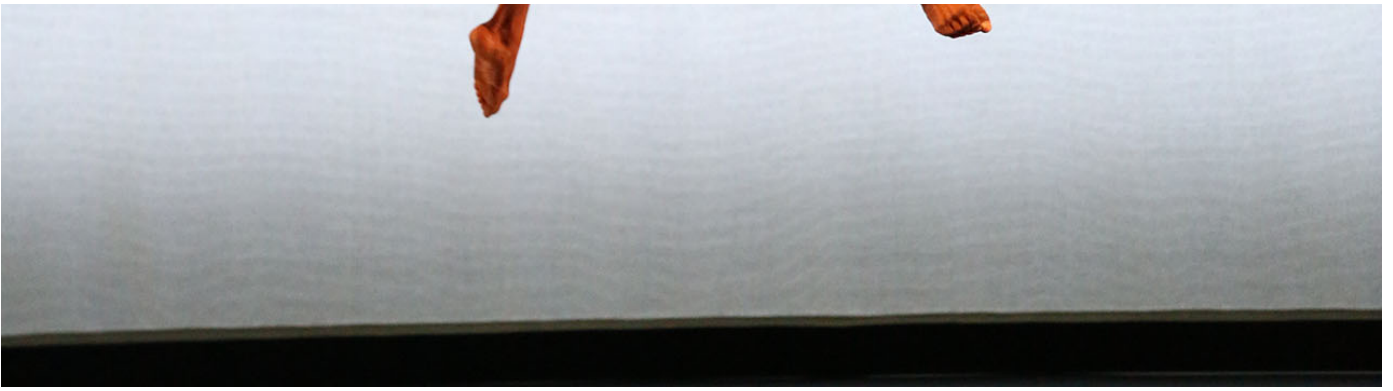
Dallas Black Dance Academy, the official school of Dallas Black Dance Theatre, celebrates 46 years of delivering dance instruction to a community of diverse backgrounds. The academy was the first in the nation to train a student who received the Presidential Scholar Award in Dance in 1980. More than 500 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 students ages four to adult. 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's primary home in the historic Moorland YMCA building in the Dallas Arts District includes 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 Wyle Theatre**.

For more details, visit www.DBDT.com and www.dbdt.com/academy.





Photograph by Amitava Sarkar of DBDT dancers Claude Alexander III and Hana Delong dancing What to Say? Notes on Echo and Narcissus.



Photograph of Awassa Astrige/Ostrich by Sharen Bradford - The Dancing Image.



[Unsubscribe](#) | [Forward](#) | [View in browser](#)

You are receiving this email because you have signed up for our email list. Click on the Unsubscribe link in this email if you no longer wish to receive emails from us.

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