



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 19, 2021

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Dallas Black Dance Theatre's The BIG Dance Fundraiser

Bringing the Big Easy to the Big D

Dallas, TX – **Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT)** kicks off the summer with a dance party that brings the Big Easy to the Big D in its annual fundraiser, **The BIG Dance**. The hybrid fundraiser, which has both in-person and virtual options, is scheduled for Saturday, June 5, 2021, from 8:00 pm – Midnight CDT at the **Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center**, 2301 Flora Street, Dallas, TX. 75201. All proceeds from the event will benefit Dallas Black Dance Theatre's educational outreach programs and support scholarships to **DBDT Academy**.

Nonstop entertainment flows through the evening featuring New Orleans native artists **Thaddeus Ford Band**, **Big Easy Brass Band**, **Brazilian Samba Dancers**, **Southern Belle Baby Dolls**, **DJ Kevy Kev**, and stilt walkers.

Dallas Black Dance Theatre will transport revelers to New Orleans with a theme that epitomizes the Big Easy with its vibrant sounds and traditions, including Grand Marshal **Michelle Gibson** and the **Mardi Gras Black Indian/ Big Queen from the Wild Apache Tribe**.

The evening pays tribute to this singular American city influenced by so many cultural and historical lineages. In addition to high-energy live music on the Meyerson's east and west lobbies, this evening soiree features New Orleans-inspired culinary delights, dancing, and vignettes by DBDT dancers.

Norma and Don Stone, and **Linda and Frederick Todd II** are the Honorary Chairpersons of the fundraiser. **Carisma Ramsey Fields** and **Kim Whitaker** are co-chairs. The chairs have selected the theme, LET THE GOOD TIMES ROLL! or *LAISSEZ LES BON TEMPS ROULER!* as they say in New Orleans. Event sponsors are JPMorgan Chase & Co., The Eugene McDermott Foundation, HALL Group, with additional sponsorship from HALL Wines. The official beer sponsor is Stella Artois.

For ticket details, visit www.DallasBigDance.com .

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Texas Commission on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, Lexus, Elite News, FYI-50+, The Dallas Examiner, The Dallas Post Tribune, Oversee My IT, Trendy Africa, and Arts+Culture.

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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. 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 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 virtuosic

dancers of Dallas Black Dance Theatre have mesmerized 5 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 12 full-time salaried dancers performing a mixed repertory of modern, jazz, African, and spiritual works by national and international choreographers. **DBDT: Encore!** features six 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 47 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 permanent 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 Wyly Theatre**.

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



Photograph of Thaddeus Ford by Steve Glickman.



The Big Easy Brass Band photograph by Oddusee Photography.



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