



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dallas Black Dance Theatre and Dallas Summer Musicals

Partner With Dallas Independent School District

In A New Arts Education Initiative During February 2022

Dallas, TX - Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT) and Dallas Summer Musicals (DSM) are launching a new initiative to advance arts education accessibility during the pandemic. Between February 1-18, 2022, Dallas Black Dance Theatre will make available a virtual matinee performance of the highly acclaimed work *ODETTA* to every student and grade level in the **Dallas Independent School District** during Black History Month 2022.

This arts education initiative is in keeping with the mission of the **National Endowment for the Arts**, to support arts learning, affirm and celebrate America's rich and diverse cultural heritage, and extend its work to promote equal access to the arts in every community across America.

Matthew Rushing, Associate Artistic Director of the **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** choreographed the work *ODETTA* for the Ailey Company in 2014. DBDT performed the work on stage in 2019. The virtual matinee is made possible at no charge by **Dallas Summer Musicals** in partnership with Dallas Black Dance Theatre and Dallas Independent School District.

Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT) presents a dramatic lesson on the emotional and spiritual struggle of the American Civil Rights Era through the virtual Cultural Awareness performance of *ODETTA*. Odetta Holmes, known as Odetta, often referred to as "The Voice of the Civil Rights Movement," was a singer, actress, guitarist, lyricist, and civil and human rights activist. In 1963, Odetta sang on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial at the historic March on Washington. In 1965, Odetta sang for Civil Rights marchers who walked from Selma to Montgomery in Alabama.

While DBDT has performed *ODETTA* on the concert stage, Dallas ISD students will view a reinvented version that takes the dance from the stage to unique locations across Dallas. DBDT filmed the dance in 2021 during the pandemic at White Rock Lake, the Meyerson

Symphony Center, the Trinity Groves area, the Dallas Design District, Bishop Arts District, and Bonton Farms to make for a robust cinematic experience.

For information on how Dallas ISD teachers can access this virtual student matinee performance, please contact Allison Bret at abret@dallassummermusicals.org.

About Dallas Black Dance Theatre: *Dallas Black Dance Theatre (DBDT) is celebrating its 45th anniversary as the ninth largest contemporary modern dance company in the nation and the oldest and largest dance company in Dallas. DBDT's mission 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.*

Dallas Black Dance Theatre is an internationally recognized professional contemporary modern dance company that presents performances from the African American experience. The virtuosic dancers of Dallas Black Dance Theatre have mesmerized 5 million arts patrons across 16 countries, including two Olympic Cultural events. For more details, visit www.DBDT.com.

About Dallas Summer Musicals: *Since 1941, the non-profit Dallas Summer Musicals Inc. (DSM) has presented the Best of Broadway to North Texas audiences. Located in the historic Music Hall at Fair Park, DSM promotes excellence in live musical theatre with year-round performances for diverse audiences of all ages, impacting the lives of children and families through education and community outreach programs, while enriching the cultural landscape of North Texas and the Southwest Region.*

As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, DSM relies on a variety of funding sources to offer affordable ticket prices, preserve the beautiful historic theatre, educate young audiences and develop impactful community programs.

DSM gratefully acknowledges the support of our season sponsors, annual fund donors and corporate partners Germania Insurance, American Airlines, Texas Instruments, The Dallas Morning News, and WFAA TV Channel 8. For more information about Dallas Summer Musicals, please call 214-421-5678 or visit our website at DallasSummerMusicals.org.

About Dallas Independent School District: *The Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) is continually preparing its more than 143,000 students for college or a career. The district offers a competitive mix of innovative programs, choice programs and instructional initiatives that support the increased academic achievement and the social and emotional development of its students. To learn more, visit www.dallasisd.org.*

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ODETTA photograph by Melissa M. Young.



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