

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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THE DALLAS BLACK DANCE ACADEMY PRESENTS THE BIG DANCE 2024
IN CELEBRATION OF ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY
ERYKAH BADU ANNOUNCED AS HONORARY CHAIR
NINE PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS TO BE HONORED
JUNE 1, 2024 AT THE MORTON H. MEYERSON SYMPHONY CENTER

Dallas, Texas – **Dallas Black Dance Theatre's (DBDT)** annual fundraiser, **The BIG Dance**, is back for its fifth consecutive year for a soulful evening of the **Motown Sound**. Renowned Grammy Award-winning Motown artist and Honorary Chair **Erykah Badu** has joined the cause, lending her support to **Dallas Black Dance Theatre's training Academy (DBDA)**. Badu, a boundary-crossing artist with deep roots in Dallas, is dedicated to giving back to the youth in her community, making her an exemplary advocate for this event.



Courtesy of Erykah Badu

Co-chaired by **Tiffany D. Hunter (Tiffany Dale Agency, LLC)** and **Ebonie Hughey Jackson (Bank of America)**, the **BIG Dance** will take place on **June 1, 2024** at the prestigious **Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center**. It promises to be an unforgettable night of glamour, music and philanthropy wrapped up as a vibrant dance party. Guests attending the event will be treated to the timeless tunes of Motown classics, led by **Jordan Kahn's Manhattan Orchestra**. The night's dress code, **Motown Sleek**, encourages attendees to don outfits inspired by the iconic Motown era.

"As a proud Dallas native, former Booker T. Washington dance major, global visual and performance artist, and parent to two children who have flourished through Dallas Black Dance Academy, this event holds a special place in my heart," said **Erykah Badu**, "I'm thrilled to serve as Honorary



Chair for The BIG Dance 2024 and have the chance to celebrate the remarkable legacy of the Academy.”

This year’s fundraiser holds special significance as it coincides with the **50th anniversary of Dallas Black Dance Academy**. The celebration will also pay tribute to the **nine Presidential Scholars** produced by the Academy since its inception.

All proceeds will benefit DBDA, providing a **40% reduction in tuition fees** for more than 300 students enrolled in our on-site academy training classes at our Arts District facility. Support of the Academy also benefits DBDA’s **in-school dance residency programs** for 2,000+ students in 24 area DFW schools with student populations who are historically working with students of color whose families face economic challenges.

The 50-year-old Academy produced one of the **first Presidential Scholars** in dance in America, in addition to eight other Presidential Scholars who graduated from **Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts** and trained at Dallas Black Dance Academy. Four Academy students have received full scholarships to the prestigious dance program at **The Juilliard School**.

Since 2012, 100% of Dallas Black Dance Academy senior students have graduated from high school and attended college. Many more Academy students have received the **Texas Young Masters Award**, the state equivalent to the national award.

Tickets for The BIG Dance are on sale now! For details and more information, visit www.dallasbigdance.com.

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ABOUT DALLAS BLACK DANCE THEATRE

Founded in 1976 by **Ann Williams**, and currently under the direction of Melissa M. Young, **Dallas Black Dance Theatre's** mission is to create and produce contemporary modern dance at the highest level of artistic excellence through performances and educational programs that bridge cultures and reach diverse communities. As the largest and oldest professional dance company in Dallas, DBDT is the fourth-largest Black dance company in the nation, the seventh-largest contemporary modern dance company, and ranked 36th among the nation's leading ballet companies. Located in the thriving downtown Dallas Arts District, DBDT has performed worldwide for over 4.6 million arts patrons and 2.8 million students in 33 states and 16 countries on five continents. The performances include two Olympics (1996 & 2012), the nation's most prestigious venues (**Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, Broadway, Jacob's Pillow**), and for such luminaries as **Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II** and **South African President Nelson Mandela**. Since the pandemic began in 2020, DBDT performances have also been viewed virtually in 43 countries. The Company has been recognized by the **National Endowment for the Arts** as an American Masterpiece Touring Artist (2008) and received the **Texas Medal of the Arts Award** for Arts Education (2017).

For more details about **Dallas Black Dance Theatre**, visit www.dbdt.com.

ABOUT DALLAS BLACK DANCE ACADEMY

The official school of Dallas Black Dance Theatre celebrates 50 years of delivering dance instruction to a community of diverse backgrounds. It was founded by **Ann Williams**. The academy trained the **first student in the nation to receive the Presidential Scholar Award** in Dance in 1980. Students participate weekly in 36 dance classes, including ballet, jazz, tap, modern, and African on-site at DBDT's studios. Classes are held at Dallas Black Dance Theatre's studios and are open to students ages four to adult. The academy has three performing ensembles: **Allegro Performing Ensemble, Dallas Black Dance Theatre's premier academy ensemble, Senior Performing Ensemble**, and **Junior Performing Ensemble**.

For details on Dallas Black Dance Academy, visit www.dbdt.com/academy.