

AUDITORIUM THEATRE

CHICAGO'S LANDMARK STAGE® EST. 1889

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AUDITORIUM THEATRE'S YEAR IN REVIEW

Featuring Ballet Nacional de Cuba, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, *Too Hot to Handel: The Jazz-Gospel Messiah*, Ballet Folklórico de México de Amalia Hernández, and More



In the Auditorium Theatre's 129th year of existence, we honored the life and legacy of **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** at the 13th annual *Too Hot to Handel: The Jazz-Gospel Messiah*; asked "What's This?" on Halloween with a special screening and the Midwest premiere of Disney in Concert's *The Nightmare Before Christmas*; and sang along to timeless classics like "December 1963 (Oh, What a Night)" and "Grease" with **Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons**. We reveled alongside the dancers from **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater**; celebrated **Ballet Nacional de Cuba's** return to Chicago following a 15-year absence; highlighted top local dance companies, including **Hubbard Street Dance Chicago** and **Giordano Dance Chicago**; and got transported to Mexico with the colorful music and dance of **Ballet Folklórico de México de Amalia Hernández**. We also hosted the 14th year of our **Hearts to Art** summer camp, a performing arts camp for young people who have experienced the death of a parent; welcomed over 5,000 students to our **Student Matinees**; and brought thousands of people from across the city to the theatre through our **ADMIT ONE** program.

Other highlights of the year included some of our rental events: the annual residency of **The Joffrey Ballet**, which included the stunning North American premiere of Alexander Ekman's *Midsummer Night's Dream*; sold-out shows by **Neil Young** and **David Byrne**; President **Bill Clinton's** discussion of his book *The President Is Missing*; youth slam poetry competition **Louder Than A Bomb**; the return of **Aida Cuevas** and **Lila Downs** with the **Mariachi Heritage Foundation**; **Death Cab for Cutie's** one-night-only performance of its signature album *Transatlanticism* in its entirety; and the inspiring **Hello Sunshine x Together Live** event, which featured speakers such as **Reese Witherspoon** and **Sophia Bush**.

As 2018 draws to a close, we invite you to look back at the highlights of this year's presented shows at the Auditorium Theatre.

***Too Hot to Handel: The Jazz-Gospel Messiah* | January 13 + 14**

The 13th annual presentation of *Too Hot to Handel: The Jazz-Gospel Messiah* had audience members singing and clapping along with soloists Rodrick Dixon, Alfreda Burke, and Karen Marie Richardson.

"The reinvention [of Handel's oratorio] works remarkably well, particularly thanks to the contributions of vocal soloists Rodrick Dixon, Alfreda Burke and Karen Marie Richardson, plus the very hot pianist Alvin Waddles and choir and orchestra." – Chicago Tribune

"The musical performance is breathtaking, emotional, and downright joyful." – Picture This Post

Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo – *La Belle (The Sleeping Beauty)* | March 3 + 4

Monaco's premier dance company brought artistic director Jean-Christophe Maillot's visually stunning reinterpretation of the classic fairy tale to the Auditorium's landmark stage.

"In keeping with Diaghilev's propensity for richly embellished ballets, Maillot's La Belle is chock-full of inviolable eye candy, accentuating the fantastical tale of a maiden who pricks her finger and falls into a deep sleep to great effect..." – The Chicago Tribune

"Maillot's La Belle offers an innovative interpretation of the traditional Sleeping Beauty ballet. It is a wonderful showcase of high energy dancing, color, and theatricality, perfect for both the seasoned dance viewer and those that may be new to story ballets." – Picture This Post

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater | March 7-11

The United States' "Cultural Ambassador to the World" gave six breathtaking performances at the Auditorium, its Chicago home since 1969. New works presented in 2018 included company member Jamar Roberts' striking *Members Don't Get Weary* and Gustavo Ramirez Sansano's *Victoria*, in addition to pieces from the company's repertory such as Chicago choreographer Talley Beatty's *Stack-Up*. Each performance closed, as is Auditorium tradition, with Alvin Ailey's masterpiece *Revelations*.

"The company, under the inspired direction of Robert Battle since 2011, has become an invaluable trove of modern dance history ... as well as a thrilling showcase for new work." – Chicago Tonight

"Alvin Ailey is a national treasure, and they [were] as strong as ever in Chicago this week." – Chicago Stage Standard

Hubbard Street Dance Chicago | March 23 + 24

Chicago's acclaimed contemporary dance company returned to the Auditorium for its first full-length engagement in over 20 years with a program of works by Hubbard Street Resident Choreographer Alejandro Cerrudo. In addition to classic Cerrudo pieces like *Lickety Split*, the company gave the world premiere to the captivating, entrancing *Out of Your Mind*.

"The company ... has never looked better, delivering pinpoint precision, unflagging verve and no shortage of first-rate individual performances." – Chicago Sun-Times

"One thing is beyond debate when it comes to Hubbard Street: No dance company can match its uncanny ability to make an ensemble of 16 dancers move as a single, seamless organism. Watch

as they join in a single horizontal line of snakelike movement and you would swear they were breathing through the same set of lungs. Amazing.” – Chicago Tonight

Ballet Nacional de Cuba – *Don Quixote* | May 18-20

Straight from Havana, Cuba's national ballet company marked its return to Chicago after a 15-year absence with three thrilling performances of company director Alicia Alonso's *Don Quixote*.

"The last time Ballet Nacional de Cuba came to Chicago was 2003. Prima ballerina Viengsay Valdes was 26 at the time. Her performance at the Auditorium Theatre was anticipated by Tribune critic Sid Smith as 'likely to knock our socks off.' Smith's comment was an understatement; 15 years later, Valdes again sent theatergoers onto Congress Parkway barefoot." – Chicago Tribune

"There is a distinct pleasure in watching a world-class company so perfectly in sync with each other – and with the musicians of the wonderful Chicago Philharmonic." – Chicago Stage Standard

Giordano Dance Chicago | June 9

America's original jazz dance company brought a fiery program to the Auditorium Theatre for its fourth "Made in Chicago" Dance Series appearance, featuring electrifying works such as Christopher Huggins' *Pyrokinesis* and Ray Leeper's *Feelin' Good Sweet*. The evening also commemorated Nan Giordano's 25th year as Artistic Director of the company.

"Giordano's highly polished, aerobically fearsome dancers invariably run on high-octane fuel and generate a similarly high-powered response from their audience." – Chicago Tonight

"The company's Saturday night show at the Auditorium Theatre was like a celebration among friends commemorating longevity, excellence, and legacy." – City Pleasures

National Geographic Live – When Women Ruled the World | September 26

Dr. Kara Cooney kicked off the Auditorium Theatre's 2018-19 *National Geographic Live* series by going back in time through different eras of female leadership in ancient Egypt. Audience members were enthralled by her storytelling and her ability to connect events from the ancient past with modern day.

"Dr. Cooney is a vibrant, funny, exceptionally well-informed speaker, comfortable with her subject and used to being at the head of the class." – Splash Magazines

Disney in Concert: Tim Burton's *The Nightmare Before Christmas* | October 31 + November 1

Halloween Town came to the Auditorium Theatre this year with two special screenings of Tim Burton's *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, featuring the Chicago Philharmonic performing Danny Elfman's classic score.

"These talented musicians truly brought to life the spooky magic of legendary Danny Elfman's music... It was truly a special event for lovers of Tim Burton, as well as live musical performance." – Chicago Stage Standard

"The effect of this arrangement with the film and the Philharmonic is that every note in the score is given center stage ... The interludes and reprises in between the songs are also highlighted wonderfully as the movie moves from scene to scene, and every string trill is chilling." – Picture This Post

Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons | November 3

The American icon returned to the Auditorium Theatre for the first time in over 40 years for a performance featuring classics like "December 1963 (Oh, What a Night)" and "Grease." "This is one of the most incredible theaters I have ever worked at," Valli told the audience as he looked out at the landmark theatre.

"[Valli] is the epitome of the phrase 'young at heart.' The crowd went wild for nearly every song." – Roosevelt Torch

Ballet Folklórico de México de Amalia Hernández | November 10 + 11

The excitement was palpable at the Auditorium Theatre when Ballet Folklórico de México returned to Chicago. The company delighted audiences with its world-class dancing (and lassoing, on full display during the piece *Charreada*), colorful costumes, and live mariachi musical interludes.

"It's a nonstop whirlwind of sound and color, and you'd have to be lacking a pulse not to be thoroughly entertained." – Chicago Stage Standard

"There is no doubt that we all were collectively moved and thrilled by Ballet Folklórico de México's performance. This was indeed a vibrant crash course of Mexico's history told through dance and music. There was a sense of community from beginning to end." – Picture This Post

Ate9 Dance Company/Visceral Dance Chicago/Deeply Rooted Dance Theater November 16

Three innovative contemporary dance companies took over the theatre for one night only for this "Made in Chicago" 312 Dance Series performance, which featured Deeply Rooted's *Heaven, Church of Nations*, and *Until Lambs Become Lions*; Visceral Dance Chicago's *Soft Spoken*; and Ate9 Dance Company's Chicago premiere of *calling glenn*, which included live percussion by Wilco's Glenn Kotche.

"On paper, it doesn't seem the most natural choice, putting these companies together, but with each taking a third of an evening that spanned well over two hours, quick transitions and smart programming made for a surprisingly cohesive and efficient performance." – Chicago Tribune

"A full evening of exhilarating entertainment." – Splash Magazines

MORE 2018 AUDITORIUM THEATRE EVENTS:

January 27 | Pedro Fernández

February 7-18 | The Joffrey Ballet – Modern Masters

March 14 | Roosevelt University's VIVID

March 17 | Varsity Vocals

March 18 | Louder Than A Bomb

April 25-May 6 | The Joffrey Ballet – *Midsummer Night's Dream*

April 30 | Alphawood Presents: A Conversation with Ai Weiwei

May 25 | All Black Affair – Memorial Day Weekend R&B Music Fest with Dru Hill, Ginuwine, Kindred Family Soul, Jon B, and Carl Thomas

May 26 + 27 | International Mr. Leather

June 1-3 | David Byrne

June 21 | A Conversation with President Bill Clinton

June 30 + July 1 | Neil Young

July 13 | Kingdom Hearts Orchestra -World Tour-

July 17-29 | Broadway in Chicago – *The Color Purple*

August 18 | Dance for Life

September 12 | A Conversation with Eric Holder: Public Service and Civil Rights

September 13 | A Conversation with Common: Activism in an Age of Polarization

September 14 | Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit

September 23 | Aida Cuevas

October 6 | *The Legend of Zygimantas Augustas and Barbora Radvilaite*

October 7 | Death Cab for Cutie

October 9 | Black Violin

October 17-28 | The Joffrey Ballet – *Swan Lake*

November 9 | Lila Downs

November 12 | Hello Sunshine x Together Live

December 1-30 | The Joffrey Ballet – *The Nutcracker*



About The Auditorium Theatre

The Auditorium Theatre, located at 50 E Ida B Wells Dr at Roosevelt University in Chicago, is an Illinois, not-for-profit organization committed to presenting the finest in international, cultural, community, and educational programming to all of Chicago and beyond as **The Theatre for the People**. The organization also is committed to the continued restoration and preservation of the **National Historic Landmark**.

The Auditorium Theatre 2018-19 Season is made possible in part with support from the **John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation**, the **Illinois Arts Council**, **The Chicago Community Trust**, and the **Palmer House Hilton**. **Michigan Avenue Magazine** is the official magazine sponsor. For more information about programming, volunteer, and donor opportunities or theatre tours, please call 312.341.2310 or visit AuditoriumTheatre.org. For a complete listing of events at the Auditorium Theatre, please click [here](#).

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, photo by Christopher Duggan. | *Too Hot to Handel*, photo by Kristie Kahns. | Death Cab for Cutie. | Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, photo by Todd Rosenberg. | Frankie Valli, photo by Richard Beland. Ballet Folklórico de México, photo courtesy of Ballet Folklórico de México. | Ballet Nacional de Cuba, photo by Jacques Moatti. | David Byrne.



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