

Dance Theatre of Harlem Returns to the Auditorium Theatre November 18-20

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Company presents Midwest premiere of Francesca Harper's System



The acclaimed [Dance Theatre of Harlem](#) (DTH) gives three performances at the Auditorium Theatre on November 18, 19, and 20 with a program that includes System, a major new work by choreographer **Francesca Harper**. The work is supported by the New England Foundation for the Arts, and is inspired by the current social, political, and economic climate in the United States. System was choreographed in collaboration with Dance Theatre of Harlem dancers who used their own experiences as people of color for inspiration. DTH Artistic Director **Virginia Johnson** told the Washington Post that System "addresses social justice issues in the Black Lives Matter era" and is "a very contemporary piece, but also very beautiful and uplifting." A live string quartet performs composer **John Adams'** original music for the piece.

"Dance Theatre of Harlem's Midwest premiere of System is relevant, timely, and connected to current events happening around the country, especially right here in Chicago," says Auditorium Theatre CEO **Tania Castroverde Moskalenko**. "We are honored to present this powerful work at the Auditorium, and know that it will have an impact on all those who experience it."

The company also performs Brahms Variations, a new neo-classical ballet by Dance Theatre of Harlem's Resident Choreographer **Robert Garland** set to Johannes Brahms' "Variations on a Theme by Joseph Haydn," and Coming Together, the 1991 work by Spanish choreographer **Nacho Duato**. Choreographed in the minimalist style and set to the music by Frederic Rzewski, the work utilizes the text of a letter written by a prisoner killed in the 1971 riot at Attica Prison.

Dance Theatre of Harlem will also present a one-hour student matinee on November 18 at 11AM, open to any student in grades K-12. The student matinee will feature excerpts from System and Brahms Variations, as well as Garland's 1999 piece Return, set to songs by Aretha Franklin and James Brown.

"Performing at the Auditorium Theatre in Chicago is always one of the highlights of Dance Theatre of Harlem's touring season," Johnson says. "I am especially happy to bring these three very different and striking works to Chicago's discerning dance audience and that, along with the public performances, there is a student matinee to introduce young people to our company."

About the Choreographers

Francesca Harper, formerly a company member at Dance Theatre of Harlem and Ballett Frankfurt, is Artistic Director of The Francesca Harper Project. She has choreographed extensively in Europe, in addition to creating works for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Hubbard Street II, Dallas Black Dance Theater, and Dance Theatre of Harlem.

Read the Auditorium Theatre's interview with Harper about System [here](#).

Robert Garland is Resident Choreographer of Dance Theatre of Harlem. A former principal dancer with the company, he has also choreographed ballets for The Royal Ballet, Oakland Ballet, and New York City Ballet, in addition to creating solo works for American Ballet Theatre principal dancer Misty Copeland.

Nacho Duato is an acclaimed international choreographer whose works have set a standard for contemporary expression. He has been the artistic director of such important companies as Compania Nacional de Espana, the Bolshoi Ballet, and, most recently, Staatsballett Berlin. He has created works for companies including Cullberg Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Australian Ballet, Martha Graham Dance Company, Boston Ballet, and Paris Opera Ballet, among others.

About Dance Theatre of Harlem

Dance Theatre of Harlem was founded in 1969 by Arthur Mitchell and Karel Shook as an institution committed to presenting a ballet company of African American and racially diverse artists, using classical ballet to celebrate African American culture. The company's artistic director, Virginia Johnson, is a founding member of the company, as well as the founder of POINTE magazine. Johnson was recently honored at the White House by First Lady Michelle Obama during a celebration of African American women and dance.

The presentation of System by Francesca Harper is made possible by the **New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project**, with lead funding from the **Doris Duke Charitable Foundation** and the **Andrew W. Mellon Foundation**.

The 2016-17 Dance Series Sponsor is **NIB Foundation**. The 2016-17 Student Matinee Sponsors are **The PrivateBank** and **The Robert Thomas Bobins Foundation**.

Performance and Ticket Information

Dance Theatre of Harlem

Friday, November 18 | 7:30PM

Saturday, November 19 | 7:30PM

Sunday, November 20 | 3PM

Tickets start at \$30, and are available online at AuditoriumTheatre.org, by phone at 312.341.2300, or in person at the Auditorium Theatre Box Office (50 E Congress Parkway). Discounts available for groups of 10+. Dance Theatre of Harlem is part of the International Dance Series and Inspiration Series, which offers a 30% discounted subscription online at AuditoriumTheatre.org.

Friday, November 18 | 11AM (Student Matinee)

One-hour student matinee tickets for Dance Theatre of Harlem are \$10 and are available at 312.341.2357 or sales@auditoriumtheatre.org. Please find more information on the Auditorium's Student Matinee program at AuditoriumTheatre.org.

For press photos of Dance Theatre of Harlem, as well as photos of the Auditorium Theatre, please visit AuditoriumTheatre.org/press-center.



Auditorium Theatre's 2016-17 Season Upcoming Events

November 5-6: [Lizt Alfonso Dance Cuba - Cuba Vibra!](#)

November 11: [Chicago Jazz Philharmonic - The Mississippi River: Black and Blues](#)

November 18-20: [Dance Theatre of Harlem](#)

January 14-15: [Too Hot to Handel: The Jazz-Gospel Messiah](#)

March 11: [Thodos Dance Chicago](#)

March 22-26: [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#)

March 31: [Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra - By George! The Pops Plays Gershwin](#)

About The Auditorium Theatre

The Auditorium Theatre, located at 50 E Congress Pkwy in Chicago, is an Illinois, not-for-profit organization committed to presenting the finest in international, cultural, community and educational programming to Chicago, and to the continued restoration and preservation of the National Historic Landmark. In September of 2014, the Auditorium Theatre was awarded the inaugural Fifth Star Award by Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

The Auditorium Theatre 2016-17 Season is made possible in part with support from the **MacArthur Foundation**, the **Illinois Arts Council** and the **Palmer House Hilton**. For more information about programming, volunteer and donor opportunities or theatre tours, call 312.341.2310 or visit AuditoriumTheatre.org. For a complete listing of events at the Auditorium Theatre, please click [here](#).

Dance Theatre of Harlem photo by Renata Pavam.

Auditorium Theatre photo by Lucio Vergara.



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