

Contact: Lila Hurwitz/Doolittle+Bird
lila.hurwitz@gmail.com | 206.650.3305

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UW DANCE PRESENTS

Chamber Dance Company

Presenting modern dance works of artistic and historic significance.

FALLING

Thursday–Saturday, October 10–12, 2019, 7:30pm

Sunday, October 13, 2019, 2pm

Meany Hall—Katharyn Alvord Gerlich Theater, UW Campus

Pre-performance lectures 30 minutes before curtain with Sheila Farr, arts writer and UW alumna.

Tickets: \$12–22 / ArtsUW Ticket Office / ArtsUW.org / 206-543-4880

Info: dance.uw.edu / [UW Department of Dance Facebook](#)

Chamber Dance Company's 29th season explores the despair, thrill and humor intrinsic in the act of falling, with choreography by **José Limón** (1945), **Brian Brooks** (2012), **Talley Beatty** (1947) and **Mark Morris** (1982).

Highlights include **Brian Brooks'** *First Fall* (2012), a duet he created for acclaimed New York City Ballet ballerina Wendy Whelan. For the first time since exclusively performing and touring *First Fall* with Whelan, Brooks is sharing this work with Chamber Dance Company—the only company to perform the work since its premiere.

With a mission of restaging and archiving significant works from the modern dance canon, Chamber Dance Company is one of the only companies in the country ensuring that these seminal masterworks are kept alive and accessible.

About the Program & Choreographers:

Concerto Grosso (1945) by José Limón. Staged by Brenna Monroe-Cook.

An ebullient trio to music by Vivaldi, showcasing the suspension and fall on which Limón technique is based. Monroe-Cook received her MFA from the UW in 2011 and re-joined the José Limón Dance Company after graduation.

Born in Mexico, **José Limón** (1908–1972) immigrated to California with his family where he studied to become an artist. After moving to New York in 1928 to continue his art studies, he enrolled in the dance school of Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman, and for the next decade performed in most of their works while choreographing and dancing on Broadway. In 1946, with Doris Humphrey as his artistic director, Limón formed his own company headquartered at The Juilliard School.

Created early in his career as a tribute to the baroque music of Vivaldi, *Concerto Grosso* is driven by musical structure, challenging movement vocabulary and a joyous spirit that are not often associated with Limón's choreography. He wrote in 1966 that he tried to "...compose works that are involved with man's basic tragedy and the grandeur of his spirit...to dig beneath empty formalisms, displays of technical virtuosity and the slick surface; to probe the human entity for the powerful, often crude, beauty of the gesture that speaks of man's humanity." (*The Modern Dance*, Cohen) *Concerto Grosso* is a lively exception to Limón's choreographic credo.

Mourner's Bench (1947) by Talley Beatty. Staged by Kim Bears-Bailey.

A solo choreographed to the African American spiritual, *There is a Balm in Gilead*.

*There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole.
There is a balm in Gilead to heal the sin-sick soul.*

With live music by Stephanie Anne Johnson and Paul Moore, the work was inspired by Howard Fast's novel *Southern Landscape* and refers to the tragic influence of the Klu Klux Klan on a mixed-race community in the rural South after the Civil War. *Mourner's Bench* is an excerpt from Mr. Beatty's first ballet, *Southern Landscapes*, which takes a dramatic look at the end of the reconstruction period marked by the destruction of the thousands of cooperative farms that had been created after the Civil War.

Talley Beatty (1918–1995), was born in Cedar Grove, Louisiana, and grew up in Chicago. He studied with Martha Graham and Katherine Dunham and became a principal dancer with the Katherine Dunham Company at age sixteen. After touring with the Dunham Company for five years and appearing in films such as *A Study in Choreography for Camera* and Broadway shows such as *Cabin in the Sky*, *Pins and Needles*, and *Blue Holiday*, Beatty formed his own company and toured throughout Europe, the U.S. and Canada. Beatty was nominated for a 1977 Tony Award as Best Choreographer for *Your Arm's Too Short to Box with God*. He is considered one of the greatest African American choreographers and his work focuses on the social issues, experiences, and everyday life of African Americans. Dance companies around the world have mounted his ballets, including Dance Theatre of Harlem, Bat-Sheva Company, Koln Opera Ballet Company, Boston Ballet, Stockholm Dance Theatre and Ballet Hispanico. Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has performed his major works including *The Road of the Phoebe Snow*, *Come and Get the Beauty of it Hot*, *Stack-Up* and *Blueshift*.

First Fall (2012) by Brian Brooks. Staged by Brian Brooks.

Physical and emotional trust are explored in this duet to music by Phillip Glass. After exclusively performing and touring *First Fall* for seven years with acclaimed ballerina Wendy Whelan, Brooks is sharing his work for the first time with CDC artists—the only company performing the work since Brooks and Whelan premiered it in 2012.

Brian Brooks is the inaugural Choreographer in Residence at Chicago's Harris Theater for Music and Dance, a three-year fellowship that includes commissions for new works for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Miami City Ballet, and his own New York-based group. His honors include a Guggenheim Fellowship, Joyce Theater Artist Residency, and NY City Center Fellowship. Brooks's company has toured internationally since 2002 with presentations by American Dance Festival, BAM's Next Wave Festival, The Joyce Theater, Jacob's Pillow, and Lumberyard Performing Arts, among others. Brooks has choreographed off-Broadway productions at Theatre for a New Audience, including *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Pericles*, and has created dances for Ballet Tech, The Juilliard School, Boston Conservatory, The School at Jacob's Pillow, and Harvard University. He teaches extensively at universities across the U.S. and has served as a Teaching Artist at Lincoln Center Education for 12 years. In 2016, he received a Mellon Foundation Creative Artist Fellowship in conjunction with the Meany Center to explore the intimate spaces between bodies on the stage and within the virtual space created by immersive technologies.

Brooks was commissioned to create *First Fall* with former New York City Ballet Principal Wendy Whelan, who is now Associate Artistic Director of the New York City Ballet.

Canon 3/4 Studies (1982) by Mark Morris. Staged by Brian Lawson.

A rollicking nonet to ballet studio music, played live by Bathsheba Marcus and arranged by Harriet Cavalli. In many of the 11 sections of the dance, falling accentuates the canonic structure. CDC member Lawson is staging the work; he danced with the Mark Morris Dance Company for seven years.

Mark Morris (1956) was born in Seattle where he attended Franklin Highschool and studied with Verla Flowers and Perry Brunson. In the early years of his career, he performed with the companies of Lar Lubovitch, Hannah Kahn, Laura Dean, Eliot Feld, and the Koleda Balkan Dance Ensemble. He formed the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1980 and has since created close to 150 works for the company. From 1988 to 1991, he was Director of Dance at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, the national opera house of Belgium. In 1990, he founded the White Oak Dance Project with Mikhail Baryshnikov. Morris is also an acclaimed ballet choreographer, with 20 works commissioned by ballet companies worldwide. He was named a Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation in 1991, has received 11 honorary doctorates, and has received numerous awards and prizes over the years. He has taught at the UW, Princeton University and Tanglewood Music Center. Morris opened the Mark Morris Dance Center in Brooklyn, New York, in 2001 to provide a home for his company, rehearsal space for the dance community, outreach programs for children and seniors, and a school offering dance classes to students of all ages and abilities.

Canon 3/4 Studies premiered at Washington Hall Performance Gallery (now Washington Hall) in Seattle.

::

About the Chamber Dance Company:

Founded in 1990 by Hannah Wiley, the Chamber Dance Company is a favorite of Pacific Northwest audiences and is revered throughout the country. At a time when much of the modern dance canon is being lost to history, the Company's mission to present, record and archive works of historical and artistic significance is more important than ever. The UW Department of Dance proudly supports this effort to ensure these dances are kept alive and accessible for local dance audiences and scholars.

The Company is comprised of professional dancers from nationally and internationally acclaimed dance groups who are pursuing the Master of Fine Arts degree in dance, plus other accomplished members of the UW dance community.

"[A] vibrant company with terrific repertory...[making] this annual concert one of the best in Seattle, local or otherwise." (Seattle Weekly)

<https://dance.washington.edu/chamber-dance-company>

::

High-quality photos available; contact lisakwak@uw.edu or visit <https://dance.washington.edu/press-releases-and-photos>.

:: ::::