

Friday, June 9, 2023

Bryant Park Picnic Performances: Dance Heginbotham + Jennifer Muller/The Works + Joffrey Ballet Concert Group

Company: Dance Heginbotham, Jennifer Muller/The Works, Joffrey Ballet Concert Group

Venue: Bryant Park

Location: New York, NY

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Jamie Kraus

First-Come, First-Served Entry

All Bryant Park Picnic Performances Are FREE

Bryant Park Picnic Performances presented by Bank of America season of free, live performances continues on June 9 with Dance Heginbotham, Jennifer Muller/The Works, and Joffrey Ballet Concert Group, part of the Contemporary Dance series (four nights of New York City-based dance companies showcasing their work on the Bryant Park stage, curated by Tiffany Rea-Fisher). For this performance, Dance Heginbotham presents work including *Iversongs*, which will feature a live accompaniment from jazz pianist Ethan Iverson and drummer Vincent Sperrazza, as well as Jennifer Muller/The Works paying tribute to their late founding Artistic Director, Jennifer Muller, who passed away earlier this year, and impressive student dance company Joffrey Ballet Concert Group.

Attendees may bring their own food or purchase from on-site food and beverage vendors near the Lawn. At all performances, attendees can discover new dishes and celebrate classics from the five boroughs with a rotating line-up of local artisanal vendors curated by Hester Street Fair. Stout NYC offers giant pretzels, gourmet popcorn and other light bites as well as a selection of beer, wine, and non-alcoholic beverages for purchase.

For their Bryant Park performance, Dance Heginbotham will be performing *Iversongs* (2023) and *Closing Bell* (2012). *Iversongs* (created especially for this performance) is a combination of two prior pieces, *Easy Win* and *Dance Sonata*, made in collaboration with jazz pianist and composer Ethan Iverson (founding member of The Bad Plus). For this performance, Iverson will be on hand to perform the pieces, alongside drummer Vincent Sperrazza. *Closing Bell* is performed to music by Tyondai Braxton, and it is the first piece that John Heginbotham created for Dance Heginbotham when he founded the company in 2012; the piece was recently revived for the company's 10th anniversary season. Dance Heginbotham (DH) is a New York-based contemporary dance company committed to supporting, producing, and sustaining the work of choreographer John Heginbotham. With an emphasis on collaboration, DH enriches national and international communities with its unique blend of inventive, thoughtful, and rigorous dance theater works. Founded in 2011, DH has shared the stage with artists such as Maira Kalman, Ethan Iverson, Colin Jacobsen, Joshua Bell, the National Symphony Orchestra, Alarm Will Sound, Brooklyn Rider, and The Knights. DH had its world premiere in 2012 at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and has since been presented by Arts Brookfield, Baryshnikov Arts Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Carolina Performing Arts, Duke Performances, Harkness Dance Festival, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, The Joyce Theater, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Vail International Dance Festival, among others. In 2016, DH toured to Indonesia, Laos, and the Philippines as cultural ambassadors of the United States with DanceMotion USA.

Jennifer Muller/The Works (JMTW) has electrified world audiences with its passionate work and superb dancers across the world and produced 28 NYC Seasons at City Center, the Joyce, Cedar Lake, and New York Live Arts, among others. A byword for diversity since its inception in 1974, JMTW performs work that celebrates the human spirit with the belief that dance can promote cross-cultural understanding and act as a catalyst for positive change. JMTW presents exhilarating dances that showcase emotional authenticity and social consciousness. Devoted to mentoring creativity in all its forms, educating youth, and serving the community with vital outreach, JMTW's education programs – *Faces of Wonder*, *Imagine That!* and *HATCH* Presenting Series – have reached thousands of New York City youth and have mentored 50 emerging choreographers annually. JMTW has developed numerous dance artists who have gone on to become directors and choreographers in their own right, including Ronald K. Brown, Young Soon Kim, Pascal Rekoert, Michael Jahoda, Maria Naidu, Leda Meredith, Lana Carroll, Mario Bermudez Gil, Ed Burgess, and Christopher Pilafian. Jennifer Muller / The Works is honored to return to the stage at Bryant Park. We dance in honor of our late founding Artistic Director, Jennifer Muller, who sadly passed away in late March. More information about a *Celebration of Life* – honoring Jennifer's brilliance, artistry, spirit, and life's achievements – will be released later this summer. For this performance, the company will perform excerpts from *Attic* (1993, choreographed by Jennifer Muller, set to music by Tracy Chapman) and *Aria* (2008, also choreographed by Muller, set to music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart).

Located in the heart of New York City, the Joffrey Ballet Center serves as a platform for some of the nation's best young dancers to launch their professional careers. The Center is home to the Joffrey Ballet Concert Group, founded by Robert Joffrey in 1981, as a pre-professional performing ensemble for young artists selected from the Joffrey Ballet School's year-round Trainee Program. In the years since its inception, selected Trainees studied and performed some of the most celebrated classical and contemporary repertoire. This included the works of Gerald Arpino (Birthday Variations, Light Rain), Robert Battle (Battlefield), George Balanchine (Serenade), August Bournonville (La Ventana), Dwight Rohden (New Work), Africa Guzman (The Stolen Path), Omar Ramon DeJesus (Tip Toe..) and Lindsay Grymes (Falter Upward). The Joffrey Ballet Concert Group has toured domestically and internationally, providing dancers the experience necessary to confidently transition from student to professional. For this performance, Joffrey Ballet Concert Group will perform Random People With Beautiful Parts (2023, choreographed by Bradley Shelver) and Babel (2018, also choreographed by Shelver).

Dance Heginbotham, Jennifer Muller/The Works, Joffrey Ballet
Concert Group
Bryant Park
New York, NY, 10018
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<https://bryantpark.org/calendar/event/contemporary-dance-dance-heginbotham-jennifer-muller-the-works/2023-06-09>

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