

Sunday, February 14, 2021

## New York Theatre Ballet Between the Acts: Sir Richard Alston

Company: NYTB

Venue: Online

Location: New York, NY

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New York Theatre Ballet presents Between the Acts: Sir Richard Alston on Sunday, February 14, 2021 at 11am ET on Zoom. Taking a look at the life and works of NYTB's Resident Choreographer Sir Richard Alston, this installment of Between the Acts will also feature former NYTB principal dancer and Hiland Artistic Director at NDI New Mexico Steven Melendez, who has been a fixture of Alston's work with NYTB beginning with A Rugged Flourish in 2011. The conversation between Sir Richard Alston, Steven Melendez, and NYTB Artistic Director Diana Byer will cover choreography, music, influence and more. RSVP to [ezahlmann@nytb.org](mailto:ezahlmann@nytb.org) to receive a Zoom link prior to Sunday. Following the live event, the conversation will be available to view on Vimeo and social media.

Normally held during intermission, Between the Acts has been recast as a preseason virtual discussion series. Last week featured a discussion with Diana Byer with Anderson Ferrell and Diana Gonzalez-Duclert from The De Mille Working Group, Broadway dancer and actor Dirk Lumbard, and NYTB's Elena Zahlmann, and can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/510738701>.

Sir Richard Alston, knighted in the 2019 Honours, choreographed his first work in 1968. He went on to choreograph for Robert Cohan's London Contemporary Dance Theatre before forming Britain's first independent dance company, Strider, in 1972. In 1975 he came to New York to study for two years. His teachers included Merce Cunningham, Carolyn Brown, Viola Farber, Valda Setterfield, Gus Solomons Jr. and Alfredo Corvino. On his return to Europe, he worked internationally as choreographer and teacher. In 1980 he was appointed Resident Choreographer of Ballet Rambert, becoming the company's Artistic Director from 1986-1992. During his time there he created 25 works for Rambert, besides being commissioned to create works for the Royal Danish Ballet (Dances from the Kingdom of Pagodas, 1982) and the Royal Ballet (Midsummer, 1983). As Artistic Director of Rambert, he commissioned work from Merce Cunningham (Touchbase, 1991); Lucinda Childs (Four Elements, 1988, designed by the painter Jennifer Bartlett); and David Gordon (Mates, 1987). In the repertoire also were Antony Tudor's Dark Elegies, Merce Cunningham's Septet and Doubles, and Frederick Ashton's Capriol Suite. In 1994 he formed his own company, where he took up the post of Artistic Director of The Place. Over the past 24 years, Alston has made over 37 pieces for his company. He made his first commissioned work for New York Theatre Ballet, A Rugged Flourish, in 2011 and his second The Seasons. He has also remounted Light Flooding into Darkened Rooms, Such Longing, and Small Sonata for NYTB.

Steven Melendez was born in New York City and started his ballet training at age seven with the LIFT Program at New York Theatre Ballet School. He has danced as a Soloist dancer with Ballet Concierto in Buenos Aires, Argentina, a Principal dancer with The Vanemuine Theater Ballet Company in Tartu, Estonia, and for over 15 years with New York Theatre Ballet. Steven co-choreographed his first large-scale work, Song Before Spring for New York Theatre Ballet which was named a Dance Europe critics choice "Best Premiere" of 2016. Steven is currently the Hiland Artistic Director for National Dance Institute New Mexico.

### ABOUT NEW YORK THEATRE BALLET

With its ever-expanding repertory, New York Theatre Ballet's cutting-edge programming brings fresh insight to classic revivals paired with the modern sensibilities of both established and up-and-coming choreographers. Going strong for 40 years, New York Theatre Ballet's diversity in repertory explores the past while boldly taking risks on the future.

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6467654773  
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