

October, 25-28, 2018

## American Dance Guild Festival Returns to Ailey Citigroup Oct. 25-28

Company: American Dance Guild  
Venue: Ailey Citigroup Theater  
Location: New York, NY

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Eleo Pomare - Photo credit: David Fullard

### THE AMERICAN DANCE GUILD PERFORMANCE FESTIVAL "VISIONS – THEN AND NOW"

October 25-28 with 32 ARTISTS OVER FOUR DAYS Honoring Choreographers Jane Comfort and Eleo Pomare PLUS Special Tribute to American Modern Dancer Choreographer and Teacher Donald McKayle

The [American Dance Guild](#) Festival 2018, *Visions Then and Now*, will honor choreographic luminaries Jane Comfort and the late Eleo Pomare with four days of performances by 32 multi-generational artists from across the United States. The Festival will take place October 25 through October 28 at the Ailey Citigroup Theater, 405 West 55th Street, in New York City.

The ADG Festival's participating artists represent a wide variety of aesthetic and cultural voices, many of them female, reflecting the wide spectrum of American dance life and the diverse character of dance today. Lifetime Achievement Awards will be presented to the two honorees on opening night, October 25, followed by a gala reception. \*Full lineup below.

"The American Dance Guild holds a unique position as both a promoter of the new and preserver of the living history of modern dance as an art form," said Gloria McLean, ADG president. "Each year, the Festival honors at least two master choreographers with performances of their work alongside emerging and mid-career choreographers ranging from modern to post-modern to performance art to cultural hybrids. This year's festival, on the heels of the Guild's 60th Anniversary, exhibits the inclusiveness of dance and the diversity on which this country was built," she said.

Jane Comfort, who recently celebrated her 40th year as a choreographer with a retrospective performance at La Mama, is an innovator in dance with text. Jane was nominated for a 2018 Bessie award for this retrospective. She has chosen to present a medley of shorts from her socially observant and politically charged form of dance theater including excerpts from *Superman*, *Underground River*, *S/He*, *Spiderwoman* and excerpts of interviews and works from the video that accompanied her 40-year retrospective at La MaMa in May 2018. (Thursday and Friday).

Eleo Pomare, the formidable choreographer of the 1960's until his death in 2007, was known for his outspoken engagement with contemporary political and social issues. His work, *Radeau/Raft* (1996) (Thursday) finds new relevance in this time of world migrations and refugee crises. It is danced by a trio from the Alpha Omega Theatrical Dance Company. Dyane Harvey, longtime leading dancer, will perform the solo, *Hex* (1964) (Saturday).

Celia Ipiotis will return on opening night to present archival footage of her interviews with Ms. Comfort and Mr. Pomare, from her popular and informative television program, *EYE ON DANCE*®. Her presentation will feature the only extended recording of Eleo Pomare speaking about his sensibility and belief that dance is a product of one's culture. Ms. Ipiotis will also show film excerpts of Pomare's *Roots* danced by Dyane Harvey. Archival footage of Jane Comfort, describing the effects of pregnancy on a dancer's body with excerpts from her film, *For The Spider Woman*, will also be shown.

Saturday night's program will include a special tribute to American modern dancer, choreographer and teacher [Donald McKayle](#), who passed away in April 2018. Mr. McKayle was a long time member, friend, honoree, and advisor to the ADG board, beginning with his connection to the New Dance Group and ADG's founders. In honor of this relationship, Roxanne d'Orleans Juste of the José Limón Company will perform a solo excerpt from *Heartbeats* (1997), a work full of the exuberance and soulful optimism that marked Mr. McKayle's work.

Jane Dudley's *Canta Flamenco* (1944) will be danced on Sunday by Santa Barbara Dance Theater's Christine Sanchez (reconstructed by Nancy Colahan). *Die Unbekannte aus der Seine* (1938), a work of Austrian choreographer and concentration camp survivor Hannah Berger is reconstructed and danced by Betsy Fisher, former Nikolais dancer (Saturday). New works by Douglas Dunn, Sarah Skaggs, Ara Fitzgerald, Tina Croll, Stafford C. Berry, Li Chiao-Ping and many more round out the program.

THE AMERICAN DANCE GUILD 2018 PERFORMANCE *Visions – Then and Now* at the Ailey Citigroup Theater THURSDAY THROUGH SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25-28 - Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 8pm, Sunday at 7pm.

TICKETS: <https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3603357> Prices range from \$20-\$40. Discounts are available for students, seniors, ADG members, and groups. Tickets will also be available at the box office one hour prior to curtain. By Phone: 800-838-3006 ext. #1

\*FESTIVAL LINEUP (not in performance order and subject to change)

THURSDAY October 25 at 8pm: (Award Presentation and Gala Reception to Follow Performance)

Alpha Omega Theatrical Dance Company performing Honoree Eleo Pomare's *Raft*, Honoree Jane Comfort, Valerie Alpert, Emily Kessler, Linda Lehovec/Grant Hill, Nicole Phillippidis, Ara Fitzgerald

FRIDAY October 26 at 8pm:

Honoree Jane Comfort, Elisabeth Archer, Tina Croll, Douglas Dunn (2014 ADG Lifetime Award recipient), Rebecca Rice, Sahasra Sambamoorthi, Elisa Schreiber, Mary Seidman, Elizabeth Shea, Jin Wen Yu

SATURDAY October 27 at 8pm:

Dyane Harvey performing Honoree Eleo Pomare's *Hex*, Joniece Boykins, Li Chiao-Ping, Betsy Fisher, Anna Hooper, Jennifer Kayle, Kara Robertson, Roxane d'Orleans Juste performing Donald McKayle's *Heartbeats*, Eileen Standley/Mary Fitzgerald, Loretta Fois

SUNDAY October 28 at 7pm:

Kathryn Alter, Sue Bernhard, Stafford C. Berry, Jr., Gloria McLean, Meghan Phillips, Jane Dudley/ Christina Sanchez/Santa Barbara Dance Theater, Sarah Skaggs, Sabrina Wong, Cherylyn Lavagnino Dance

The 2018 American Dance Guild Performance Festival thanks The Harkness Foundation for Dance, The Arnhold Foundation and the Janis and Alan Menken Foundation, Inc. for their generous support.

#### HONOREE BIOS:

Jane Comfort is a choreographer, writer and director who recently celebrated 40 years of making dance/theater works with a retrospective concert at La MaMa that is nominated for a 2018 BESSIE Award for best revival. She has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, BESSIE Award, Doris Duke Award for New Work through ADF, and a Habey Award for distinguished service to the arts from the UNC/Chapel Hill. Called by the New York Times "a postmodernist pioneer in the use of verbal material in dance," she addresses contemporary social and cultural issues with compassion and wit. Her company, Jane Comfort and Company, is an extraordinary group of dancers, actors and singers whose multiple talents allow her to create deeply layered works utilizing a wide range of theatrical elements, from pure dance to chanted texts, a capella singing, film, lip-syncing, cross-dressing, acted scenes and puppetry. From Shakespeare to Donald Trump rants, the company creates theater in which transformation occurs through many voices.

Ms. Comfort's company has toured throughout the United States, and to Europe and Latin America. It has received 18 NEA fellowships and grants, four National Performance Network commissions, multiple NY State Council on the Arts grants over 20 years as well as support from the Department of Cultural Affairs, Creative Capital, the NY Foundation for the Arts and many others. Jane also works in theater and opera, and choreographed the Broadway musicals *Passion*, by Stephen Sondheim, and *Amour*, by Michel Legrand as well as Shakespeare in the Park's 2004 *Much Ado About Nothing* and Lyric Opera of Chicago's production of *Salome* with Deborah Voigt in the title role. The Company recently celebrated its 40th anniversary with a concert at La MaMa in which 22 former and current company members gathered to re-create their roles in a retrospective of works from 1978 to 2018.

Eleo Pomare (1937-2008) was born in Cartagena, Colombia and was the Artistic Director of the Eleo Pomare Dance Company for more than forty years. Mr. Pomare is widely recognized for his artistic contribution to American dance. He gained a reputation for portraying the black experience with bold honesty and searing political and emotional insight. Three of his works have been documented by the American Dance Festival as masterworks, and archived as important achievements by African-American choreographers. In addition to maintaining his own company, Mr. Pomare choreographed works for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Company, the Maryland Ballet Company, the Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, the Cleo Parker-Robinson Dance Company (Denver), Alpha Omega Theatrical Dance Company, the National Ballet of Holland, Ballet Instituttet (Oslo, Norway), the Australian Contemporary Dance Company, and the Ballet Palacio des Artes (Belo Horizonte, Brazil) and the Cincinnati Ballet. Mr. Pomare was a Guggenheim Fellow and the recipient of numerous other awards, including a John Hay Whitney Fellowship and recognition as one of the New Voices of Harlem. He was an alumnus of the High School for Performing Arts, served on the Executive Planning Committee of the International Association of Blacks in Dance, and on the Advisory Board of the American Dance Festival.

#### ABOUT THE AMERICAN DANCE GUILD:

The American Dance Guild has served the dance field in many capacities over the past 60 years, including sponsoring conferences, festivals & publications. The yearly Performance Festival continues the Guild tradition of bringing together artists from across the nation and internationally for performances and master classes. ADG offers performance opportunities that range from gala productions to bare-bones choreography showcases. In June 2014, ADG participated in Jacob's Pillow's Inside/Out program. In addition, ADG sponsors an annual Student Scholarship for summer study at Jacob's Pillow, and provides scholarly resources through its New Dance Group Gala Video and its publications such as *Branching Out: Oral Histories of Six National Dance Organizations* and *Dance Scope*.

The American Dance Guild offers an annual summer scholarship to Jacob's Pillow in Becket, MA. ADG supports one-half of the tuition for a gifted young dancer to attend this renowned summer festival. This year's scholarship was awarded to Trinity Dawn Bobo for the Gaga Workshop.

#### ABOUT EYE ON DANCE:

Designated an "Irreplaceable National Dance Treasure," the EYE ON DANCE educational series was created and produced by Jeff Bush and Celia Ipiotis. Broadcast weekly on PBS from 1981-2005, EOD built a robust historical archive of lively conversations pinned to performance footage exploring the multitude of voices forming American dance. Currently, the EOD Archive is being restored for future generations. Celia Ipiotis, creator, producer and moderator of EYE ON DANCE, leads the fundraising campaign to restore the EOD Legacy Archive. A former dancer, choreographer, company director and videographer, Ipiotis serves on college dance faculties, arts panels, and boards. The recipient of a BFA in dance from Ohio State University and MA from New School, Ms. Ipiotis oversees the EYE ON THE ARTS culture site.

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American Dance Guild  
405 West 55th Street  
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800-838-3006  
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Schedule  
October 25, 2018: 8:00pm  
October 26, 2018: 8:00pm  
October 27, 2018: 8:00pm  
October 28, 2018: 7:00pm

