



DANCECleveland & Playhouse Square  
Present

# MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE COMPANY



January 31, 2026 | 7:30 pm  
KeyBank State Theatre, Playhouse Square

Photo: Elyse Mertz; Dancer: Leslie Andrea Williams



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# WELCOME ♦ to Dance Cleveland



Theresa Remick



Sarah Sumbrum

It's not every day we can celebrate the 100th anniversary of a modern dance company in America. Tonight, we are thrilled to welcome you as we rejoice in such a monumental moment for this historically important company, and in our pride that Cleveland is a stop on this tour for the first time in almost 20 years.

Many refer to Martha Graham as the mother of modern dance in America. She was an incredible choreographer who created more than 181 works over a span of 70 years. She challenged the notion of what dance could look like, adding grounded movements, contractions and her own dramatic flair to the art form that has become instantly recognizable around the world.

Today, the Martha Graham Dance Company features dancers who perform with top-caliber technique and athleticism, but also artistic finesse that adds to the magnificence of the company. It is no surprise that Martha Graham Dance Company has been called "one of the great companies of the world" by *The New York Times*. Tonight's performance not only celebrates the company's 100th anniversary, it introduces DANCECleveland's seventh decade of bringing you the best modern and contemporary dance from around the world.

DANCECleveland started as Cleveland Modern Dance Association in 1956 with a group of women who wanted to bring in modern dance opportunities to Cleveland dancers. We often held some of these events at the Mather Dance Center at Case Western Reserve University, so tonight, honoring the continuation of modern dance education and our roots, we have included a special guest performance of Graham's *Steps in the Street* by CWRU's Dance Department. The company is excited to share some of Martha Graham's most iconic works such as *Lamentation* and *Appalachian Spring*, alongside new artistic voices that showcase the growth of the company in recent years: performing pieces such as *CAVE* by Hofesh Shechter and *We the People* by Jamar Roberts.

We want to extend our thanks to Playhouse Square for co-presenting this performance with us, and to Benesch for their support of tonight's event.

Please help us in celebrating the return of Martha Graham Dance Company to Playhouse Square!

Theresa Remick,  
Executive Director  
DANCECleveland

Sarah Sumbrum,  
Artistic Director  
DANCECleveland

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KeyBank State Theatre | January 31, 2026



present

## MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE COMPANY

# GRAHAM100

Artistic Director  
**Janet Eilber**

Executive Director  
**LaRue Allen**

### The Company

Lloyd Knight   Xin Ying   Leslie Andrea Williams  
Anne Souder   Laurel Dalley Smith   So Young An  
Marzia Memoli   Devin Loh   Antonio Leone  
Meagan King   Ane Arrieta   Zachary Jepps-Toy  
Amanda Moreira   Jai Perez   Ethan Palma

*Major support for the Martha Graham Dance Company is provided by*

The Arnhold Foundation  
Barbara and Rodgin Cohen  
The Hayes Foundation  
Howard Gilman Foundation  
Christine Jowers and Rob Friedman  
National Endowment for the Arts  
New York City Department of Cultural Affairs  
New York State Council on the Arts  
Dr. M. Felicity Rogers-Chapman  
Judith G. Schlosser  
The Shubert Foundation  
Lawrence Stein  
Thompson Family Foundation  
Inger K. Witter  
Nadia Zilkha

The Artists employed in this production are members of the  
American Guild of Musical Artists AFL-CIO.

In the tradition of its founder, the Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance remains committed to being a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and anti-racist organization, and will honor this pledge through its ongoing practices, policies and behaviors.

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## APPALACHIAN SPRING

**Choreography and Costumes by** Martha Graham

**Music by** Aaron Copland†

**Set by** Isamu Noguchi

**Original lighting by** Jean Rosenthal, Adapted by Beverly Emmons

**Premiere: October 30, 1944, Coolidge Auditorium, Library of Congress, Washington, DC**

Springtime in the wilderness is celebrated by a man and woman building a house with joy and love and prayer; by a revivalist and his followers in their shouts of exaltation; by a pioneering woman with her dreams of the Promised Land.

*The Bride:* **Anne Souder**

*The Husbandman:* **Lloyd Knight**

*The Preacher:* **Jai Perez**

*The Pioneering Woman:* **Ane Arrieta**

*The Followers:* **Meagan King, Devin Loh, Marzia Memoli, Amanda Moreira**

Commissioned by the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation in the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

The original title chosen by Aaron Copland was "Ballet for Martha," which was changed by Martha Graham to "Appalachian Spring."

†Used by arrangement with the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, copyright owners; and Boosey and Hawkes, Inc., sole publisher and licensee.

## WE THE PEOPLE

**Choreography by** Jamar Roberts

**Music by** Rhiannon Giddens

**Arranged by** Gabe Witcher

**Costume Design by** Karen Young

**Lighting Design by** Yi-Chung Chen

**Ane Arrieta   Laurel Dalley Smith   Zachary Jeppsen-Toy**

**Meagan King   Lloyd Knight   Antonio Leone**

**Devin Loh   Amanda Moreira   Ethan Palma**

**Jai Perez   Leslie Andrea Williams**

*We the People* was made possible with a significant commissioning grant from The O'Donnell-Green Music and Dance Foundation.

This production was also made possible by the 92nd Street Y, as part of 92NY's 150th anniversary celebration, in honor and continued support of Martha Graham's rich 92NY legacy.

Production support was provided by University of Michigan.

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Intermission

# LAMENTATION

**Choreography and Costume by Martha Graham**

**Music by Zoltán Kodály†**

**Original lighting by Martha Graham**

**Adapted by Beverly Emmons**

**Premiere: January 8, 1930, Maxine Elliott's Theatre, New York City**

**Leslie Andrea Williams**

This presentation of *Lamentation* has been made possible by a gift from Francis Mason in honor of William D. Witter.  
Additional support was provided by The Harkness Foundation for Dance.

†*Neun Klavierstücke*, op. 3. no. 2

## “STEPS IN THE STREET”

**Devastation—Homelessness—Exile  
from *CHRONICLE***

**Choreography and Costumes by Martha Graham**

**Music by Wallingford Riegger†**

**Original lighting by Jean Rosenthal**

**Restaged by Gary Galbraith**

**Premiere: December 20, 1936, Guild Theatre, New York City**

“Steps in the Street,” from the 1936 *Chronicle*, was a response to contemporary problems threatening the world, the rise of fascism in Europe. This dance required a new vocabulary, one that Graham had been developing over the previous decade. The female body is cast as an instrument of force, joints, muscles and sinews at the ready. Dancers in “Steps in the Street” are prepared to speak out with an expressive vocabulary in order to make an impact upon a modern world. —Ellen Graff

*Case Western Reserve University's Dance Department Dancers:*

**Megan Gregory**

**Colette Kuntz, Lucia Mancha, Rafaella Ortiz Cárdenas, Laura Sarafian, Lilly Stanley,  
Baylee Van Patten, Akhila Venkat, Ziyue Wei, Maizy Windham**

“Steps in the Street” reconstructed in 1989 by Yuriko and Martha Graham, from the Julien Bryan film.

†Finale from *New Dance*, Opus 18b, used by arrangement with Associated Music Publishers, Inc., publisher and copyright owner. Additional orchestrations by Stanley Sussman.



# CAVE

**Choreography by** Hofesh Shechter

**Creative Producer** Daniil Simkin

**Music by** Âme† and Hofesh Shechter

**Costume Design by** Caleb Krieg

**Lighting Design by** Yi-Chung Chen

**Choreography Assistant** Kim Kohlmann

**World Premiere: April 6, 2022, New York City Center**

**Ane Arrieta Laurel Dalley Smith Meagan King**

**Lloyd Knight Antonio Leone Marzia Memoli**

**Ethan Palma Jai Perez Anne Souder Leslie Andrea Williams Xin Ying**

CAVE was made possible with a significant commissioning grant from The O'Donnell-Green Music and Dance Foundation.

Major support for CAVE was provided by Sharon Patrick, the Clayton-Royer Family Fund, Monica Voldstad and Jeff & Susan Campbell and Barbara Goldstein.

Production support was provided by Vassar College.

Co-Producing support provided by Studio Simkin and Sharing Spaces.

†Samples of *Fiori* by Âme; Sample of *The Witness* by Âme & Karyn. Frank Wiedemann and Kristian Beyer are members of the German collecting society GEMA and published by Innervisions GmbH.

## NOTES ON THE REPERTORY

### APPALACHIAN SPRING (1944)

In 1942, Martha Graham received a commission from the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation for a new ballet to be premiered at the Library of Congress. Aaron Copland was to compose the score. Graham called the new dance *Appalachian Spring*, after a poem by Hart Crane, but for Copland it always remained “Ballet for Martha.” Choreographed as the war in Europe was drawing to end, it captured the imagination of Americans who were beginning to believe in a more prosperous future, a future in which men and women would be united again. With its simple tale of a new life in a new land, the dance embodied hope. Critics called *Appalachian Spring* “shining and joyous,” “a testimony to the simple fineness of the human spirit.” The ballet tells the story of a young couple and their wedding day; there is a Husbandman, his Bride, a Pioneering Woman, a Preacher, and his Followers.

In a letter to Aaron Copland, Graham wrote that she wanted the dance to be “a legend of American living, like a bone structure, the inner frame that holds together a people.” As Copland later recalled, “After Martha gave me this bare outline, I knew certain crucial things – that it had to do with the pioneer American spirit, with youth and spring, with optimism and hope. I thought about that in combination with the special quality of Martha’s own personality, her talents as a dancer, what she gave off and the basic simplicity of her art. Nobody else seems anything like Martha, and she’s unquestionably very American.” Themes from American folk culture can be found throughout the dance. Copland uses a Shaker tune, “Simple Gifts,” in the second half of his luminous score, while Graham’s choreography includes square dance patterns, skips and paddle turns and curtsies, even a grand right and left. The set by Isamu Noguchi features a Shaker rocking chair. *Appalachian Spring* is perhaps Martha Graham’s most optimistic ballet, yet it does contain a dark side. The fire and

brimstone Preacher and his condemnation of earthly pleasures recalls the repressive weight of our Puritan heritage, while the solemn presence of the Pioneering Woman hints at the problems of raising families in remote and isolated communities. In this newly cleared land life was not simple, and Graham's vision pays homage to that as well. —Ellen Graff

### WE THE PEOPLE

Premiered in February 2024, this dance of 21st Century Americana references and reverberates with our history. Its new score by Rhiannon Giddens, as arranged by Gabe Witcher, offers the historic sound of American folk music. While the choreography by Jamar Roberts is very much of today and in counterpoint to the music. The choreographer has said, "*We the People* is equal parts protest and lament, speculating on the ways in which America does not always live up to its promise. Against the backdrop of traditional American music, *We the People* hopes to serve as a reminder that the power for collective change belongs to the people."

### LAMENTATION (1930)

*Lamentation* premiered in New York City on January 8, 1930, at Maxine Elliot's Theater, to music by the Hungarian composer Zoltán Kodály. The dance is performed almost entirely from a seated position, with the dancer encased in a tube of purple jersey. The diagonals and tensions formed by the dancer's body struggling within the material create a moving sculpture, a portrait which presents the very essence of grief. The figure in this dance is neither human nor animal, neither male nor female: it is grief itself.

According to Martha Graham, after one performance of the work she was visited by a woman in the audience who had recently seen her child killed in an accident. Viewing *Lamentation* enabled her to grieve, as she realized that "grief was a dignified and valid emotion and that I could yield to it without shame."

### STEPS IN THE STREET (1936)

"Steps in the Street" premiered at the Guild Theater in New York City on December 20, 1936 as one section of a larger work, *Chronicle*. The dance was a response to the menace of fascism in Europe. Earlier that year, Graham had refused an invitation to take part in the 1936 Olympic Games in Germany, stating: "I would find it impossible to dance in Germany at the present time. So many artists whom I respect and admire have been persecuted, have been deprived of the right to work for ridiculous and unsatisfactory reasons, that I should consider it impossible to identify myself, by accepting the invitation, with the regime that has made such things possible. In addition, some of my concert group would not be welcomed in Germany" (a reference to the fact that many members of her group were Jewish). "Steps in the Street," subtitled "Devastation — Homelessness — Exile," depicts the isolation and desolation that war leaves in its wake.

### CAVE

This high-energy work by Hofesh Shechter emerged out of an idea brought to the Graham Company by the international dance star Daniil Simkin. Daniil was interested in taking the dance that is part of the techno club scene to a new level and finding a way to integrate choreographed movement into a Rave style event. As a prelude to this larger idea, Hofesh Shechter was invited to create a dance for the proscenium stage for the Graham dancers. The result is a visceral collective movement experience, with a powerful, swirling shared kinetic energy.



# ABOUT ♦ the company

## ABOUT MARTHA GRAHAM

Martha Graham has had a deep and lasting impact on American art and culture. She single-handedly defined contemporary dance as a uniquely American art form, which the nation has in turn shared with the world. Crossing artistic boundaries, she collaborated with and commissioned work from the leading visual artists, musicians and designers of her day, including sculptor Isamu Noguchi and composers Aaron Copland, Samuel Barber and Gian Carlo Menotti.

Graham's groundbreaking style grew from her experimentation with the elemental movements of contraction and release. By focusing on the basic activities of the human form, she enlivened the body with raw, electric emotion. The sharp, angular and direct movements of her technique were a dramatic departure from the predominant style of the time.

Graham influenced generations of choreographers that included Merce Cunningham, Paul Taylor and Twyla Tharp, altering the scope of dance. Classical ballet dancers Margot Fonteyn, Rudolf Nureyev and Mikhail Baryshnikov sought her out to broaden their artistry. Artists of all genres were eager to study and work with Graham. She taught actors including Bette Davis, Kirk Douglas, Madonna, Liza Minnelli, Gregory Peck, Tony Randall, Eli Wallach, Anne Jackson and Joanne Woodward to utilize their bodies as expressive instruments.

During her long and illustrious career, Graham created 181 dance compositions. During the Bicentennial she was granted the United States' highest civilian honor, The Medal of Freedom. In 1998, *TIME* magazine named her the "Dancer of the Century." The first dancer to perform at the White House and to act as a cultural ambassador abroad, she captured the spirit of a nation. "No artist is ahead of his time," she said. "He is his time. It is just that the others are behind the time."

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

The Martha Graham Dance Company has been a leader in the evolving art form of modern dance since its founding in 1926. It is both the oldest dance company in the United States and the oldest integrated dance company.

Today, the Company is embracing a new programming vision that showcases masterpieces by Graham alongside newly commissioned works by contemporary artists. With programs that unite the work of choreographers across time within a rich historical and thematic narrative, the Company is actively working to create new platforms for contemporary dance and multiple points of access for audiences.

Since its inception, the Martha Graham Dance Company has received international acclaim from audiences in more than 50 countries throughout North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The Company has performed at the Metropolitan Opera House, Carnegie Hall, the Paris Opera House, Covent Garden and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, as well as at the base of the Great Pyramids in Egypt and in the ancient Odeon of Herodes Atticus theater on the Acropolis in Athens. In addition, the Company has also produced several award-winning films broadcast on PBS and around the world.

Though Martha Graham herself is the best-known alumna of her company, the Company has provided a training ground for some of modern dance's most celebrated performers and choreographers. Former members of the Company include Merce Cunningham, Erick Hawkins, Paul Taylor, John Butler and Glen Tetley. Among celebrities who have joined the Company in performance are Mikhail Baryshnikov, Margot Fonteyn, Rudolf Nureyev, Maya Plisetskaya, Tiler Peck, Misty Copeland, Herman Cornejo and Aurelie Dupont.

In recent years, the Company has challenged expectations and experimented with a wide range of offerings beyond its mainstage performances. It has created a series of intimate in-studio events, forged unusual creative partnerships with the likes of SITI Company, Performa, the New Museum, Barney's and Siracusa's Greek Theater Festival (to name a few); created substantial digital offerings with Google Arts and Culture, YouTube and Cennarium; and created a model for reaching new audiences through social media.

The astonishing list of artists who have created works for the Graham dancers in the last decade reads like a catalog of must-see choreographers:

Kyle Abraham, Aszure Barton, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Lucinda Childs, Marie Chouinard, Michelle Dorrance, Nacho Duato, Mats Ek, Andonis Foniadakis, Liz Gerring, Larry Keigwin, Michael Kliën, Pontus Lidberg, Lil Buck, Lar Lubovitch, Josie Moseley, Richard Move, Bular-eyang Pagarlawa, Annie-B Parson, Yvonne Rainer, Sonya Tayeh, Doug Varone, Luca Vegetti, Gwen Welliver and Robert Wilson.

The current Company dancers hail from around the world and, while grounded in their Graham core training, can also slip into the style of contemporary choreographers like a second skin, bringing technical brilliance and artistic nuance to all they do — from brand new works to Graham classics and those from early pioneers such as Isadora Duncan, Jane Dudley, Anna Sokolow and Mary Wigman.

“Some of the most skilled and powerful dancers you can ever hope to see,” reported *The Washington Post* last year. “One of the great companies of the world,” says *The New York Times*, while *Los Angeles Times* notes, “They seem able to do anything, and to make it look easy as well as poetic.”

## BIOGRAPHIES



**JANET EILBER** (*Artistic Director*) has been the Company's artistic director since 2005. Her direction has focused on creating new forms of audience access to Martha Graham's masterworks. These initiatives

include contextual programming, educational and community partnerships, use of new media, commissions from today's top choreographers and creative events such as the *Lamentation Variations*. Earlier in her career, as a principal dancer with the Company, Ms. Eilber worked closely with Martha Graham. She danced many of Graham's greatest roles, had roles created for her by Graham and was directed by Graham in most of the major roles of the repertoire. She soloed at the White House, was partnered by Rudolf Nureyev, starred in three segments of *Dance in America*; and has since taught, lectured and directed Graham ballets internationally. Apart from her work with Graham, Ms. Eilber has performed in films, on television and on Broadway, directed by such greats as Agnes deMille and Bob Fosse. She has received four Lester Horton Awards for her reconstruction and performance of seminal

American modern dance. Ms. Eilber has served as Director of Arts Education for the Dana Foundation, guiding the foundation's support for Teaching Artist training, and contributing regularly to its arts education publications. She is a Trustee Emeritus of the Interlochen Center for the Arts. Ms. Eilber is married to screenwriter/director John Warren, with whom she has two daughters, Madeline and Eva.

**BEN SCHULTZ** (*Rehearsal Director*) joined the Company in 2009 and serves as rehearsal director for the company. He's danced lead roles including King Hades in *Clytemnestra*, Jason in *Cave of the Heart*, and Shaman in *The Rite Of Spring*. He premiered Martha Graham's work in Russia performing *Errand into the Maze* with prima ballerina Diana Vishneva at the Mariinsky Theatre, Saint Petersburg. He's also performed with Buglisi Dance Theater, Hannah Kahn Dance Company, and The Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble. Currently he's on staff at both The Martha Graham School and The Alvin Ailey School teaching the Martha Graham technique for pre-professional students and divisions.



**LLOYD KNIGHT** joined the Company in 2005, and performs the major male roles of the Graham repertory, including in *Appalachian Spring*, *Embattled Garden*, *Night Journey* and many others. *Dance*

*Magazine* named him one of the “Top 25 Dancers to Watch” in 2010, and one of the best performers of 2015. Mr. Knight has starred with ballet greats Wendy Whelan and Misty Copeland in signature Graham duets, and has had roles created for him by such renowned artists as Nacho Duato and Pam Tanowitz. He is currently a principal guest artist for The Royal Ballet of Flanders directed by Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui. Born in England and raised in Miami, he trained at Miami Conservatory of Ballet and New World School of the Arts.



**XIN YING** joined the Company in 2011, and is a *Dance Magazine* cover star. She performs The Chosen One in *Rite of Spring*; Graham's own roles including in *Hérodiade*, *Errand into the Maze*, *Chronicle* and *Cave of the Heart*.

She has been featured in works created for the Company by Pontus Lidberg, Annie-B Parson, Hofesh Shechter, Kyle Abraham, Maxine Doyle and Bobbi Jene Smith. She is also a choreographer and currently getting her MFA at NYU Tisch.



**LESLIE ANDREA WILLIAMS** grew up in Raleigh, North Carolina. She earned her BFA from The Juilliard School and joined the Company in 2015. Williams performs iconic Graham solos such as *Lamentation* and *Deep*

*Song*. Her expansive repertoire of roles includes *Medea in Cave of the Heart* and, notably, the lead in *Chronicle*, which was highlighted on *The New York Times* "Best Dance of 2019" list. Outside of Graham, Williams serves as a board member of the theater company Off-Brand Opera.



**ANNE SOUDER** joined the company in 2015, and performs Martha Graham's own roles in *Dark Meadow Suite*, *Chronicle*, *Deep Song* and *Ekstasis*. Roles have also been created for her by luminaries including Marie

Chouinard, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Maxine Doyle and Bobbi Jene Smith. Ms. Souder began her training in Maryville, Tennessee, and graduated from the Ailey/Fordham BFA program with a double major in dance and theology while performing works by Alvin Ailey, Ron K. Brown and many others. She was also a member of Graham 2 and awarded a Dizzy Feet Foundation scholarship.



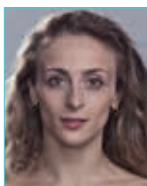
**LAUREL DALLEY SMITH** joined the company in 2015, and enjoys performing principal roles in *Clytemnestra*, *Errand*, *Appalachian Spring* and *Chronicle*, among others; as

well as new creations by Hofesh Shechter, Jamar Roberts, Pam Tanowitz, Bobbie Jene Smith, Pontus Lidberg, Lar Lubovitch and Lucinda Childs. She had the privilege of revising Agnes De Mille's title role of *The Cowgirl in Rodeo*. Laurel guests internationally, working closely with Olivier award-winning choreographer Kim Brandstrup, award-winning Yorke Dance Project and had the privilege of dancing for the late Sir Robert Cohan.



**SO YOUNG AN** is a native of South Korea, who joined the Company in 2016, and dances featured roles in Graham ballets, as well as new works. Ms. An is the recipient of the International Arts Award and

the Grand Prize at the Korea National Ballet Grand Prix. She has danced with Korean National Ballet Company, Seoul Performing Arts Company and Buglisi Dance Theatre. She has also performed works by Yuri Grigorovich, Jean-Christophe Maillot, Mats Ek, Patricia Ruanne and Samantha Dunster.



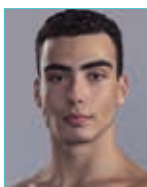
**MARZIA MEMOLI** is from Palermo, Italy, and joined the Martha Graham Dance Company in 2016, performing leading roles in Graham's *The Rite of Spring*, *Chronicle*, *Cave of the Heart* and *Deep Song*. She has

also danced works by Hofesh Shechter, Pam Tanowitz, Lar Lubovitch, Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Jamar Roberts, Bobbi Jean Smith and, recently, Benjamin Millepied. In 2022, she performed Twyla Tharp's *In the Upper Room* and *Nine Sinatra Songs* at New York City Center, later joining Tharp's 60th Anniversary Diamond Jubilee tour. Memoli is a recipient of the Fini International Rising Star Award.



**DEVIN LOH** is from Fanwood, NJ, holds a BFA from Purchase College and is a Bert Terborgh Dance Award recipient. Ms. Loh joined Graham 2 in 2019, and the Company in 2021. She has

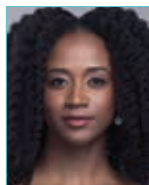
performed Graham classics and works by Jamar Roberts, Hofesh Shechter and Sonya Tayeh with the Company. Ms. Loh is a certified Graham Technique teacher, and is the 2025 Distinguished Graduate of UCAPA High School for passing Martha's legacy to the next generation.



**ANTONIO LEONE** is a native of Italy, and graduated from the Rudra Bejart School in Switzerland. In 2021 he joined Graham 2, and the main Company in 2022. He performs featured roles in *Errand into the Maze*, *Diver-*



sion of *Angels* and in *Appalachian Spring* by Martha Graham, as well as roles in commissioned works by Agnes DeMille, Sonya Tayeh, Hofesh Shechter, Jamar Roberts, Baye and Asa and Yin Yue. He is the first male dancer with CR Dance and a Pearl Lang Award recipient for Excellence in Performance.



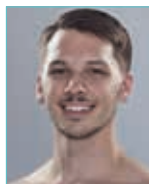
**MEAGAN KING** of Brooklyn, NY, is an Ailey/Fordham BFA and LaGuardia High School alumna. Ms. King formerly danced with Ailey II and received features in *Vogue* magazine and *Dance Spirit*, as well as on *The*

*Today Show*, PIX11, NY12 and *Good Day Sacramento*. She is a Princess Grace Award nominee and named BLOCH Young Artist. She has performed at Holland Dance Festival, Jacob's Pillow Contemporary Program, and choreographed for *Women/Creatate!* This is her second season with the company.



**ANE ARRIETA** is from Rhode Island, and is a dual citizen of Spain and the U.S. She earned a BFA from the Hartt School, receiving the Outstanding Senior Award. She's danced with Newport Contemporary Ballet,

Graham 2 and Buglisi Dance Theater. At Graham, she's worked with Jamar Roberts and Baye and Asa, and has performed soloist roles in Graham masterpieces *Cave of the Heart* and *Appalachian Spring*.



**ZACHARY JEPSEN-TOY** was raised in southern Wisconsin, and is an alumnus of The Juilliard School where he received his BFA in dance. He has had the pleasure of performing pieces by Alvin Ailey, Mar-

tha Graham, Jacquelyn Buglisi, Donald McKayle, Paul Taylor, Ohad Naharin and many other choreographers. Before Juilliard, Zachary attended The

Chicago Academy for the Arts where he studied under Randy Duncan and Patrick Simoniello. This is his second season with the Company.



**AMANDA MOREIRA** (*New Dancer*), originally from Roxbury, NJ, graduated from Marymount Manhattan College. She has assisted in dance conventions with Deviate Dance and has apprenticed with Parsons

Dance. She has performed works choreographed by Pascal Rioult, Twyla Tharp, Sidra Bell, Jessica Lang, May O'Donnell and Jennifer Archibald, among others. After graduating, she joined Graham 2. This is her second season with the company.



**JAI PEREZ** (*New Dancer*) is from Harlem, NY. He started his dance journey at the National Dance Institute, where he cultivated a love for movement. He continued his training at the Ailey School,

then at SUNY Purchase, where he received a BFA in dance. He has performed works by Hofesh Schechter, Jamar Roberts and Ronald K. Brown. Jai has performed with Buglisi Dance Theater and A.I.M. by Kyle Abraham. This is Jai's second season with the company.



**ETHAN PALMA** (*New Dancer*) is originally from Appleton, Wisconsin. Ethan received a BFA in dance from Marymount Manhattan College. At Marymount, Ethan has performed in works of many choreographers

including Martha Graham, Jenn Freeman, Chanel Dasilva and Pedro Ruiz. Ethan danced in the 2024 MET Opera's *Ainadamar* and is currently in his first season with the Martha Graham Dance Company.

# STAFF • Martha Graham Dance Company

## Staff

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If you or someone you know has ever performed with the Martha Graham Dance Company or attended classes at the Martha Graham School, please send us names, addresses, telephone numbers and approximate dates of membership. We will add you to our alumni mailing list and keep you apprised of alumni events and benefits. Call +1.212.229.9200 or e-mail [info@marthagraham.org](mailto:info@marthagraham.org).

The Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance is a not-for-profit corporation, supported by contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations, and government agencies.

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For more information, visit [www.marthagraham.org](http://www.marthagraham.org)

# ABOUT • DANCECleveland

**DANCECleveland aspires to be a national model for how a presenting organization serves its community, leveraging the world's best modern and contemporary dance to inspire and educate audiences, local dancers, and community members.**

One of only a handful of presenters in the nation dedicated solely to the presentation of dance, DANCECleveland brings renowned modern and contemporary dance companies from around the world to perform on the stages of Northeast Ohio through their annual dance series. DANCECleveland is A COMMISSIONER of new dance works, bringing up-and-coming choreographers from across the nation to be inspired by our community as they create new dance pieces; AN EDUCATOR through Read to Learn... Dance to Move, an early childhood program that brings professional dancers into preschool and kindergarten classrooms to inspire creativity through literacy and movement; A RESOURCE to the dance community by offering free dance classes with visiting world class dancers and directors for local dancers of all ages and abilities; A NATIONAL LEADER recognized by organizations such as Dance/USA for their innovative audience engagement programs, pre- and post-show activities; and A VISIONARY by collaborating with the region's leading arts, cultural and educational organizations to create co-presenting relationships.

**The 2025-2026 DANCECleveland Performance Series continues with our final performance of the season, YY Dance Company April 25, 2026. Tickets are on sale now! Learn more at [DANCECleveland.org](https://DANCECleveland.org). Be sure to like DANCECleveland on Facebook and follow them on Instagram @dancecleveland.**

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To be a leader in placemaking, the advancement of arts education, and the presentation and production of performing arts experiences.

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DANCECleveland is dancing confidently into the future, emboldened by our endowment, The Advancing Dance Legacy Fund. This Organizational Fund of the Cleveland Foundation, established in 2018, provides donors the satisfaction of knowing that their investment in the future of modern and contemporary dance in Northeast Ohio will be carefully managed to grow over time, serving tens of thousands of dancers, dance makers and dance enthusiasts for generations to come. To learn more, call Theresa Remick, Executive Director, at 216-991-9000. **Thank you to our generous Legacy Fund donors:**

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By phone: 216-991-9000 By mail: DANCECleveland, PO Box 18021, Cleveland, OH 44118

Online: [dancecleveland.org](http://dancecleveland.org)

**Thank you for your generosity!**

## A Change in History?

One of many fascinating items to be found in the book *Playhouse Square: An Entertaining History* deals with the infamous John Wilkes Booth. Booth performed locally at the old Academy of Music, which was one of the first drama schools in the country and was located at 1371 W. 6th Street.

It was at that Cleveland Academy where he would play his last role prior to performing at Washington D.C.'s Ford Theatre where he would assassinate President Lincoln. (Might history have been changed if the Academy had held over Booth's play for an extended run?)

## There Goes the Neighborhood!

The 1870s ushered in the golden age for Euclid Avenue — known as Millionaire's Row — as the street became a stretch of grand mansions, with grounds often extending as far as Lake Erie, and stately elm trees arching over the avenue.

But by Cleveland's Centennial in 1896, Euclid Avenue residents were likely muttering, Well, there goes the neighborhood! as the dirt street was paved with sandstone, and businessmen began to buy up and tear down the mansions and towering elms to make way for commercial ventures.

Streetcar lines on the once totally residential stretch hastened the creation of a commercial district, forcing wealthy families to move even farther east on Euclid Avenue. In another 30 years, the district would see the birth of the five main theaters that would eventually become Playhouse Square.

## Basketball on the KeyBank State stage?

The stage of the KeyBank State Theatre is so large that a typical high school gymnasium (complete with basketball court and bleachers) could easily fit on stage. As another point of comparison, three of the Mimi Ohio Theatre stages could fit onto the State's stage.

## The Mural Above the Fireplace

Above the fireplace at the rear of the KeyBank State Theatre auditorium, an original mural hangs

despite its near-tragic loss. Removed from the wall in the early 1970s prior to the scheduled demolition of the venue, the mural eventually turned up in the basement of a piano store and was repurchased by Playhouse Square for \$200.

The recovered mural was badly torn, having originally been painted on burlap then glued to the wall. The challenge of restoring the artwork fell to the Theater District's Bonfoey Company. Artisans sanded the glue from the burlap and attached the cleaned mural to canvas via beeswax.

The next step was to clean and restore the work where needed. A stretcher for the canvas had to be custom-made. To eliminate tears and wrinkles, the stretcher was designed to expand and contract with the theater's climactic changes and held together with springs (no nails or screws). It took Bonfoey employees 18 months to restore the painting at a cost of \$8,500.

Although the creator of this mural is unknown, it is suspected to be Italian artist Sampitrotti, who had painted three murals for the original Mimi Ohio Theatre lobby. (Those murals were later destroyed in the Ohio's 1964 lobby fire.)

## World's Longest Lobby Explained

In 1920 as the Loew's chain anticipated building in the area that would come to be known as Playhouse Square, it was discovered there wasn't sufficient room to build two theaters side by side in the available space.

Since it was important that the proposed theater marquees be located on Euclid Avenue, an architectural plan was devised. Even though the KeyBank State Theatre would be completed and open 21 months before the Connor Palace, it was decided to build the KeyBank State behind the Connor Palace. This led to the construction of the KeyBank State's 320-foot-long lobby, reported to be the longest theater lobby in the world. The Mimi Ohio Theatre would then be built on the other side of the KeyBank State, giving all three theaters the desired Euclid Avenue marquee frontage.

## What Would It Cost to Build Them Today?

Even though the Connor Palace is not the largest of the Playhouse Square venues, it was the most costly to build (\$3.5 million) by the time it premiered



on Nov. 6, 1922. The largest theater, the KeyBank State, (opened Feb. 5, 1921) was built at a cost of \$2 million; the Mimi Ohio (Feb. 14, 1921) also cost \$2 million, and the Allen's costs totaled \$1.9 million when it opened April 1, 1921. (Exact building costs for the Hanna Theatre — which opened March 28, 1921 — have yet to be uncovered.) In 1977, it was estimated that it would cost \$75 million to recreate the Connor Palace.

### A Phoenix from the Ashes

In 1964, the Mimi Ohio Theatre lobby and auditorium were destroyed by fire. When the fledgling Playhouse Square organization restored the spaces in 1982, funding and time constraints made it possible only for the auditorium to be fully restored. Thanks to a gift from the George Gund Foundation, the lobby was re-created in its original splendor in 2016. You can watch a documentary about the project, "Restoring the Legacy," on Playhouse Square's YouTube channel.

### Re-Creating History

We call the completed Mimi Ohio Theatre George Gund Foundation Lobby project a "re-creation" rather than a restoration. Why? There was nothing left to restore after a 1964 fire destroyed the space. To reproduce the lobby's original 1921 splendor, architects, restoration specialists and Playhouse Square staff conducted exhaustive

research of the original drawings by architect Thomas Lamb, photo archives and a few remaining bits of ornamental plaster detail to gain a thorough understanding of the space and inform the plans for re-creating the lobby.

### Broadway to Buildings

Where do the arts and real estate go hand-in-hand? At Playhouse Square, of course! As the theaters began to be restored in the early 1980s, it was thought that developers would step in to build and open businesses around them. When that didn't happen, Playhouse Square began to steward development of the surrounding neighborhood. In 1999, Playhouse Square became the first performing arts center with a real estate services division, which manages the more than 2.6 million square feet of property owned by the organization and another three million square feet outside the theater district. Other performing arts centers have since looked to our expertise as a model.

### Building Cleveland

The original builder of the Allen and Hanna Theatres — John Gill & Sons Co. — also built Judson Manor (known then as Wade Park Manor), the Federal Reserve Bank and the Terminal Tower.

### Keeping Up the KeyBank State Theatre

First restored more than 30 years ago, the KeyBank State Theatre was repainted from the street to the proscenium in 2015. The new, cohesive color palette showcases the beauty and craftsmanship of the nearly 100-year-old theater. It took 25 painters 12,500 hours and 595 gallons of paint in 15 different colors to complete the project, which also included 6000 sheets of new metal leafing in the auditorium dome and the application of a historically accurate wall-covering design. While the theater was dark, its lighting fixtures and restrooms received major upgrades.

### What's in a Logo?

The Playhouse Square logo we use today — a tilted burgundy square with a capital P in its center — was introduced in 2008 to capture the enduring spirit of entertainment and excitement. Each of the logo's graphic elements has meaning: the exclamation point with a star in the "P" symboliz-

es excitement and innovation; the swirl in the “P” represents creativity and forward motion; the tilted square symbolizes Playhouse Square as a destination; and the burgundy color gives nod to the color scheme of our historic theaters.

## Going Green

While red is the color most often associated with theaters, Playhouse Square is making efforts to go “green.” You will find receptacles for recycling paper, plastic and cans throughout the complex. Lighting fixtures are being switched to LED for increased energy efficiency. And the Playhouse Square administrative office is making strides towards going paperless.

## Patterns in Plaster

As you walk through the theaters, you may notice various patterns within the plaster decoration. Common are dentil, lamb tongue, rope and rosettes. Other patterns you may see have been associated with certain meanings since they were first used hundreds or even thousands of years ago, such as the acanthus leaf (immortality), egg and dart (life and death), and the palm leaf, first used in ancient Egypt as a reference to the Nile River. In the KeyBank State Theatre, if you look closely and carefully, you can find ox skulls, which were believed to offer protection from natural elements. And throughout the theaters, you will find griffins, mythical creatures thought of as guardians.

## The “Blue Urn”

On the mezzanine level of the Connor Palace lobby, you’ll find a cobalt blue urn sitting on a marble base. The urn, weighing 325 pounds, was made in Sevres, France before WWI. It is said that its twin resides in the Louvre Museum.

## The Show That Saved Playhouse Square

After seeing a performance of *Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris* at Cleveland State University, Ray Shepardson — the man who was the driving force behind the saving of Playhouse Square’s theaters — decided to stage the show in the KeyBank State Theatre lobby for three weeks. Clevelanders flocked to the performances and the show’s run extended to more than two years, proving that audiences would return to Playhouse Square and to downtown.

## In Residence

Playhouse Square is proud to be the home of eight resident companies: The City Club of Cleveland, Cleveland Ballet, Cleveland International Film Festival, Cleveland Play House, Cleveland State University Department of Theatre and Dance, DANCECleveland, Great Lakes Theater and Tri-C JazzFest.

## You Can Find Us on YouTube

There’s lots to see on the Playhouse Square YouTube channel: show content; interviews; videos about our education programs and what it’s like to be a RedCoat; documentaries about our history, the re-creation of the Mimi Ohio Gund Foundation Lobby, and our 2021 reopening...and more!

## A League of Our Own

Playhouse Square is a member of The Broadway League, the national trade association for the Broadway industry. Formed in 1930, members include theater owners and operators, producers, presenters, general managers and suppliers throughout North America.

## Marquees on Display

The Playhouse Square District is shining brighter than ever before with our magnificent marquees and outdoor digital signage. The marquees’ designs were inspired by each historic theater with the ceiling of each marquee capturing elements from the grand ceiling of its respective theater. The marquees are equipped with localized sound to welcome audiences with thematic soundtracks, as well as sustainable, energy-efficient LED lighting that can complement shows, holidays and other themes. Guests can catch the Marquee Moment presented by GE Lighting, a Savant company, every night before entering and leaving their performances at the theaters.

## The Playhouse Square Chandelier

The Playhouse Square Chandelier at the intersection of E. 14th and Euclid Ave. is the largest outdoor chandelier in North America with 4200 crystals. The Chandelier is generously presented by GE Lighting, a Savant company.



# GUEST SERVICES • Playhouse Square



## Guest Assistance

For questions or service that may provide a quality, entertaining experience, please see the House Manager on duty. A RedCoat usher can direct you to their office location.

## Smoking Policy

Smoking, including electronic smoking or “vaping,” is not permitted indoors at Playhouse Square.

## We Love Hearing From Our Guests

Your feedback is important. For matters that are not immediate or for additional questions you may have, please access our online comment form at [playhousesquare.org/contact-us](http://playhousesquare.org/contact-us). We read and share all comments with the staff and meet often to discuss how we can improve upon your experience at Playhouse Square.

## Beware of Ticket Scalpers

Buy your tickets **ONLY** from the Playhouse Square Ticket Office, at [playhousesquare.org](http://playhousesquare.org), by

phone at 216-241-6000 or your licensed group/travel leader. (We cannot guarantee validity or admittance for tickets purchased elsewhere, nor can we issue replacement tickets if they are lost or stolen). Help us keep ticket prices affordable and fair for everyone.

## Photography and Recording

Taking photos and recording audio and/or video of the performance are strictly prohibited.

## Mobile Devices

The experience of a live performance can be ruined by the interruption of ringtones, vibrating phones or conversation. The magic of a darkened theater can be disrupted by the light of someone text messaging as well. Please be considerate to others and remember to turn off your cell phone for the duration of the show.

## Follow Us!

Follow Playhouse Square on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X (Twitter) and YouTube.



## Thank You

Playhouse Square gratefully acknowledges the people of Cuyahoga County for their historical support to theater restoration, upkeep and programming, as well as through their ongoing contributions through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture.

# FEB./MAR. • at Playhouse Square

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>FEBRUARY</b>		Suffs	Suffs	Suffs	Suffs	Suffs
Billy Goats Gruff & Other Tales	Playhouse Square Public Tours				Flanagan's Wake The Heart of Robin Hood	Flanagan's Wake The Heart of Robin Hood
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Suffs The Heart of Robin Hood Primary Trust		Suffs	Suffs The Heart of Robin Hood Primary Trust	Suffs The Heart of Robin Hood Primary Trust Gregory Porter Chris Fleming	Suffs Flanagan's Wake The Heart of Robin Hood Primary Trust Jerry Seinfeld	Suffs Flanagan's Wake The Heart of Robin Hood Primary Trust
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Suffs The Heart of Robin Hood Primary Trust Urban Vibe Presents Valentine's Soul Jams		Suffs	Suffs The Heart of Robin Hood Primary Trust	Suffs The Heart of Robin Hood Primary Trust	Suffs Flanagan's Wake The Heart of Robin Hood Primary Trust CSU Dance Concert	Suffs Flanagan's Wake The Heart of Robin Hood Primary Trust CSU Dance Concert Playhouse Square Public Tours
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Suffs The Heart of Robin Hood CSU Dance Concert		Primary Trust Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit	Primary Trust Epiphany A Conversation with Kamala Harris	Primary Trust Epiphany	Primary Trust Epiphany	Primary Trust Epiphany Jump Back Ball 2026: BLOOM
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
<b>MARCH</b>		The Choir of Man	The Choir of Man Epiphany Stardew Valley: Symphony of Seasons	The Choir of Man Epiphany Rachmaninoff and the Tsar	The Choir of Man Flanagan's Wake Epiphany Rachmaninoff / Tsar Hollywood Blockbusters feat. Neil Zaza	The Choir of Man Flanagan's Wake Epiphany Rachmaninoff/Tsar Tortoise & Hare: The Next Gen Kathleen Madigan
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Lucy Darling Primary Trust						
The Choir of Man Rachmaninoff and the Tsar The Adventures of Tortoise & Hare: The Next Gen		Water For Elephants Attack on Titan: Beyond the Walls Tour	Water For Elephants Rachmaninoff and the Tsar	Water For Elephants Rachmaninoff and the Tsar	Water For Elephants Flanagan's Wake Rachmaninoff and the Tsar Chelsea Handler	Water For Elephants Flanagan's Wake Rachmaninoff and the Tsar Lords of The Sound/ Music of Hans Zimmer
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Water For Elephants Rachmaninoff and the Tsar		Water For Elephants	Water For Elephants	Water For Elephants	Water For Elephants Flanagan's Wake Handel's Messiah Macbeth	Water For Elephants Flanagan's Wake Handel's Messiah Macbeth Playhouse Square Public Tours
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Water For Elephants Handel's Messiah Macbeth		Water For Elephants Mae Martin	Water For Elephants Macbeth	Water For Elephants Macbeth	Water For Elephants Flanagan's Wake Macbeth Tom Papa	Water For Elephants Flanagan's Wake Macbeth Ballet Unbound
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Water For Elephants Macbeth						
29	30	31				

Shows are announced every week. Sign up at [playhousesquare.org](http://playhousesquare.org) to get advance notices by email!



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