



A RAINBOW OF MUSICAL COLOR
GARTH FAGAN RETURNS TO THE JOYCE THEATER WITH
WORLD PREMIERE OF "DANCECOLLAGEFORROMIE"
AND A SERIES OF REVIVALS AND CLASSICS,
NOVEMBER 11-23

Maybe Bach. Bob Marley, perhaps. Telemann. John Cage for a change. Upstairs to jazz, zip across to classical, fly around the corner to blues, dash downstairs to urban folk. You could wear your shoes out trying to keep pace with Garth Fagan as he hunts for music for a new dance. A single dance can leap across conventional boundaries and circle through centuries. Take "DANCECOLLAGEFORROMIE," the world premiere that Garth Fagan Dance will present at The Joyce Theater, November 11–23. The music is a compilation of Shostakovich, Villa-Lobos and Ferd "Jelly Roll" Morton. But then again, consider his movement, a seamless mix of modern, classical ballet, African, West Indian and Afro-American.

Dedicated to Romare Bearden, "DANCECOLLAGEFORROMIE," is divided in three sections, each dealing with a different aspect of Bearden's work and personality. The first is 'Matter and Materiel,' which explores shape, movement, texture and color (the raw materials of collage). The second, 'Detail: Down Home Also,' is based on one of Fagan's own Bearden collages, presently part of the *Art of Romare Bearden* exhibit at the National Gallery of Art in Washington. The dance concludes with 'Conjur Man,' an exploration of some of Bearden's collages, his favorite imagery, tones and the artist's love of jazz.

The Joyce season also promises Fagan's own parade of hits: Among the dances will be last year's success story, "Translation Transition," set to music by the Jazz Jamaica All Stars, which explores the similarities, differences and meeting points between American jazz and the traditional music of Jamaica (ska, reggae and mento). The first section uses a ska-based score by Clement Dodd. Thirty-three year Fagan

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veteran Steve Humphrey and relative newcomer Keisha Laren Clarke lead an ensemble of six in 'Two,' the second section, which is choreographed to a reggae arrangement of a composition by Wayne Shorter. The third and final section, 'One Love,' set to a score by Harry Johnson, begins with an adagio solo and duet that sets the atmosphere for the ensemble performance that follows.

"Griot New York," set to an original score by Wynton Marsalis, became an instant classic at its 1991 premiere. Sections of the work, a glorious tapestry in its rich synthesis of African traditions with American contemporary culture, will be performed. The epic work is told from the point of view of a "griot," or a historian storyteller who passes on the wisdom, traditions and history of a society. The spirit and integrity of the piece endures, even with new cast members joining those who originally performed the work, which affirms the ongoing resiliency of the dance.

The revival of "Passion Distanced," which premiered in 1987, should be of special note. Set to an almost exaltedly austere score by Arvo Part, the dance opens with a breath-taking, emotionally and spiritually complex solo performed by Norwood Pennewell, whose sensitive physicality explores a range of feeling.

And finally, there is "Prelude," another Fagan classic, premiered in 1981 and revised in 1983, which celebrates the far-ranging Fagan technique. The music is by Max Roach and Abdullah Ibrahim.

Fagan began his career in dance as a teenager, leaving his native Jamaica to tour Latin America with Ivy Baxter and the Jamaican National Dance Company. Baxter, Lavinia Williams and Pearl Primus strongly influenced Fagan's work, as did his later studies with Martha Graham, Mary Hinkson, Alvin Ailey and José Limón. After graduating from Wayne State University in Detroit, Fagan became director of Detroit's All-City Dance Company and performed with the Dance Theatre of Detroit and the Detroit Contemporary Dance Company. He moved to Rochester in 1970, where he began Garth Fagan Dance, now in its 33rd season.

In addition to the dances he creates for his own company, Fagan has choreographed pieces for the Dance Theatre of Harlem ("Footprints Dressed in Red" in 1986), the Jamison Project ("Scene Seen" in 1988) and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater ("Jukebox for Alvin" in 1993). In 1994, Fagan choreographed "Never No Lament" for the Limón Dance Company, and in May 1999, he created "Ellington Elation"

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for New York City Ballet's 50th anniversary.

For his choreography in "The Lion King," Fagan received the 1998 Tony Award, the 1998 Drama Desk Award, the 1998 Outer Critics Circle Award, the 1998 Astaire Award, the 2000 Laurence Olivier Award and the 2001 Ovation Award. In 2001, Fagan received the Samuel H. Scripps/American Dance Festival Award; that same year, he was also the recipient of the Golden Plate Award and was inducted into the American Academy of Achievement. Fagan has also received a New York Dance and Performance Award (Bessie), as have four other members of his company: Norwood Pennewell, Steve Humphrey, Natalie Rogers and Sharon Skepple.

Garth Fagan Dance has appeared in many major venues and arts festivals throughout the U.S., as well as internationally in France, Turkey, Switzerland, Israel, Australia, Germany and Africa. Following its Joyce Theater season, the company will perform in Rochester, NY (December 2–7); Buffalo, NY (February 6); Geneseo, NY (February 8); Rochester, NY (February 17); and Atlanta, GA (March 5). Live music by the Wycliffe Gordon Septet will accompany performances of "Griot New York" in Boulder, CO (April 15); Davis, CA (April 21); Stanford, CA (April 24); and Storrs, CT (April 29).

The evening curtain for Garth Fagan Dance's season at The Joyce Theater, Tuesday through Saturday, is at 8pm; and on Sunday at 7:30pm. There will also be a 2pm matinee on Sunday. All tickets are \$40, and are available at The Joyce Theater box office or by calling JoyceCharge at 212-242-0800 or online at www.joyce.org. The Joyce Theater is located at 175 Eighth Avenue at 19th Street.

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