



For Immediate Release



PHOTO OF "WOZA" BY GREG BARRETT

UNCORK THE CHAMPAGNE
GARTH FAGAN DANCE CELEBRATES 40 YEARS WITH
TWO WORLD PREMIERES AT THE JOYCE THEATER,
NOVEMBER 9-14

Forty years ago a small, scrappy dance troupe arrived on the scene. It called itself Bottom of the Bucket, But ... Dance Theatre. Now transformed into one of the most elegant and original dance troupes in the world, Garth Fagan Dance continues to be directed by its founder Garth Fagan, who, besides becoming the Tony Award-winning choreographer of "The Lion King," has created works for New York City Ballet, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Dance Theatre of Harlem and the Limón Dance Company. Fagan's "Griot New York" was subject of a Great Performances program, which aired nationwide on PBS. Garth Fagan Dance has toured round the world and back again. You've come a long way, baby.

To celebrate its four decades, two world premieres – one by the master himself, and the other by Fagan's protégé and longtime principal dancer, Norwood Pennewell – are on the boards for Garth Fagan Dance's Joyce Theater season, November 9-14. The week of shows also features Fagan classics such as "Passion Distanced" dating back to 1987.

Fagan's premiere, aptly entitled "Thanks Forty," a celebration of his company's four decades, is set to cello music by Shostakovitch, a melodic percussion score by Angolian composer Bonga Kwenda and Gerald Albright's music for tenor, alto and baritone sax. The

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dance opens with a solo for Nicolette Depass, an homage to the toughness, strength and femininity of women. The physical virtuosity and sensual power of men is celebrated in an all-male quartet, while the third section, a lyrical and rhythmically complex quartet for women, brims with tender generosity. The fourth section unites the nine performers, with Fagan veterans Norwood Pennewell and Steve Humphrey making cameo appearances.

A work for 11 performers, Norwood Pennewell's contribution to the season, "Hylozoic," marks the 52 year-old virtuosic dancer's first foray into choreography. While calling on Fagan's polyrhythmic use of the body, the work also gives a nod to post modern dance. Shot through with Pennewell's whimsical wit and optimism, the lyrical, abstract work includes partnering that adds an emotional dimension to the dance.

The season also features last year's hit, "Mudan 175/39," set to selections from "Dim Sum," the Ying Quartet's Telarc recording of classical and contemporary Chinese music. In response to the music's unique complexity, Fagan created a series of interconnected solos, duets, trios and group pieces sharpened by unexpected dynamic changes and eruptions of fiendish rhythms that demand a change-on-a-dime precision from the performers.

Set to music by "The Lion King" composer Lebo M, "Woza," which premiered in 1999 and means *come* and also *come celebrate* in Zulu, suggests a voyage whose initial mystery culminates with a sense of arrival and celebration. Performed to music by Wynton Marsalis, "Spring Yaounde," is a passionate and sensual duet from Fagan's full-evening classic "Griot New York." The dance was premiered as part of BAM's 1991 Next Wave Festival. Excerpts from Fagan's 2006 "Senku" and 2003 "DANCECOLLAGEFORROMIE" will also be showcased.

And finally, select evenings will open with "Prelude: Discipline is Freedom," a classic introduction to Fagan's singular style distinguished by its complex polyrhythmic demands on the dancers and its fusion of ballet, modern and Afro-Caribbean dance. Created in 1983, the dance is set to music by Abdullah Ibrahim (Dollar Brand) and Max Roach.

Following its Joyce season, Garth Fagan Dance will perform in Rochester, NY (November 30-December 5); Denton, TX (February 1); Baton Rouge, LA (February 4); Grand Rapids, MI (February 19); Charlotte, NC (March 29-April 3); and Conway, SC (April 5).

GARTH FAGAN, a 1998 Tony Award-winner for his choreography for Broadway hit "The Lion King," began his career in dance by touring Latin America with Ivy Baxter and her Jamaican national dance company. In addition to studying with Baxter, Fagan trained with Caribbean dance teachers Lavinia Williams and Pearl Primus, as well as with Martha Graham, Mary Hinkson, Alvin Ailey and José Limón.

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A graduate of Wayne State University, the Jamaican-born choreographer served as director of Detroit's All-City Dance Company and was a principal soloist and choreographer for the Dance Theatre of Detroit and the Detroit Contemporary Dance Company. In 1970, he moved to Rochester, NY, where he founded Garth Fagan Dance. The company has since appeared in many major venues and arts festivals throughout the United States, as well as internationally in Europe, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, South America, New Zealand, Australia and the West Indies.

In addition to works for Garth Fagan Dance, Fagan has choreographed dances for Judith Jamison, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Limón Dance Company. In May 1999, he created "Ellington Elation," one section of a trio of pieces commissioned by New York City Ballet in honor of Duke Ellington's centenary and NYCB's 50th anniversary.

Fagan's choreography for "The Lion King" also won him 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, he received the Samuel H. Scripps/American Dance Festival Award; that same year, he was the recipient of the Golden Plate Award, inducted into the American Academy of Achievement and presented with the Order of Distinction in the rank of Commander by the Jamaican government. Additionally, he won the 2004 Helpmann Award. Throughout the history of the Garth Fagan Dance Company, five members have received New York Dance and Performance Awards ("Bessies"): Garth Fagan, Norwood Pennewell, Steve Humphrey, Natalie Rogers and Sharon Skepple.

The evening curtains for Garth Fagan Dance's Joyce Theater season are Tuesday, Wednesday and Sunday at 7:30pm, and Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 8pm. There are 2pm matinees on Saturday and Sunday. A post-performance "Dance Chat" will take place Wednesday, November 10.

Tickets are \$59, \$35 and \$19 and can be purchased online at <http://www.joyce.org>, by calling 212-242-0800, or in person at The Joyce Theater box office, 175 Eighth Avenue at 19th Street. A limited number of \$10 tickets are available by calling 212-242-0800.

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PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED DETAILED PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

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GARTH FAGAN DANCE
THE JOYCE THEATER
175 EIGHTH AVENUE
NOVEMBER 9–14, 2010
BOX OFFICE: 212-242-0800
WWW.JOYCE.ORG
TICKETS: \$59, \$35, \$19, \$10



PROGRAMS

Tuesday, November 9, 7:30 pm

Program A

Prelude: Discipline is Freedom
Spring Yaounde*
Hylozoic (world premiere)
Thanks Forty (world premiere)
Woza (revival)

Wednesday, November 10, 7:30 pm

Program A

Prelude: Discipline is Freedom
Spring Yaounde*
Hylozoic (world premiere)
Thanks Forty (world premiere)
Woza (revival)
(with post performance Dance Chat)

Thursday, November 11, 8:00 pm

Program B

Hylozoic (world premiere)
Passion Distanced (revival)
Mudan 175/39
Thanks Forty (world premiere)

Friday, November 12, 8:00 pm

Program A

Prelude: Discipline is Freedom
Spring Yaounde*
Hylozoic (world premiere)
Thanks Forty (world premiere)
Woza (revival)

Saturday, November 13, 2:00 pm

Program C

Prelude: Discipline is Freedom
Talking Drums***
Hylozoic (world premiere)
Detail: Down Home Also**
Thanks Forty (world premiere)

Saturday, November 13, 8:00 pm

Program A

Prelude: Discipline is Freedom
Spring Yaounde*
Hylozoic (world premiere)
Thanks Forty (world premiere)
Woza (revival)

Sunday, November 14, 2:00 pm

Program A

Prelude: Discipline is Freedom
Spring Yaounde*
Hylozoic (world premiere)
Thanks Forty (world premiere)
Woza (revival)

Sunday, November 14, 7:30 pm

Program B

Hylozoic (world premiere)
Passion Distanced (revival)
Mudan 175/39
Thanks Forty (world premiere)

LEGEND:

* Excerpt from Griot New York

** Excerpt from DANCECOLLAGEFORROMIE

*** Excerpt from Senku

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