

Detroit Opera announces 2023–24 Season of Dance, with ballet and modern dance companies from around the world

Dance Theatre of Harlem will open the season; Israel's Batsheva Dance Company and Spain's Compañía Nacional de Danza will also perform



Dance Theatre of Harlem will perform William Forsythe's *Blake Works IV (The Barre Project)* at the Detroit Opera House in the 2023–24 season. Photo by Theik Smith

Detroit, May 9, 2023 – Detroit Opera will take audiences on a journey around the world with its 2023–24 Dance Season under the leadership of President and CEO Wayne S. Brown and Artistic Advisor for Dance Jon Teeuwissen. “I invite you to ‘Come see the music, and hear the dance,’ to quote George Balanchine, just one of the choreographers featured in our wide-ranging season, as we present the full spectrum of dance at the Detroit Opera House,” says Teeuwissen. “The upcoming dance season provides the

opportunity to experience three top companies from around the world that represent the best of dance, ranging from classical ballet to modern dance.”

Teeuwissen has curated the 2023–24 Detroit Opera Dance Season, an eclectic lineup of dance experiences that showcase some of the newest and most exciting artists as well as titans of the dance world. Genres range from contemporary dance to classical ballet, paying homage to iconic choreographers such as George Balanchine while celebrating creativity and innovation with a contemporary reimagining of *Carmen* and a new full-length work by Israeli choreographer Ohad Naharin.

On October 21 and 22, Detroit favorite **Dance Theatre of Harlem** (DTH) will open the dance season with two performances made possible with support from the Gilbert Family Foundation. The company will present works choreographed by George Balanchine, William Forsythe, and Artistic Director Robert Garland. The program will include Balanchine’s *Allegro Brillante*, which the choreographer described as containing “everything I know about classical ballet—in thirteen minutes”; Forsythe’s *Blake Works IV (The Barre Project)*, celebrating dancers, technique, and the possibilities of the ballet barre, and set to electronic soul music by James Blake; and the Detroit premiere of Garland’s *Return*, set to music by James Brown and Aretha Franklin. Founded by Arthur Mitchell, the first African-American principal dancer of New York City Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem is steeped in the neoclassical style developed by George Balanchine. Dance Theatre of Harlem’s New York performances of Balanchine’s *Allegro Brillante* in April 2023 were heralded as “a triumphant achievement” (*New York Times*). The company’s most recent Detroit performances in 2022 featured Claudia Schreier’s *Passage* and Robert Garland’s *Higher Ground*, the latter set to songs by Stevie Wonder. Those performances were met with “thunderous, almost deafening applause” (*Detroit Free Press*).

On January 17, Spain’s **Compañía Nacional de Danza** will make its Detroit Opera House debut in *Carmen*, a reimagined version of Georges Bizet’s opera by Swedish choreographer Johan Inger. Inger’s *Carmen* takes a contemporary look at Prosper Mérimée’s original story as seen through the eyes of a child; Bizet’s music is arranged by Rodion Shchedrin and the production strips the story to its universal themes of love, passion, and the consequences of violence. This will be the only U.S. performance of Inger’s *Carmen* during the company’s North American tour. “There is a certain mystery within this character,” says Inger. “It could be any kid, it could be Don José when he was a boy, it could be a young Micaela or Carmen and José’s unborn child. It could even be ourselves, with our very first goodness wounded due to a violent experience that, though brief, has had a negative impact in our lives and our ability to interact with others forever.” Inger’s striking choreography for *Carmen* earned him the Benois de la Danse prize in 2016. Compañía Nacional de Danza, based in Madrid, was founded in 1979 as Ballet Nacional de España Clásico and presents classical, neoclassical and contemporary works. The company’s artistic director since 2019 is Joaquín De Luz, a former principal dancer at New York City Ballet and solo dancer at American Ballet Theater. De Luz’s

recent choreography includes *Arriaga*, a collaborative work created with Mar Aguiló and Pino Alosa, and *Passengers Within*, focusing on technology, the media, consumerism.

On March 23 and 24, **Batsheva Dance Company**, Israel's most celebrated dance company, will make its debut at the Detroit Opera House with two performances of a program featuring acclaimed choreographer Ohad Naharin's recent work, *MOMO*. An exceptional dancer and choreographer, Ohad Naharin has made Batsheva one of the greatest contemporary dance companies in the world. His new creation for the company's 18 dancers, *MOMO*, premiered in Tel Aviv in December 2022 and is set to a soundtrack largely drawn from the album *Landfall* by Laurie Anderson and the Kronos Quartet. Developed in collaboration with Batsheva dancers and former company member Ariel Cohen, *MOMO* has two souls. One sends long roots to the depths of the earth—a soul that embodies archetypes and myths of hardened, raw masculinity—and the other is in a constant search for an individual and distinct DNA; one moves with its own autonomous and independent force field, and the other is a constellation of elements that spin around the same nucleus—alternately drifting away and towards it, making room for necessary tenderness and catharsis. Through it all, a shared passion of deep sorrow and beauty unfolds on stage. "A rowdy, dreamlike, and chaotic space: *MOMO* is one of the most beautiful shows Ohad Naharin ever created for Batsheva Dance Company" (*Portfolio*). Batsheva Dance Company's performances are a co-presentation between Detroit Opera and University Musical Society (UMS).

Subscriber packages starting at \$80 will go on sale soon. Subscription packages allow patrons to enjoy priority seating, free ticket exchanges, savings of up to 40 percent on tickets, exclusive access to pre-paid parking in the Opera House Parking Center, and additional perks. Visit Detroitopera.org or call 313-237-7464 for more details.

The safety of all patrons continues to be a priority for Detroit Opera and the Detroit Opera House. The company will continue to monitor health and safety precautions and will regularly update its website to reflect those precautions when appropriate.

Detroit Opera

2023-24 Dance Season

Dance Theatre of Harlem

October 21 & 22, 2023

Detroit Opera House

Program:

George Balanchine's *Allegro Brillante*

Music: Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 3

William Forsythe's *Blake Works IV (The Barre Project)*

Music: James Blake

Robert Garland's *Return* (Detroit premiere)

Music: James Brown and Aretha Franklin

Performance dates:

Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023, 7:30pm

Sunday, Oct. 22, 2023, 2:30pm

Student dress rehearsal dates to be announced

Compañía Nacional de Danza

January 17, 2024

Detroit Opera House

Program: Johan Inger's *Carmen*

Music: Georges Bizet, Rodion Shchedrin, and Marc Álvarez

Performance date:

Wednesday, January 17, 2024, 7:30pm

Batsheva Dance Company

March 23 & 24, 2024

Detroit Opera House

Co-presentation with University Musical Society (UMS)

Program: Ohad Naharin's *MOMO*

Music: Laurie Anderson and Kronos Quartet's 2018 album *Landfall*

Performance dates:

Saturday, March 23, 2024, 7:30pm

Sunday, March 24, 2024, 2:30pm

About Detroit Opera

Detroit Opera (formerly Michigan Opera Theatre), one of the nation's most vibrant nonprofit arts organizations, aspires to influence the future of opera and dance with a goal of invigorating audiences through new and re-imagined productions, relevant to current times. It is creating an ambitious standard for American opera and dance that emphasizes community, accessibility, artistic risk-taking, and collaboration. Founded in 1971 by the late Dr. David DiChiera, Detroit Opera is led by President and CEO Wayne S. Brown; Yuval Sharon, Gary L. Wasserman Artistic Director; Associate Artistic Director Christine Goerke; Music Director Roberto Kalb; Artistic Advisor for Dance Jon Teeuwissen; and Board Chairman Ethan Davidson. For more information, visit www.detroitopera.org. Follow the company on Facebook and Instagram (@DetroitOpera), LinkedIn (Detroit Opera), and Twitter (@DetOperaHouse).

PRESS CONTACT:

Jennifer Melick, jmelick@detroitopera.org, 973-985-5499 (m)

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