



US Department of State and Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) announce third season of cultural diplomacy program *DanceMotion USAsm*

Participating companies Doug Varone and Dancers, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Illstyle and Peace Productions, and Spectrum Dance Theater to launch international tours in 2013

Brooklyn, NY/July 25, 2012—The US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) announced today the four American dance companies selected to participate in the third season of *DanceMotion USAsm*. This vibrant cultural diplomacy program shares the rich dance culture of the United States with international audiences through performance and cultural exchange. *DanceMotion USAsm* is designed and funded by ECA and produced by BAM with additional support from the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation.

Season three features the following companies and world regions:

- Doug Varone and Dancers, based in New York, New York, will tour in Argentina, Paraguay, and Peru
- Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, based in Chicago, Illinois will tour to Algeria and Morocco
- Illstyle and Peace Productions, based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, will tour to Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine
- Spectrum Dance Theater, based in Seattle, Washington, will tour in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka

As in the two previous seasons of this successful program, participating dance companies will embark on consecutive, four-week-long international performance and exchange tours. *DanceMotion USAsm* will again offer innovative, high-caliber



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artistic work to global audiences that might not otherwise have access to performances and related educational activities from established American artists. Companies will perform and participate in outreach events, workshops, master classes, media interviews, and discussions about arts management and technical production with international artists and local audiences in a wide variety of venues and settings. A US-based cultural exchange (which was instituted as part of last season's program) will bring a South American dance ensemble to the US for collaboration with Doug Varone and Dancers. Each component of *DanceMotion USAsm* serves to deepen engagement between international and US artists and audiences.

DanceMotion USAsm builds on Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's vision of "smart power" diplomacy, which embraces the full use of diplomatic tools, in this case dance, to engage people and create opportunities for greater understanding.

"*DanceMotion USAsm* helps open the door to creating a better future for all of us by inspiring international audiences and showing America at its best," said Ann Stock, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs. "Our diplomats of dance start conversations and build lasting personal and professional connections among students from a range of regions, backgrounds, ages, and abilities in every country that they visit. This is truly cultural diplomacy in motion!"

BAM President Karen Brooks Hopkins said, "BAM is honored to have been selected by the US Department of State as the sole grantee and producer of this valuable program. We also appreciate the continuing additional support of the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation on behalf of this dynamic project."

BAM Executive Producer Joseph V. Melillo said, "*DanceMotion USAsm* has provided us with the opportunity to broaden our institutional mission and to share American dance with global audiences. We are committed to this rewarding and successful cultural exchange program and are honored to be working once again with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs."

Providing funding through public-private partnerships lends credibility to public sector activities to promote mutual understanding," says Margaret Ayers, President of the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation. "Further, it serves to demonstrate to other foundations that there are powerful ways to support cultural engagement. We are extremely proud of our role in supporting translation and dissemination of *DanceMotion USAsm* on the internet, thereby expanding the accessibility of this important program. The Robert Sterling Clark Foundation's support of public-private partnerships with agencies such as the Cultural Programs Division at the State Department gives us the opportunity to acknowledge, promote, and enlarge the Foundation's role in funding international arts and cultural engagement on behalf of our country and its artists." The Robert Sterling Clark Foundation has helped support the two previous *DanceMotion USAsm* seasons in partnership with the State Department.

Season Three *DanceMotion USAsm* Companies

Doug Varone and Dancers, founded in 1986, has commanded attention for its expansive vision, versatility, and technical prowess. On the concert stage, in opera, theater, film, and fashion, Varone's kinetically thrilling dances make essential connections and mine the

complexity of the human spirit. At home in New York City, Doug Varone and Dancers is the resident company at the 92nd Street Y Harkness Dance Center. On tour, the company has performed across the US and internationally at venues including the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music (*Dense Terrain*, 2007 Spring Season), the Jacob's Pillow and American Dance Festivals, London's Queen Elizabeth Hall, Moscow's Stanislavsky Theater, and the Venice Biennale, among others. Varone, his dancers, and designers have won 11 New York Dance and Performance Awards (Bessies). They are sought-after ambassadors and educators in the field, and conduct annual summer intensive workshops at leading universities as well as multi-discipline residency programs while on tour.

Doug Varone is an award-winning choreographer and director. He has choreographed four productions for the Metropolitan Opera (including *Salome*, *An American Tragedy*, and an acclaimed production of *Les Troyens*, scheduled for revival in autumn 2012) as well as for New York City Opera, Washington Opera, Broadway, off-Broadway, and regional theaters. He has created works for the Limón Company, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, and Batsheva Dance Company (Israel), among others. As a director, Varone has staged *Orfée and Eurydice* for Opera Colorado and *Joseph Merrick: The Elephant Man* for Minnesota Opera. He has been honored with a Guggenheim Fellowship, an OBIE Award, two individual Bessie Awards, two American Dance Festival Doris Duke Awards for New Work, and four National Dance Project Awards. Visit www.dougvaroneanddancers.org

Now celebrating its 35th anniversary season, **Hubbard Street Dance Chicago**, under the artistic direction of Glenn Edgerton, is one of the most original and forward-thinking forces in contemporary dance. The core purpose of Hubbard Street is to bring artists, art, and audiences together to enrich, engage, educate, and transform lives through the experience of dance. Hubbard Street grew out of the Lou Conte Dance Studio in 1977 (located on Hubbard and LaSalle Streets), where in its first decade it began to attract renowned choreographers—including Lynne Taylor-Corbett, Nacho Duato, Jirí Kylián, and Twyla Tharp—to create work for the company. Glenn Edgerton, named artistic director in 2009, joined Hubbard Street after an international career as a dancer with Joffrey Ballet and Nederlands Dans Theater. Edgerton, who has secured new commissions and repertoire favorites from notable choreographers including William Forsythe, Mats Ek, Ohad Naharin, Twyla Tharp, and Aszure Barton, among others, has guided the company forward and built on more than three decades of leadership from both Lou Conte and Jim Vincent, whose extraordinary work established the company as a leader in dance performance, education, and appreciation.

Hubbard Street Dance Chicago comprises 17 dancers, operates year-round, and performs nationally and internationally. Hubbard Street 2 was established in 1997 to provide professional training for dancers ages 18—25. Hubbard Street's rich educational and community programs offer movement-based arts experiences to students, teachers, and families throughout the Chicago area. Also key to Hubbard Street's mission are collaborative partnerships with Chicago's most significant cultural and community organizations, including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Art Institute of Chicago, and Rush University Medical Center—with which it established the HSDC Parkinson's Project, using contemporary dance techniques to improve the quality of life for participants. Visit www.hubbardstreetdance.com

Illstyle and Peace Productions is a multicultural, Philadelphia-based dance company founded in 2001 by Brandon "Peace" Albright. The company creates work rooted in contemporary dance, West African dance, and old-school hip-hop blended with an eclectic mix of dance and performance disciplines including tap, ballet, DJ-ing, and beat-boxing. It has

toured nationally and internationally to critical acclaim and is committed to delivering positive messages to all audiences. Illstyle and Peace most recently appeared at BAM in May, 2012 as part of the 35th annual DanceAfrica Festival.

Brandon "Peace" Albright is well versed in the various styles of hip-hop dance. He was an original member of the Philly-based hip-hop crew Scanner Boyz and has danced for major recording artists such as Schooly D, Will Smith, LL Cool J, Run DMC, Boyz II Men, and the Beach Boys, among others. Among Peace's most recent choreography for Illstyle and Peace is *Same Spirit Different Movement I & II—IMpossible, IZZpossible*, a vibrant work which incorporates beat-boxing, tap, modern dance, African dance, DJ-ing, break-dancing, and modern jazz and has toured to critical acclaim in Canada, Russia, Poland, England, Italy, and France.

Illstyle and Peace Productions also offers acclaimed high-energy workshops, master classes, and educational programs including *Become Your Dreams*, a history of hip-hop; *Hip-hop add it up*, a math lecture demonstration program; and *NO-Bullying STOP-Bullying and let's be friends*, a program focused on non-violence and healthy eating. Visit www.pentacle.org/metro_illstyle.php

Spectrum Dance Theater was founded in Seattle, Washington, in 1982. Its mission is to produce and present contemporary dance of global caliber that challenges expectations and calls forth strong emotions and thoughtful responses; to provide expert dance instruction in diverse dance forms to all; and to educate the community about dance as an art form and as a social/civic instrument. Under Donald Byrd's visionary artistic leadership, Spectrum has emerged as a company of regional and national significance. The organization attracts world-class dancers and produces thrilling and challenging works in contemporary dance to critical acclaim.

Donald Byrd became artistic director of Spectrum Dance Theater in December 2002. From 1978-2002, he was artistic director of Donald Byrd/The Group, a critically acclaimed contemporary dance company that toured extensively, both nationally and internationally. He has created more than 80 modern dance works for his own groups as well as for The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, the Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, and The Philadelphia Dance Company (Philadanco), among others. He has choreographed for classical companies, including Pacific Northwest Ballet, The Joffrey Ballet, Aterballetto, Maggio Danza di Firenze, and Oregon Ballet Theater. He has worked with some of the most prestigious theater and opera companies in the US, including The New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, San Francisco Opera, and New York City Opera. In 2005, Donald Byrd was honored by the Kennedy Center with a Master of Choreography Award, and in 2006 he received a TONY nomination for his choreography for *The Color Purple*. Most recently, Byrd was selected among the first group of Fellows to the American Academy in Jerusalem; and was awarded a fellowship by United States Artists. Visit SPECTRUMDANCE.ORG

DanceMotion USAsm Background

The *DanceMotion USAsm* pilot program was built around performance tours in early 2010 by US companies Urban Bush Women; ODC/Dance; and Evidence, A Dance Company. It served as a model cultural exchange initiative and the first major international tour of dance supported by the Department of State in more than 20 years. It reached global audiences of

more than 15,000 people in tours to 16 cities in nine countries within three world regions—Southeast Asia, South America, and Africa. The program offered multiple opportunities for exchange among artists, audiences, and cultures through 21 performances and 104 cultural exchange activities.

The program's second season—expanded to include four participating companies—featured Jazz Tap Ensemble, Rennie Harris Puremovement, Seán Curran Company, and Trey McIntyre Project in performance and exchange tours in early 2012. It reached global audiences of 25,000 in tours to more than 24 cities in 13 countries within four world regions—Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia. The program offered 45 formal and informal performances and 118 workshops and outreach activities. Additional combined efforts by program participants, US Embassies and Consulates reached audiences of millions via social media, websites, print publications, and television. In an added US-based cultural exchange, members of the Korean National Contemporary Dance Company will be invited to collaborate and perform with Trey McIntyre Project at its Boise, Idaho home with additional performances at BAM as part of this fall's Next Wave Festival.

Opportunities to follow the experiences of the touring companies are provided through a dedicated website and blog. Visit dancemotionusa.org to view a video retrospective of the pilot program and to share the experiences of the program's participants to date.

The **Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs** (ECA) promotes international mutual understanding through a wide range of academic, cultural, professional, and sports exchange programs. ECA exchanges engage youth, students, educators, artists, athletes, and emerging leaders in many fields in the United States and in more than 160 countries. Alumni of ECA exchanges comprise over one million people around the world, including more than 50 Nobel Laureates and more than 300 current or former heads of state and government.

Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) is recognized internationally for its innovative programming of dance, music, theater, music-theater, opera, and film. BAM presents leading national and international artists and companies in its annual Spring Season and highlights groundbreaking, contemporary work in the performing arts with its Next Wave Festival each fall. Founded in 1983, the Next Wave is one of the world's most important festivals of contemporary performing arts. BAM Rose Cinemas features new, independent film releases as well as BAMcinématek—a curated, daily repertory film program.

BAM also serves New York City's diverse population through a weekend concert series in BAMcafé, community events, literary series, and a wide variety of educational programs. BAM, America's oldest performing arts center, is currently celebrating its 150th anniversary and attracts an audience of more than 600,000 people each year. The institution is led by President Karen Brooks Hopkins and Executive Producer Joseph V. Melillo—each of whom has been associated with BAM for more than 25 years. www.BAM.org

Credits

DanceMotion USAsm was made possible by the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and produced in partnership with Brooklyn Academy of Music, Inc. (BAM).

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