

M A R K M O R R I S



D A N C E G R O U P

For Immediate Release

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**THE MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP CELEBRATES MILESTONE WITH
*DANCE ON! 40TH ANNIVERSARY DIGITAL SEASON***

Mark Morris Dance Group's first-ever digital season celebrates 40 years of dance with mostly free online events, including new videodances, livestreamed performances, screenings of full works accompanied by talks and interactive events, and much more.

October 2020-May 2021

BROOKLYN, NY – The Mark Morris Dance Group (MMDG) presents **Dance On! 40th Anniversary Digital Season** from October 2020 to May 2021 to commemorate its 40-year milestone. The season includes new videodance events with live Q&As; three distinct weeks of programming each focused on one of Mark Morris's best-known works, including full-length screenings, online talks with Morris and artistic collaborators, interactive dance classes, and more; plus, special livestreamed performances of solos, duets, and quartets live on stage, including new work by Morris. Additionally, the Dance On! Video Vault will resume with on-demand archival video collections of Morris's less-performed works. Many of the events are interactive and welcome audience participation, from live Q&As to Zoom classes teaching excerpts of Mark Morris's works.

"Way back in 1980, I couldn't have imagined a 40th season of my brand new company, the Mark Morris Dance Group. Today, I find myself putting together a performing season that, just a few months ago, was equally unimaginable," says Artistic Director Mark Morris. "We had big plans for this year: a full calendar of performances and related activities large and small, new and old; in New York, at our home in Brooklyn, and worldwide. Those plans have changed. We've been working hard, mostly from home, to prepare a new kind of celebration...the virtual kind. We are committed to our audience and to our artists and to everyone involved in this uncharted and exciting endeavor. We still have big plans: we will be presenting new and old works, and related activities: historical, scholarly, varied, and fun. There are many dances to watch, music to hear, posts to read, classes, and workshops for everyone. Much of it is free; all of it is valuable. We've missed you. Welcome to our 40th Season. It has taken that long to get here, and we're grateful to be able to offer you the work we cherish."

Most events in the MMDG 40th Anniversary Digital Season are free, with a donation suggested. The livestreamed performances that feature company dancers performing live on stage will be ticketed starting at \$25. The Season lineup includes:

Dance On! An Evening with the Mark Morris Dance Group, Part 2
November 12, 2020 at 8:00 pm ET

The Dance Group celebrates the anniversary of its debut performance in November 1980 with a livestreamed event featuring new videodances created remotely by Mark Morris in collaboration with Music Director Colin Fowler. Two videodances are based on Morris's existing choreography from *Empire Garden* (music by Charles Ives) and *Layla and Majnun* (music by Uzeyir Hajibeyli). Additional videodances to Debussy's "Clair de Lune" and Conlon Nancarrow's Piano Sonata (3rd movement, Allegro Molto) from his Studies for Player Piano are entirely new, and feature new approaches to choreographing, including creating the movement before selecting the music, which is rare for Morris. The livestreamed event features a guest appearance by Yo-Yo Ma playing the cello and will include an interactive Q&A.

Free (Suggested donation: \$20)

MMDG Holiday Special: Home for the Holidays
December 12-18, 2020

For the December holidays, MMDG will bring back excerpts from *The Hard Nut*, Morris's witty, lavish, gender-varied homage to Tchaikovsky's original score, *The Nutcracker*. For the 40th Season, MMDG has planned a week of *The Hard Nut*-themed activities. This includes a Family Day featuring screenings of *Snow (Waltz of the Snowflakes)* and *Flowers (Waltz of the Flowers)*, Dance with MMDG classes for all ages to learn excerpts of the work, dancer meet and greets, a holiday sing-along with Music Director Colin Fowler, hot chocolate and cookie recipe swaps, and more.

Free (Suggested donation: \$12 per activity)

***Dido and Aeneas* Week**
February 8-14, 2021

MMDG invites audiences to explore Mark Morris's *Dido and Aeneas*, a danced opera to Henry Purcell's score, through a week-long series of talks and classes around the on-demand screening of the work. The first screening day will be followed by a live Q&A with Morris. Other weekly activities include talks with dancers and artistic collaborators, Dance with MMDG classes for all levels to learn excerpts from the work, Dance for PD® classes appropriate for anyone with mobility concerns, and more.

Free (Suggested donation: \$12 per activity)

Live From Brooklyn
March 2021

These livestreamed shows feature MMDG dancers performing rarely seen works from the early years of the Dance Group — 1985 through 1992 — live on stage. The works include three solos (*Offertorium*, with music by Franz Schubert; *Jealousy*, set to music by Handel; *Greek to Me*, set to music by Harry Partch), one duet (*Beautiful Day*, with music attributed to Bach), and two quartets (*Retreat from Madrid*, danced to Luigi Boccherini's *La Ritirata di Madrid*; and *Fugue and Fantasy*, with music by Mozart). The event will include new work by Morris set to selections from Johannes Brahms's Sixteen Waltzes Op. 39 performed by MMDG Music Director Colin Fowler.

Ticket Price: \$25

40th Toast Ticket Price: \$40 – Base ticket plus a \$15 donation to support the coming year. Ticket includes invitation to a brief pre-show toast with Mark Morris and a Mark Morris signature cocktail recipe emailed in advance of the show.

***L'Allegro* Week**
April 19-25, 2021

L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato is perhaps Morris's most beloved work, set to Handel's oratorio of the same name. It was Morris's premiere work as Director of Dance at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie. *L'Allegro* Week includes a screening of the work filmed at the Teatro Real in Madrid in July 2014. In addition to week-long on-demand access to the film, the week will include a post-screening live Q&A with Morris, talks with dancers and artistic collaborators, Dance with MMDG classes for all levels to learn excerpts from the work, Dance for PD® classes appropriate for anyone with mobility concerns, and a screening of *L'Allegro Movement Project*, a short documentary about the transformative power of dance and music for people with Parkinson's.

Free (Suggested donation: \$12 per activity)

Dance On! An Evening with the Mark Morris Dance Group, Part 3
May 13, 2021 at 8:00 pm ET

This online event will feature new videodances that Mark Morris will create in January and February when the company is slated to return to the Dance Center to rehearse in the studio. The full lineup of works will be released later in the season.

Free (Suggested donation: \$20)

Dance On! Video Vault
Dates throughout the season

Continuing the popular series from the summer, MMDG will stream archival collections of Morris's rarely performed works. The series includes thematic collections as well as dances picked by some of MMDG's most well-known dancers — Tina Fehlandt, Guillermo Resto, Joe Bowie, and Lauren Grant. The Video Vault will stream Mark Morris Dance Group's very first performance at the Merce Cunningham Studio on November 28, 1980 on the exact day of its 40th anniversary.

The Dance Theater Workshop Years: October 28 - November 27

MMDG Premiere Performance: November 28 - December 6

Baryshnikov Dances with MMDG: December 7 - December 29

Dancers' Picks: Tina Fehlandt and Guillermo Resto: December 30 - January 31

Dancers' Picks: Joe Bowie and Lauren Grant: February 1 - March 7

Dances to the Music of Lou Harrison: March 8 - April 4

Dancing to Bach: April 5 - May 13

Free

The Official Sponsor of the 40th Anniversary Season is Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Note: Programs and dates are subject to change. Please check our website at mmdg.org/forty for the most up-to-date information.

WHAT: Dance On! 40th Anniversary Digital Season presented by the Mark Morris Dance Group. Features online events, including new videodances, livestreamed performances from the stage, week-long screenings of full works accompanied by talks, interactive events, and much more.

WHEN: October 2020 through May 2021

WHERE: For more information on programs and dates (which are subject to change), please visit: mmdg.org/forty

About Mark Morris

Mark Morris has been praised as “the most successful and influential choreographer alive, and indisputably the most musical” (*New York Times*). In addition to creating over 150 works for the Mark Morris Dance Group, he conducts orchestras, directs opera, and choreographs for ballet companies worldwide. Morris's work is acclaimed for its ingenuity, musicality, wit, and humanity. Named a Fellow

of the MacArthur Foundation in 1991, he has received eleven honorary doctorates to date, and a multitude of awards, including the Samuel H. Scripps/American Dance Festival Award for Lifetime Achievement, the Leonard Bernstein Lifetime Achievement Award for the Elevation of Music in Society, the Benjamin Franklin Laureate Prize for Creativity, the Cal Performances Award of Distinction in the Performing Arts, the Orchestra of St. Luke's Gift of Music Award, and the 2016 Doris Duke Artist Award. Morris's memoir, *Out Loud*, co-written with Wesley Stace, was published by Penguin Press in October 2019.

About the Mark Morris Dance Group and the MMDG Music Ensemble

Founded in New York City in 1980 by artistic director and choreographer Mark Morris, praised by *The New York Times* as "the most successful and influential choreographer alive, and indisputably the most musical," the Mark Morris Dance Group has been called "the preeminent modern dance organization of our time" (Yo-Yo Ma). Its members have received the "highest praise for their technical aplomb, their musicality, and their sheer human authenticity." (*Bloomberg News*). Live music and community engagement are vital components of the Mark Morris Dance Group, which has toured with its own musicians, the MMDG Music Ensemble, since 1996. The Mark Morris Dance Center, opened in Brooklyn in 2001, is the home of the Dance Group and provides educational opportunities in dance and music to people of all ages and abilities.

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