

**DURHAM, N.C.** — The American Dance Festival (ADF) kicks off its 85th anniversary season on Thursday, June 14 at 7:00pm at Reynolds Industries Theater with the return of Dayton Contemporary Dance Company (DCDC) performing classic repertoire and a new ADF-commissioned piece by Abby Zbikowski. The season will be dedicated to ADF Alumni at the top of the show, and an Opening Night Fête at Penn Pavilion will immediately follow the performance. DCDC performs again on Friday, June 15 at 8:00pm and will also present a special Children's Matinee on Saturday, June 16 at 1:00pm. Also returning is Shen Wei Dance Arts at DPAC on Saturday, June 16 and Sunday June 17 at 7:00pm with their latest work *Neither*, a work that reflects on Morton Feldman and Samuel Beckett's 1977 anti-opera of the same name. Crowd favorite *Pilobolus* teams up with indie rocker Thao Nguyen in a new ADF commission to create the company's first all-woman trio at DPAC on Thursday, June 21 and Friday, June 22 at 8:00pm. Duke University's newly opened von der Heyden Studio Theater in the Rubenstein Arts Center will host Nicole Wolcott & Larry Keigwin in *Places Please!* on Friday June 22 at 7:00 and 9:00pm, Saturday June 23 at 10:00pm, and Sunday, June 24 at 5:00 and 7:00pm. Burr Johnson, Raja Feather Kelly, Julio Medina, Chafin Seymour, and Alex Springer and Xan Burley will present an exciting evening of original works in a first-ever all ADF alumni concert, *Coming Home: ADF Alumni Return*, in Reynolds Industries Theater on Saturday, June 23 at 7:00pm and Sunday, June 24 at 2:00pm.

### **Dayton Contemporary Dance Company**

Reynolds Industries Theater

Thursday, June 14, 7:00pm

Friday, June 15, 8:00pm

Children's Matinee-Saturday, June 16, 1:00pm

ADF Commissioned World Premiere!

Working with some of the world's most renowned choreographers, the Dayton Contemporary Dance Company holds the world's largest archive of classic African-American dance works and one of the largest of any kind among contemporary dance companies. Noteworthy choreographers who have worked with the company over four decades include Eleo Pomare, Alvin Ailey, Talley Beatty, Bill T. Jones, José Limón, Donald McKayle, Ronald K. Brown, and Doug Varone. DCDC's March 2016 performance of Donald McKayle's *Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder* produced by Paul Taylor American Modern Dance (originally set on the company as part of ADF's Black Tradition in American Modern Dance program and featured in the Emmy Award-winning *Free to Dance*) was recognized by The New York Dance and Performance Awards and received a 2016 "Bessie" award for Outstanding Revival. In 2012 the company embarked on the New Works Project for the creation of new dance work by world-leading choreographers and emerging choreographers of great promise. Works to be performed include *Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder*, *This I Know For Sure...*, *Awassa Astrige/Ostrich*, and a new ADF commissioned work *Indestructible* by 2017 "Bessie" award winning choreographer Abby Zbikowski.

### **Shen Wei Dance Arts**

Durham Performing Arts Center

Saturday, June 16, 7:00pm

Sunday, June 17, 7:00pm

One of the premier international dance companies, Shen Wei Dance Arts has won worldwide acclaim for "amassing a body of works so strikingly original they defy categorization"-The Boston Globe. The work Shen Wei makes for his company draws on influences as varied as traditional Chinese culture and arts, European surrealism, American high modernism, and the ritual power of ancient drama.

Transcending east and west, Shen Wei Dance Arts fuses these disparate forms to forge a startling new hybrid form of dance. The company's dances reflect the compositional rigor of Shen Wei the visual artist, dancer, and choreographer-incorporating vivid colors, striking design, and imaginative use of space into theatrical, kinetic paintings. 2018 marks the 30th anniversary of ADF's involvement helping develop modern dance in China based on its own culture and traditions. Shen Wei was one of the first young dancers to graduate from the earliest classes taught by ADF faculty in Guangzhou, and in 2000, he founded his company while in residence at ADF. The company will perform *Neither*, a work that reflects on Morton Feldman and Samuel Beckett's 1977 anti-opera of the same name. In this piece Shen Wei immerses 11 dancers into massive and luminous sets of this own design, exquisitely illuminated by Jennifer Tipton's lighting. This performance contains brief nudity.

### **Pilobolus**

Durham Performing Arts Center

Thursday, June 21, 8:00pm

Friday, June 22, 8:00pm

Children's Matinee-Saturday, June 23, 1:00pm

ADF Commissioned World Premiere!

"Pilobolus embodies a large part of what the best in contemporary dance is all about: discovery. Making something new with the same standard body parts the rest of us have"-The Washington Post. Pilobolus began at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire in 1971. Moses Pendleton, an English literature major and cross-country skier, Jonathan Wolken, a philosophy science major and fencer, and Steve Johnson, a pre-med student and pole vaulter, were enrolled in a dance composition class taught by Alison Becker Chase. In that class, they created their first piece, which they titled Pilobolus-and a legacy of movement and magic was born. This perennial crowd favorite will present an evening of work based on the five senses including *Gnomen*, a quartet for men with its lyrical exploration of relationships emerging from an unusually inventive physical vocabulary, and *Day Two*, one of the company's most amazing works set to a soundtrack from Brian Eno and Talking Heads that captures the awe of evolution and the wonder of existence. Additionally, Pilobolus teams up with indie rocker Thao Nguyen in a new ADF commission to create the company's first all-woman trio. Working in the mode of collage, the darkly comic, physically theatrical piece begins with myriad movement clichés that surround us every day and then chisels away at them to reveal the nuances of power and the contradictions of identity. Evening performances contain nudity.

### **Places Please! Starring Nicole Wolcott & Larry Keigwin**

Co-presented by ADF and the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University

von der Heyden Studio Theater at the Rubenstein Arts Center

Friday, June 22, 7:00pm & 10:00pm

Saturday, June 23, 10:00pm

Sunday, June 24, 5:00pm & 7:00pm

Nicole Wolcott, a Brooklyn-based artist called "One of today's finest dance comedians and a knockout dancer" by The New York Times, and ADF alumni Larry Keigwin, a native New Yorker and choreographer who has danced his way from the Metropolitan Opera to downtown clubs to Broadway and back, present their latest work *Places Please!*, a zany trip backstage in the final moments before the curtain goes up. The audience becomes privy to the anxiety and playfulness of life behind the scenes in this anticipation-fueled program that celebrates and extends the creative relationship that served as KEIGWIN + COMPANY's foundation during its burgeoning years. Set as a dreamscape sonic collage, the evening attempts to capture the parallel and intersecting paths of a dynamic creative process and relationship.

### **Coming Home: ADF Alumni Return**

Reynolds Industries Theater

Saturday, June 23, 7:00pm

Sunday, June 24, 2:00pm

ADF Debuts!

ADF will highlight the significant talent that has come out of its school programs with a first-ever ADF Alumni Concert. Five choreographers, from a field of over 130 entries, were selected by an all ADF alumni panel (Elaine Bayless, Krystal Butler, Li Chiao-Ping, Kim Cullen, Mark Dendy, Larry Keigwin, Nicholas Leichter, Johnnie Mercer, Sherone Price, and Elena Slobodchikova) to participate in this program. Burr Johnson (ADF student 2006-2009), Raja Feather Kelly (ADF student 2008), Julio Medina (ADF student 2011), Chafin Seymour (ADF student 2010), and Alex Springer (ADF student 2003) and Xan Burley will present an exciting evening of original works.

### **Festival Extras**

The 85th ADF season will be dedicated to ADF Alumni. A brief ceremony honoring the alumni will be held Thursday, June 14th at 7:00pm at Reynolds Industries Theater prior to the season opening performance. The Opening Night Fête will follow the performance on June 14 at 9:00pm at Penn Pavilion on Duke University's west campus. Spend a magical evening with ADF! Meet the performers while enjoying food provided by The Catering Company of Chapel Hill, as well as dancing, wine, beer, and an ADF signature cocktail. Tickets are \$150 each and include the evening's performance. Tickets available at [here](#).

A historic panel titled "Why Do They Fall Down? The Story of Modern Dance in China" will celebrate 30 years of modern dance in China on Sunday, June 17th, 2:00-3:30pm at White Lecture Hall on Duke University's east campus. Panelists include Director Emeritus of ADF Charles L. Reinhart, Yang Meiqi, the founder and former director of the first modern dance company in China, China's foremost dance expert Ou Jian-Ping, Ralph Samuelson, former director of the Asian Cultural Council, Michelle Vosper, former director of the Asian Cultural Council in Hong Kong, internationally celebrated choreographer Shen Wei, and former José Limón Company dancer Sarah Stackhouse. The event is free and open to the public.

#### **Tickets for DPAC**

[americandancefestival.org](http://americandancefestival.org)

Durham Performing Arts Center Ticket Center

919-680-2787

123 Vivian St.

Durham, NC 27701

Monday-Saturday 10:00am-2:00pm

The DPAC box office will open three hours prior to event time.

#### **Tickets for Reynolds Industries Theater, North Carolina Museum of Art, Durham Fruit, von der Heyden Studio Theater, and Baldwin Auditorium**

[americandancefestival.org](http://americandancefestival.org)

Duke University Box Office

919-684-4444

Bryan University Center

Duke University West Campus

Tuesday-Friday 11:00am-6:00pm

The Duke box office will open one hour prior to event time.

#### **Tickets for The Carolina Theater of Durham**

[americandancefestival.org](http://americandancefestival.org)

919-560-3030

309 West Morgan Street

Durham, NC 27701

Monday-Friday 11am- 6pm

#### **About ADF:**

Throughout its 85-year history, ADF has been a nationally recognized leader in our indigenous art form of modern dance. Generations of dancers and choreographers have come to ADF as students, taught as faculty, and created and performed work as professional artists. Each summer, ADF has been the beating heart of the dance world. The best companies in the world premiere work on ADF's stage, much of it commissioned by the festival. Other festivals and season programs are measured against ADF. Over 25,000 people see performances by more than 30 companies each season. The festival has commissioned 427 works and premiered 689 pieces including dances by Martha Graham, Merce Cunningham, and Paul Taylor. Each summer at ADF, more than 300 students from some 25 countries and 42 states study with ADF's 50 faculty members. They come as kids in leotards with as many doubts as dreams. They leave as dancers and artists-and sometimes even new members of companies. Lives change in those 5½ sweaty weeks. Beyond the summer, ADF maintains year-round dance studios offering movement classes to over 650 participants, provides over 180 free classes to almost 4,000 local dancers, and offers choreographic residences providing artists with the necessary space and time to create. [americandancefestival.org](http://americandancefestival.org).

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<https://media.visitnc.com/In-its-85th-Season-American-Dance-Festival-Presents-the-Worlds-Best-Modern-Dance>