



MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 2021–2022 SEASON

WORLD PREMIERES BY ANDREA MILLER AND HOFESH SHECHTER AND NEW *CANTICLE FOR INNOCENT COMEDIANS* CREATED BY EIGHT EXCEPTIONAL CHOREOGRAPHERS TO BE PRESENTED ALONGSIDE MARTHA GRAHAM MASTERWORKS

New York, NY, July 29, 2021 – The **Martha Graham Dance Company** is pleased to announce the return to an in-person performance season with new commissions, touring, and New York engagements at The Joyce Theater and New York City Center. The 2021–22 season, with the theme HUMAN/NATURE, will feature world premieres by internationally acclaimed choreographers **Andrea Miller** and **Hofesh Shechter** and the premiere of a new *Canticle for Innocent Comedians*, reimaged by eight extraordinary choreographers—**Sonya Tayeh**, **Kristina and Sadé Alleyne**, **Jenn Freeman**, **Juliano Nuñez**, **Micaela Taylor**, **Yin Yue**, and Graham alum **Sir Robert Cohan**. The work will include an original score by renowned composer **Jason Moran**. The season also features Graham masterworks *Appalachian Spring*, *Steps in the Street*, *Immediate Tragedy*, *Ekstasis*, *Diversion of Angels*, and *Acts of Light*, which will be presented in New York for the first time in 15 years. The Company’s touring includes performances at major venues and festivals across the US and internationally in France, Germany, Turkey, Greece, and China.

About the season, Artistic Director Janet Eilber said: “I’m convinced that the exhilaration of being in the physical presence of our audiences—experiencing that deeply personal and emotional connection with heightened appreciation—will be the unmistakable highlight of this season. The pandemic and the total revision of our lives in the last sixteen months bring a new and universal context to our season theme, HUMAN/NATURE. Our repertory of Graham classics and extraordinary commissions asks us to reflect on the miracle of the human body and its relationship to our space, our environment, and our planet.”

A new work from in-demand choreographer Andrea Miller, known for her visceral and evocative choreography, will premiere at The Joyce Theater October 26–31, 2021. Miller began working with the Company pre-pandemic and will return to the Graham studio this fall to complete the dance. Inspired by the rhythms, speeds, and surges of nonhuman life, the piece will be performed by eight dancers to a soundscape by Miller’s frequent collaborator **Will Epstein**.

The season will also feature a premiere from celebrated choreographer Hofesh Shechter. *Convergence* (working title) explores the irresistible, elemental response to music and community that makes anyone and everyone want to get up and move. The work features all of the Graham dancers. Guest artist **Daniil Simkin**, principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre, will perform

with the Company at select venues. *Convergence* will premiere as part of the inaugural City Center Dance Festival, April 6–10, 2022.

Another highlight this season is the premiere of a new *Canticle for Innocent Comedians* inspired by the themes and format of Graham's 1952 work. The original work was built around eight virtuosic vignettes that each celebrated a different aspect of nature and our relationship to it. Though the work was well received there is little record of it and it is considered lost. The new series of vignettes will be created by eight different choreographers of diverse dance backgrounds.

Emmy and Tony Award winner Sonya Tayeh is the lead choreographer and will create the *Prelude*, *Finale*, and transitions for the ensemble as well as the vignette titled *Sun*. Notable emerging choreographers Kristina and Sadé Alleyne, Juliano Nuñez, Micaela Taylor, Yin Yue, and Jenn Freeman will create *Earth, Water, Fire, Stars and Death*. Sir Robert Cohan, who danced in the original cast in 1952, created a new *Wind* for *Canticle* in 2020. *Moon* will have the original choreography by Martha Graham. The work will feature a score by jazz pianist Jason Moran. The new *Canticle for Innocent Comedians* will have its world premiere at The Soraya in Northridge, CA, in March 2022, and its New York premiere at City Center in April.

Pam Tanowitz's witty, highly praised *Untitled (Souvenir)*, created for the Company in 2019 and set to two Caroline Shaw scores, will be presented along with **Elisa Monte's** mesmerizing signature work *Treading* (1979), set to music by Steve Reich. *Treading* was commissioned by Martha Graham and created while Monte was a dancer with the Company.

The repertory throughout the season includes Graham's three-part *Acts of Light*, created in 1981 and not danced by the Company in New York since 2007. Taking its title from a phrase by Emily Dickinson, one of Graham's favorite poets, the dance introduced a new period in Graham's work. Devoid of theatrical trappings, *Acts of Light* celebrates the form of dance while making references to earlier works in the Graham canon. The score is by 19th-century Danish composer Carl Nielsen. Costumes are by Halston.

Graham's celebrated 1943 masterwork, *Appalachian Spring*, with a score by Aaron Copland and set by Isamu Noguchi will also be presented. The stark *Steps in the Street* from Graham's anti-war work *Chronicle* (1936), performed by 10 women and set to a score by Wallingford Rigger, will be presented along with the lyrical *Diversion of Angels* (1948), with a score by Norman Dello Joio. Also featured are two of Graham's sculptural solos from the 1930s—*Immediate Tragedy*, reimaged by Janet Eilber in 2020, and *Ekstasis*, reimaged by Virginie Mécène in 2017.

The dancers of the Martha Graham Dance Company are **So Young An, Alessio Crognale, Laurel Dalley Smith, Natasha M. Diamond Walker, Lloyd Knight, Jacob Larsen, Lloyd Mayor, Marzia Memoli, Anne O'Donnell, Lorenzo Pagano, Anne Souder, Leslie Andrea Williams, and Xin Ying.**

Martha Graham Dance Company 2021–22 Schedule

2021

October 26–31	The Joyce Theater, New York, NY
November 19	The Soraya, Northridge, CA
November 27	Cannes Dance Festival, France

November 30 Internationale Tanzwochen Neuss, Germany
December 3–4 Zorlu Performing Arts Center, Istanbul, Turkey

2022

March 1 Bing Concert Hall, Bloomington, IN
March 4–5 Lensic Performing Arts Center, Santa Fe, NM
March 8 Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts, Reno, NV
March 19 The Soraya, Northridge, CA
March 25–26 Duncan Theatre, Lake Worth, FL
March 29 CPA Memorial Hall, Chapel Hill, NC
April 2 Northrop Auditorium, Minneapolis, MN
April 6–10 New York City Center, NY
April 15–17 Megaron, Athens, Greece
May 16–30 China tour

Ticketing and program information for the Joyce Theater, New York City Center, and touring engagements can be found on the Company’s website at www.marthagraham.org. The Martha Graham Dance Company is continually monitoring the changing Covid-19 situation and will perform and tour following current health protocols and with safety for all in mind.

Link to Artist Biographies:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/wpxh5tm083ee8rr/AAD5Y5iFMwS2-yHGivTXPVbza?dl=0>

About Martha Graham Dance Company

The Martha Graham Dance Company has been a leader in the evolving art form of modern dance since its founding in 1926. Today, the Company is embracing a new programming vision that showcases masterpieces by Graham alongside newly commissioned works by contemporary artists. With programs that unite the work of choreographers across time within a rich historical and thematic narrative, the Company is actively working to create new platforms for contemporary dance and multiple points of access for audiences.

Since its inception, the Martha Graham Dance Company has received international acclaim from audiences in more than 50 countries throughout North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. The Company has performed at the Metropolitan Opera House, Carnegie Hall, the Paris Opera House, Covent Garden, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, as well as at the base of the Great Pyramids in Egypt and in the ancient Odeon of Herodes Atticus theater on the Acropolis in Athens. In addition, the Company has also produced several award-winning films broadcast on PBS and around the world. For more information about the Company, visit www.marthagraham.org.

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Digital photos are available on request.