



## US Department of State and Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) announce fourth season of cultural diplomacy program

***DanceMotion USA*<sup>SM</sup>**

### **Participating companies MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP, CONTRA-TIEMPO, and DAVID DORFMAN DANCE to launch international tours in 2014**

**UPDATED April 14, 2014/Brooklyn, NY**—The US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) announced today the three American dance companies selected to participate in the fourth season of *DanceMotion USA*<sup>SM</sup>—the vibrant cultural diplomacy program that supports United States foreign policy goals by engaging international audiences through educational opportunities, performance, and cultural exchange.

*DanceMotion USA*<sup>SM</sup> is a people-to-people international exchange initiative of the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, produced by BAM.

Season four features the following companies, world regions, and touring periods:

- David Dorfman Dance, from New York, NY, will travel to Turkey, Armenia, and Tajikistan in April–May, 2014.
- CONTRA-TIEMPO, from Los Angeles, CA, will travel to Bolivia, Chile, and Ecuador in May–June, 2014.
- Mark Morris Dance Group, from Brooklyn, NY, will travel to China, Taiwan, Cambodia, and Timor-Leste in October–November, 2014.

As in the three previous seasons of this successful program, participating dance companies will embark on consecutive, four-week-long international performance and exchange tours to underserved regions around the world. *DanceMotion USA*<sup>SM</sup> will again offer high-caliber artistic work to global audiences that might not otherwise have access to American artists. Companies will participate in outreach events, workshops, master classes, media interviews, performances, and discussions about arts management and technical production with local artists and audiences in a wide variety of venues and settings. A US-based cultural exchange component will bring a Central Asian dance ensemble to the United States for collaboration with David Dorfman Dance in late 2014.



**BAM**

*DanceMotion USA<sup>SM</sup>* is an integral part of the US State Department's efforts to connect people, especially youth and marginalized communities, through the arts and cultural exchanges around the world. In the program's first three years, it has visited 34 countries, with 77 performances and 328 workshops. *DanceMotion USA<sup>SM</sup>* has engaged more than 22,000 students and 51,000 audience members. Through television, print, radio, and social media outlets, it has reached more than 20 million people worldwide. BAM has also added funding from the private sector to the program through the generosity of the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation.

"*DanceMotion USA<sup>SM</sup>* showcases the diversity of America's culture to communities worldwide," says Ann Stock, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs. "Each year, the dancers serve as US cultural ambassadors, reaching out and connecting on a personal level with foreign audiences in ways that help build lasting, global ties."

BAM President Karen Brooks Hopkins said, "BAM is once again honored to have been selected by the US Department of State as the sole grantee and producer of this dynamic initiative. We are proud to play a role in a program that values the arts as a means to create personal, life-changing connections."

BAM Executive Producer Joseph V. Melillo said, "*DanceMotion USA<sup>SM</sup>* has provided us with the opportunity to broaden our institutional mission and to share American dance with global audiences. This resonant cultural exchange program has been a successful and rewarding endeavor in its first three years. It is our honor to be working again with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs."

Margaret Ayers of the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation, a longtime supporter of the program, said, "The Robert Sterling Clark Foundation considers it vital to develop sustainable relationships between public and private-sector participants such as that exemplified by *DanceMotion USA<sup>SM</sup>*. Such partnerships inspire new models of cooperation between artists and presenting organizations here and abroad."

#### Season Four *DanceMotion USA<sup>SM</sup>* companies:

Internationally renowned as one of the world's leading dance companies, the **Mark Morris Dance Group (MMDG)** has inspired critics and audiences alike throughout its 30-year-plus history. Founded in New York in 1980 by artistic director/choreographer Mark Morris, MMDG has been called "the preeminent modern dance organization of our time" (Yo-Yo Ma), receiving "highest praise for their technical aplomb, their musicality, and their sheer human authenticity." (*Bloomberg News*). MMDG spent three years in residence at Brussels' Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie as Belgium's national dance company, returning to the United States in 1991. The Dance Group tours domestically and internationally to great acclaim, and is distinguished as the only modern dance company with a commitment to live music at every performance, founding the MMDG Music Ensemble in 1996. MMDG also regularly collaborates with eminent musicians across genres, including cellist Yo-Yo Ma, mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe, jazz trio The Bad Plus, the London Symphony Orchestra, baroque orchestras Tafelmusik and Philharmonia Baroque, as well as opera companies such as The Metropolitan Opera and the English National Opera.

Just as fervent as its commitment to live music is the company's dedication to the communities in which it resides and performs. Outreach is interwoven into every aspect of the Company's life, both at its Brooklyn home, the Mark Morris Dance Center, as well as on tour through its Access/MMDG programming. The Dance Group brings a variety of free and low-cost opportunities for dance, music, talks, panels, and education to young children, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and underserved populations. The Mark Morris Dance Center additionally provides affordable, high-quality dance classes for adults from novice to professional, children and teens ages 3-17, and subsidized rehearsal

space for the dance community. All dance classes are accompanied by live music. For more information, visit [www.mmdg.org](http://www.mmdg.org)

**Mark Morris** has been hailed as the “the most prodigiously gifted choreographer of the post-Balanchine era” (*Time*). Since founding MMDG in 1980, Morris has created close to 150 works for the company, many are widely considered masterpieces. He has been described as “an innovator and a conservative, a satirist and a romantic” (*New Yorker*) who “easily ranks among the top five living American choreographers... and has already carved a major place for himself in the history of modern dance” (*The Denver Post*). In addition to works for the Dance Group, Morris is much in demand as a ballet choreographer. His works have been commissioned and performed by San Francisco Ballet, the Pacific Northwest Ballet, and American Ballet Theatre, to name a few. Renowned as an intensely musical choreographer, Morris is undeviating in his devotion to music. The first choreographer to be named music director of the Ojai Music Festival (2013), he has conducted performances for MMDG since 2006 and has also worked extensively in opera, directing and choreographing at the Metropolitan Opera and the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, among others. He is a named Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation, and has received eleven honorary doctorates to date. In recent years, he has received the Samuel H. Scripps/American Dance Festival Award for Lifetime Achievement (2007), the Leonard Bernstein Lifetime Achievement Award for the Elevation of Music in Society (2010), the Benjamin Franklin Laureate Prize for Creativity (2012) and the Cal Performances Award of Distinction in the Performing Arts (2013). Morris continues to create new works from his home base in Brooklyn, New York, the Mark Morris Dance Center, which he founded in 2001 to provide a home for his company, rehearsal space for the dance community, outreach programs for local children and seniors, and a vibrant school offering dance classes to students of all ages and abilities.

**Ana Maria Alvarez** is the founding artistic director and choreographer of **CONTRA-TIEMPO**, an urban, Latin dance theater based in Los Angeles. Alvarez began dancing at the age of five, and went on to dance and train with Urban Bush Women, Cutumba, and Katherine Dunham, among many others. After graduating from Oberlin College with a degree in Dance and Politics, she worked at The Center for Family Life in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, a community resource for local families. There, she taught, danced, and choreographed as part of the center’s “Lifelines” community arts project before moving to Los Angeles in 2002 and obtaining her MFA in choreography from UCLA. Alvarez has received numerous awards for both her choreographic and community work and was recently awarded a National Endowment of the Arts grant as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. She is currently developing a new work with the working title *Agua* which explores the role of water within both an individual and global context, and is set to debut in the fall of 2014.

CONTRA-TIEMPO, hailed as “the new face of Los Angeles dance” (*The Los Angeles Times*) fuses Salsa, Afro-Cuban, contemporary urban, and abstract dance theater to create an invigorating blend of physically intense and socially acute performance work. What sets the company apart is an active and uncompromising take on the way in which artists function within communities: its company members are also immigrants, teachers, organizers and activists of all types living and working in Los Angeles. In addition to its electrifying live performances, set to music by resident composer César Alvarez, the company offers dance residencies for young people as well as master classes for all ages. It is dedicated to working with underserved populations of young people, in particular communities of color; teen and pre-teen programs address social, political, and racial issues through movement and traditional dance forms, and focus on using the body as a tool for communication and community building. For more information, visit [www.contra-tiempo.org](http://www.contra-tiempo.org)

Chicago native **David Dorfman**, artistic director of **David Dorfman Dance**, is the recipient of a 2005 Guggenheim Foundation fellowship. He has also been honored with four fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, three New York Foundation for the Arts fellowships, an American Choreographer’s Award, the first Paul Taylor Fellowship from The Yard, and a New York Dance &

Performance Award (“Bessie”) for David Dorfman Dance’s community-based project *Familiar Movements (The Family Project)*. His work has been commissioned and performed widely throughout the US and Europe. As a performer, he toured internationally with Kei Takei’s Moving Earth and Susan Marshall & Co. Dorfman holds an MFA in Dance from Connecticut College, where he joined the faculty in 2004 and is currently Professor of Dance and Department Chair.

Since its founding in 1985, David Dorfman Dance has performed extensively in New York and throughout North and South America and Europe, most recently in Russia and Poland. Among the company’s recent projects are *Prophets of Funk*, a dynamic work driven by the popular and populist funk sounds of Sly and the Family Stone, and *Disavowal*, a piece inspired by the life and legacy of radical abolitionist John Brown. Community-based projects have played an important role in the life of the company. In *Out of Season (The Athletes Project)* and *Familiar Movements (The Family Project)*, members of the company rehearse and perform with groups of volunteer athletes and family members drawn from the communities to which the company tours. In *No Roles Barred*, the company examines the roles assumed and formed by our modern social construct. The project has been a success with groups ranging from corporate executives to “at risk” youths, among many others, and continues to advance David Dorfman Dance’s goal to “get the whole world dancing.” The company’s three community projects have been presented more than 30 times in 18 states and two foreign countries. Since 2007, David Dorfman Dance has been company-in-residence at Connecticut College. For more information, visit [www.daviddorfmandance.org](http://www.daviddorfmandance.org)

Visit [DanceMotionUSA.org](http://DanceMotionUSA.org)

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