



**US Department of State and Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) announce sixth season of cultural diplomacy program *DanceMotion USA<sup>SM</sup>***

**Participants KEIGWIN + COMPANY, Stephen Petronio Company, and Reggie Wilson/Fist and Heel Performance Group to launch international residencies in 2017**

**March 30, 2016/Brooklyn, NY**—The US Department of State and Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) today announced the three American dance companies selected to participate in the sixth season of *DanceMotion USA<sup>SM</sup>*—the dynamic, cultural diplomacy program that supports United States foreign policy goals by engaging international audiences through educational opportunities, cultural exchange, and performance. *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 six features the following companies and world regions:

- KEIGWIN + COMPANY (New York, NY) will travel to Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, and Tunisia
- Stephen Petronio Company (New York, NY) will travel to Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam
- Reggie Wilson/Fist and Heel Performance Group (Brooklyn, NY) will travel to the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Panama

Participating companies will embark on consecutive, four-week-long international performance and exchange residencies. *DanceMotion USA<sup>SM</sup>* presents professional American dance to global audiences who may not otherwise be exposed to such work. Companies engage in outreach events, workshops, master classes, and media interviews; organize discussions about arts management and technical production with local artists and audiences in a variety of venues and settings. A particular area of focus is working with diverse communities and promoting the empowerment of women, people with disabilities, LGBTI communities and at-risk youth. A US-based exchange component to the program is also being planned.

To date, *DanceMotion USA<sup>SM</sup>* has engaged with more than 125,000 participants in 49 countries and has reached more than 40 million people online. It is an integral part of the US State Department's efforts to connect people—particularly youth and marginalized communities—through cultural exchanges worldwide. The program has also provided rich experiences for the US-based dance companies and choreographers, who have formed resonant collaborative relationships with new artistic colleagues worldwide.

BAM President Katy Clark said, "We are honored to work with the US Department of State on the sixth season of this important cultural initiative. *DanceMotion USA<sup>SM</sup>* forges life-changing, personal connections worldwide, through the arts. That is an immensely gratifying and worthwhile endeavor and BAM is proud to partner in this program."



BAM Executive Producer Joseph V. Melillo said, "Since its inception, *DanceMotion USA*<sup>SM</sup> has deployed 17 contemporary American dance companies, using the universal language of movement as a means of communication. It has had enormous impact on the global communities it has touched, and has inspired and enriched our dance-ambassadors."

### Season Six *DanceMotion USA*<sup>SM</sup> Companies

#### **KEIGWIN + COMPANY**

Founded in 2003 by Artistic Director Larry Keigwin, KEIGWIN + COMPANY creates and presents Keigwin's electrifying brand of contemporary dance. K+C reaches national and international audiences and invigorates diverse communities with dance that embodies a theatrical sensibility of wit, style, and heart. Its education and community projects seek to physically engage audiences and aspiring dancers in movement and the choreographic process. Since K+C's premiere performance at Joyce Soho in 2003, Keigwin has created 35 dances, including the acclaimed large-scale community project, *Bolero*, which has been commissioned in 12 communities nationwide; *Runaway* (2008), a fashion-inspired choreographic ride, and *Canvas* (2013). Over the past decade, K+C has presented performances at venues including the Kennedy Center, *Summerdance* Santa Barbara, New York City Center, the Joyce Theater, American Dance Festival, the Bates Dance Festival, the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, Spain, and others. K+C celebrated its 10th anniversary season in 2013, generously supported by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. In 2015, K+C broadened its artistic vision with its commission of Adam Barruch and Loni Landon, providing a platform for young, emerging choreographers, and this season looks forward to the world premiere of *Bolero Silicon Valley* at Stanford University, a new collaboration with NYU Tisch School of the Arts, and more.

**Larry Keigwin** is a native New Yorker and choreographer who has danced his way from the Metropolitan Opera to downtown clubs to Broadway and back. Since he founded KEIGWIN + COMPANY in 2003, he has created dozens of dances for his company as well as for Paul Taylor's American Modern Dance, New York Choreographic Institute, The Juilliard School, Vail International Dance Festival, and many others. Keigwin's work in musical theater includes choreography for the off-Broadway production of *Rent* (2011 Callaway Award) and the Broadway musical *If/Then* (2013), starring Idina Menzel. As a dancer, Keigwin has appeared at the Metropolitan Opera in Doug Varone's *Le Sacre du Printemps* and Julie Taymor's *The Magic Flute*, in addition to his work with Mark Dendy (earning a 1998 Bessie award for his performance in *Dream Analysis*), Jane Comfort, John Jasperse, Doug Elkins, Zvi Gotheiner, and David Rousseve. He appeared on Broadway in *Dance of the Vampires*, and off-Broadway in *The Wild Party* and Julie Taymor's Oscar-nominated film *Across the Universe*. Keigwin is co-founder of the Green Box Arts Festival in Colorado, a multi-disciplinary festival designed to increase cultural opportunities in the region as well as provide creative residencies to young and emerging choreographers. Visit: [keigwinandcompany.com](http://keigwinandcompany.com)

**Stephen Petronio Company**, founded in 1984, has performed in 26 countries worldwide, including more than 40 New York City engagements with 22 seasons at The Joyce Theater. The company has been commissioned internationally by Dance Umbrella Festival (London), Hebbel Theater (Berlin), Scène Nationale de Sceaux, Festival d'Automne (Paris), CNDC Angers (France), the Holland Festival, and Festival Montpellier Danse (France), and in the US by San Francisco Performances, Joyce Theater, Wexner Center for the Arts, Walker Art Center, UCSB Arts & Lectures, and White Bird, among others. Last season marked the company's first incarnation of *Bloodlines*, a project honoring and curating a lineage of American postmodern

dance masters who embody the highest level of artistic excellence. Over a period of five years, the company plans to bring works by Merce Cunningham, Trisha Brown, Lucinda Childs, Anna Halprin, Yvonne Rainer, Steve Paxton, and others into its repertory. This year, Stephen Petronio Company has launched a campaign to establish a choreographic residency program in Pawling, New York. This new undertaking expands the company's mission and lays the groundwork for a creative and secure future. The residency program will focus on research and the creative process, providing dedicated rehearsal space and resources to choreographers and their collaborators to explore ideas and develop new work away from the pressures of urban life.

For more than 30 years, **Stephen Petronio** (artistic director, choreographer) has honed a unique language of movement that speaks to the intuitive and complex possibilities of the body, informed by its shifting cultural context. He has collaborated with a wide range of artists in many disciplines and holds the integration of multiple forms as fundamental to his creative vision. Petronio was born in Newark, NJ and received a BA from Hampshire College in Amherst, MA where he began early training in improvisation and dance technique. He was greatly influenced by work with Steve Paxton and became the first male dancer in the Trisha Brown Dance Company (1979–86). He has received honors including a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship, an American Choreographers Award, and a 2015 Doris Duke Performing Artist Award. Petronio has created more than 35 works for his company and has been commissioned by some of the world's most prestigious modern and ballet companies, including William Forsythe's Ballett Frankfurt (1987), Deutsche Oper Berlin (1992), Lyon Opera Ballet (1994), and Sydney Dance Company (2003, full evening).

Petronio, whose training originated with the leading figures of the Judson era, performed *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building* in 2010 for Trisha Brown Company at the Whitney Museum. He has collaborated on multiple works with composer Son Lux, including *Tragic Love* (2009), an evening-length work for 30 dancers for Ballet de Lorraine, and with visual artist Janine Antoni, with whom he has created discipline-blurring projects including a new work, *Ally*, in collaboration with Anna Halprin and Adrian Heathfield. Petronio was named the first Artist-in-Residence at The Joyce Theater from 2012-14. His memoir, *Confessions of a Motion Addict*, is available on Amazon.com. Visit: [petronio.io](http://petronio.io)

**Reggie Wilson/Fist & Heel Performance Group**, founded in 1989, is a Brooklyn-based dance company that investigates the intersections of cultural anthropology and movement practices and believes in the potential of the body as a valid means for knowing. Its performance work is a continuing manifestation of the rhythm languages of the body provoked by the spiritual and the mundane traditions of Africa and its diaspora, including the blues, gospel, and slave idioms. The group has received support from major foundations and corporations and has performed at notable venues in the US and abroad. The name Fist & Heel is derived from the history of enslaved Africans in the Americas who were denied their drums. They reinvented their spiritual traditions as a soulful art form, dismissed by white and black authorities as merely "fist and heel worshipping."

**Reggie Wilson** (artistic director, choreographer, and performer) draws from the cultures of Africans in the Americas and combines them with post-modern elements and his own personal movement style to create what he calls, "*post-African/Neo-HooDoo Modern dances*." He has lectured, taught, conducted workshops, community projects, and has had his work presented nationally and internationally, most recently at BAM, New York Live Arts, the Dance Center at Columbia College (Chicago), ICA and Summer Stages (Boston), and Tanzkongress 2013 (Germany).

Wilson is the recipient of the Minnesota Dance Alliance's McKnight National Fellowship (2000–2001), a 2002 Bessie Award recipient for his work *The Tie-tongued Goat and the Lightning Bug Who Tried to Put Her Foot Down*, and is a 2002 John Simon Guggenheim Fellow. He has been an artist advisor for the National Dance Project, a board member of Dance Theater Workshop, a recipient of the 2009 Herb Alpert Award in Dance and, in recognition of his creative contributions to the field, was named a 2009 United States Artists Prudential Fellow. In 2012, New York Live Arts presented a concert of selected Wilson works, *theRevisitation*, he was named a Wesleyan University's Creative Campus Fellow, received a Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, and also received the 2012 Joyce Foundation Award for his work *Moses(es)*, which had its NY premiere in BAM's 2013 Next Wave Festival and is currently touring. Wilson's newest work *CITIZEN* premieres in 2016.

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

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

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*DanceMotion USA*<sup>SM</sup> is a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State, produced by Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) to showcase contemporary American dance abroad.

#### Credits

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