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Philly

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@PHILADANCO (Facebook/Instagram)/@PhiladancoC (Twitter/X) returns to the Perelman Theater with their captivating spring engagement, "Relentless Resident Visions," presented by @EnsembleArtsPhilly (Facebook/Instagram) from 4/25-4/27! For more info, visit www.ensembleartsphilly.org

Press Contacts:

Lauren A. Woodard Hall
484-832-1963

lhall@ensembleartsphilly.org

Taylor Hord
267-765-3723

thord@alliedglobalmarketing.com

**ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY PRESENTS
THE ICONIC PHILADELPHIA DANCE COMPANY,**

PHILADANCO!

CELEBRATING THEIR 55TH ANNIVERSARY

WITH THEIR REMARKABLE SPRING PROGRAM,

RELENTLESS RESIDENT VISIONS,

APRIL 25 – 27, 2025

"Often emulated...Never duplicated." – PHILADANCO!

"A vibrant and creative force." – Alvin Ailey

"The company is in peak form—dancer for dancer, probably the best-trained, certainly the most versatile, dance company in Philadelphia."

– *The Philadelphia Inquirer*

"PHILADANCO's dancers are a miracle of skill and energy.

...A company that can do more than just anything. It can represent the possibilities of human spirit through dance."

– *Dance Magazine*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (March 6, 2025) – Ensemble Arts Philly presents **PHILADANCO!**, the renowned Philadelphia Dance Company, and their newest show, ***Relentless Resident Visions***, in the Perelman Theater from Friday, April 25 through Sunday, April 27, 2025. *Relentless Resident Visions* showcases **two world premieres** and **two classic revivals** from PHILADANCO's **four cutting-edge choreographers-in-residency**: Milton Myers, Christopher Huggins, Tommie-Waheed Evans and Ray Mercer.

The performance series emphasizes the unity and diversity within the PHILADANCO! family, highlighting the choreographers' unique backgrounds and distinct styles. Often described as "a brilliant mix of miracle of skill, energy and artistry," PHILADANCO! dancers are among the best in the world.

"PHILADANCO! narrates through each movement, physically capturing emotional expression and human stories without speaking any words," said Frances Egler, Vice President of Theatrical Programming and Presentations. "Always seeking innovation, their spring program introduces new works while incorporating classics, showcasing the incredible artistry of four remarkable choreographers."

"PHILADANCO! is home to many choreographers showcasing the talents of this art form. Our resident choreographers are both historical and emerging," said Joan Myers Brown, PHILADANCO! Founder.

About the Choreographers:

Tommie-Waheed Evans – A 2021 Guggenheim Fellow, Evans is a queer Black dance maker from Los Angeles whose work explores Blackness, spirituality, queerness, and liberation. He trained with Karen McDonald, earned a fellowship at The Ailey School, and received an MFA in Choreography from Jacksonville University. A former company member of Lula Washington Dance Theatre, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, and PHILADANCO, he has choreographed over 50 works for companies including BalletX, Dallas Black Dance Theatre, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, PHILADANCO, and Louisville Ballet. As the founder of waheedworks, he created bold, gospel-infused contemporary works presented by Jacob's Pillow, The Joyce Theater, and SummerStage NYC. A former assistant professor at The University of the Arts, he has received honors, including the Princess Grace Honoraria Award, Howard Gilman Foundation Fellowship, Joffrey Ballet Winning Works, and the Dance Research Fellowship at NYPL for the Performing Arts. Currently, he is one of three Choreographers-in-Residence at PHILADANCO!

Christopher Huggins - A distinguished 2021 Guggenheim Choreography Fellow, Huggins is a visionary and dance innovator. He is an Alvin Ailey disciple and historian, developing multilayered, storytelling through dance. Huggins attended Purchase University, the Julliard School and was a merit scholar at the Ailey School. He's a former soloist of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Aterballetto of Reggio Emilia, Italy. His work is rooted in research that memorializes our darkest history. He works around the globe and held residencies at over 25 universities and colleges. He holds the distinction of being "repetiteur" of Mr. Ailey's ballets. He is a 2002 recipient of the Ira Aldridge Award for Best Choreography from the Black Theater Alliance for his work of ***'Enemy Behind the Gates'*** for PHILADANCO! which he has brought back home to revisit on this next generation of artists.

Ray Mercer – Mercer is presently in his 28th year as a dancer and fight captain in Disney's *The Lion King* on Broadway. Through his tenure on Broadway, Mercer has also donated his time to create works for various initiatives within the Broadway Cares/Equity Fights Aids (Dancers

Responding to Aids, Fire Island Dance Festival, Red Bucket Follies, and more). His presentations earned the coveted "Best Onstage Presentation Award" a record ten times, making him the most celebrated choreographer at BCEFA's annual fundraising events. Mercer has created works for premier dance companies such as Ailey II, Dallas Black Dance Theatre, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, New Jersey Ballet, The Pensacola Ballet, and PHILADANCO!. His accomplishments have landed him among New York City's most innovative multiskilled directors/choreographers. Mercer is the recipient of many awards including a 2012 Joffrey Ballet Choreographers of Color Award, a Pensacola Ballet Choreographers Award, and more. The Smithsonian Museum commissioned and archived Mercer's work *Hamdan: Through the Gate of Tears*.

Milton Myers – Mr. Myers performed with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and directed the Joyce Trisler Danscompany. He is recognized worldwide as a Master Teacher and Holder of the Lester Horton Dance Technique. Resident choreographer and Master instructor for PHILADANCO!, Milton Myers teaches the Horton Technique and is the Program Director of The School at Jacob's Pillow Contemporary Program. Myers has served on the faculties of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, the Ailey/Fordham B.F.A Program, Peridance, and STEPS on Broadway for many decades. He is presently at the Julliard School, where he is the first Horton instructor. Myers has been honored by the international association of Blacks in Dance for his extraordinary teaching and mentorship to dancers. This season Myers has chosen to revitalize his ballet ***'Echoes: A Celebration of Alvin Ailey'***.

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With its home base since 1970 on Philadanco Way (1981) in West Philadelphia, PHILADANCO! provides one of the nation's most state-of-the-art and successful dance training programs. A myriad of company support systems and intensive training enable dancers to hone their talent and refine their technical skills, preparing them for skills for life after performing. Often described as "a brilliant mix of miracle of skill, energy and artistry, fascinating and thrilling," and performers with "virtuoso physicality," PHILADANCO! dancers are among the best in the world.

The Philadelphia Dance Company (PHILADANCO!) is a nonprofit organization presenting the highest quality of professional dance performance. The intensely welcoming company is home for emerging and professional dancers and choreographers, providing creative space for these visionaries while increasing the appreciation of dance among its many communities. Across the nation and around the world, PHILADANCO! is celebrated for its innovation and preservation of African American traditions in dance, breaking barriers, and advocating for access and inclusion.

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Other featured upcoming performances include **David Nihill: *Shelf Help Tour*** (March 6, 2025, Perelman Theater); **Sheng Wang** (March 7, 2025, Miller Theater); **Sh!t-faced Shakespeare®: *Much Ado About Nothing*** (March 8, 2025, Perelman Theater); ***Tango After Dark*** (March 12, 2025, Miller Theater); **The RESET – *An Immersive Sound Experience with Davin Youngs*** (March 29, 2025, Miller Theater); **Je'Caryous Johnson Presents *Jason's Lyric Live!*** (April 3 – 4, 2025, Miller Theater); ***An Evening with David Sedaris*** (April 5, 2025, Miller Theater); and ***Bitch Sesh: The You've Got a Friend in Me Tour*** (April 12, 2025, Miller Theater).

Tickets

Tickets can be purchased by calling 215-893-1999 or online at www.ensembleartsphilly.org. In-person ticket sales can be conducted daily from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. at the Academy of Music Box Office, located at 240 S. Broad Street. See www.ensembleartsphilly.org for more information.

PHILADANCO!: *Relentless Resident Visions*

Perelman Theater

Friday, April 25, 2025, at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 26, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 26, 2025, at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 27, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

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ABOUT ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY

For more information about ENSEMBLE ARTS PHILLY, visit www.ensembleartsphilly.org.

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