



## 20th Anniversary of Harris Theater for Music and Dance Celebrates Resident Companies, World-Class Visiting Artists, and Cultural Impact in Chicago

Festival celebrating 20 years of Resident Company partnership and evolution

Co-commissioned multimedia collaboration by Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Wendy Whelan, and Francesca Harper

New work from Akram Khan Company; Jazzmeia Horn; and Arooj Aftab/Vijay Iyer/Shahzad Ismaily

Return of New York City Ballet and Sir John Eliot Gardiner

Chicago, IL, March 8, 2023 – **The Joan W. and Irving B. Harris Theater for Music and Dance** today announced its 20th anniversary season, bringing pioneering artists from around the globe to Chicago and continuing to champion the world-class ensembles and arts organizations that call the city home. The Harris will kick off its 2023-24 season with a **Resident Company festival** alongside its signature **Harris Theater Presents (HTP)** programming, filled with ambitious new works, commissions, and collaborations from artistic innovators including **Akram Khan Company**, jazz vocalist **Jazzmeia Horn**, poet **Marc Bamuthi Joseph**, dancer **Wendy Whelan**, and choreographer **Francesca Harper**. Marking the Theater’s two decades as an anchor of Millennium Park and Chicago’s cultural ecosystem, the anniversary season will bring together artists working across traditions and genres—including jazz, electronic, classical music, Latin folk, spoken word, ballet, and contemporary dance—for a celebration of creative community, collaboration, and innovation.

“As Chicago’s home for music and dance, the Harris is proud to play a part in the city’s vibrant cultural scene and uplift the work of groundbreaking artists and organizations. In this exciting 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, we celebrate the Harris’ tremendous evolution, charting a course of continued support for a growing community of Resident Companies, commissioning new works, presenting artists from across the globe and from our own backyard who are pushing their art forms forward, and expanding the impact of our programming throughout Chicago with new community initiatives,” said **Lori Dimun, Alexandra C. and John D. Nichols President and CEO of the Harris**. “This anniversary season features an array of artists from Black Grace to Arooj Aftab, Vijay Iyer, and Shahzad Ismaily, with new commissions, collaborations, and debuts. We kick it off, fittingly, with a festival showcasing the amazing Harris Resident Companies that will highlight the innovative work coming out of Chicago, and I couldn’t be more excited.”

Since its founding in 2003 to fill the void of a much-needed shared home for 12 of Chicago’s midsize performing arts organizations, the Harris has grown to become a home base and supportive partner for nearly 30 local Resident Companies, as well as a renowned presenter bringing boundary-pushing artists from around the globe to perform in its state-of-the-art theater. The Harris has adapted to meet the evolving needs of the artists and organizations who call it home, expanding the scope of its operational resources for Resident Companies, providing unprecedented levels of operational and creative support

during the pandemic, and, in 2022, making major technical investments in cutting-edge sound and lighting to enable new frontiers of performance. Building on its distinctive model of continuous conversation with Resident Companies and countless visiting artists, the Theater's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season looks towards the future with a vision for fostering artistic innovation and collaboration.

The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season opens in September 2023 with a festival of performances, educational activities, and special events featuring more than 20 of the Resident Companies that call the Harris Theater home—including Chicago Gay Men's Chorus, Chicago Philharmonic, Giordano Dance Chicago, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Music of the Baroque, Puerto Rican Arts Alliance, and South Chicago Dance Theatre—alongside independent artists and community partners throughout Chicago. On **Saturday, September 9**, the **Resident Company Celebration** will activate the Harris Theater as well as the iconic Pritzker Pavilion and other spaces throughout Millennium Park, celebrating the city's creative community and inviting new audiences to discover the Harris.

"The Harris Theater's deep and holistic support for its Resident Companies has been an irreplaceable asset to Chicago's performing arts community, giving organizations like ours an exceptional home venue, collaborative partnership, and resources to thrive," said **Terrell Johnson**, Executive Director of the Chicago Philharmonic and a Harris Theater board member, co-chair of the Committee on Resident Companies. "We are excited to come together this anniversary season to celebrate the shared purpose carrying us forward in the next 20 years and beyond."

The Theater's flagship presenting series, **HTP Mainstage**, will spotlight collaboration and innovation by leading artists and ensembles in music and dance. Co-commissioned by the Harris, a centerpiece of the series' 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season is **Carnival of the Animals**, a new evening-length work by spoken word artist and activist **Marc Bamuthi Joseph** (Vice President and Artistic Director of Social Impact, The Kennedy Center), legendary dancer **Wendy Whelan** (Associate Artistic Director, New York City Ballet), and acclaimed choreographer **Francesca Harper** (Artistic Director, Ailey II) that brings the Saint-Saëns composition into the present as a multidisciplinary mixtape exploring race, gender, and shifting societal values. The celebrated New Zealand contemporary dance company **Black Grace** will make its Chicago debut with a week-long engagement that incorporates extensive public programming in collaboration with the Harris' community partners. **New York City Ballet**—which has a longstanding relationship with the Theater since launching the inaugural *Harris Theater Presents* season in 2006—returns to Chicago with two programs that together celebrate past, present, and future: an evening of classic favorites by George Balanchine and Jerome Robbins, and a bill of contemporary works by Kyle Abraham, Justin Peck, Pam Tanowitz, and Christopher Wheeldon. Reinterpreting a classic story to speak to future generations, the Chicago premiere of **Akram Khan Company's *Jungle Book reimagined*** imbues the fable with a new sense of urgent relevance through the lens of climate and refugee crises, asking audiences to envision the possibilities of a new world together.

*HTP Mainstage's* music programming opens with *Love in Exile*, a new project and recording by the powerhouse trio of GRAMMY-winning singer and composer **Arooj Aftab**, pianist **Vijay Iyer**, and multi-instrumentalist **Shahzad Ismaily** that explores freedom and identity through jazz and electronic improvisation. The season also features a dynamic reexamination of Baroque and early music; **Sir John Eliot Gardiner** returns to the Harris with the **Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists** for Bach's

monumental *B Minor Mass* and Handel's *L'Allegro*, while the **Los Angeles Master Chorale**—conducted by **Grant Gershon** and stage directed by **Peter Sellars**—presents a deeply personal meditation on grief and loss with a unique staged performance of Heinrich Schütz's *Musikalische Exequien (Music to Accompany a Departure)*.

The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season offers accessible and engaging programming for all ages in the **Family Series**, with tailored programs and new work created specifically for young audiences. Families will be invited to attend performances, conversations, and workshops with **Black Grace** alongside their *HTP Mainstage* engagement, as well as the **world premiere** of a special storyteller-style program by acclaimed jazz singer and songwriter **Jazzmeia Horn**, developed in collaboration with the Harris. Horn will also perform as part of the Theater's **Mix at Six** series, which features adventurous performances in an informal and social setting. Other *Mix at Six* featured artists include genre-bending trumpeter and composer **Marquis Hill**; Latin GRAMMY-winning Venezuelan singer **Nella**; and jazz pianist, vocalist, and composer **Alexis Lombre**.

The Harris also continues its longstanding **Chamber Music Series**, presenting **Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center** in three concerts including Copland's *Appalachian Spring Suite* for 13 players, the complete *Brandenburg Concertos*, and a special program pairing co-artistic directors David Finckel and Wu Han with the next generation of chamber musicians. **Dubhe Ensemble**, led by acclaimed bassist Joseph Conyers and featuring an evolving roster of exceptional musicians, educators, and youth advocates, completes the 2023-24 *Chamber Music Series*. In addition to the ensemble's Chicago debut performance, the engagement will include an extended residency in partnership with Merit School of Music and Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative. **Beyond the Aria**, produced in association with Harris Resident Company **Lyric Opera of Chicago**, will return with four performances in 2023-24, with artists and dates to be announced in late summer.

Throughout the season, *Harris Theater Presents* artists will offer masterclasses, workshops, and educational programs in collaboration with Resident Companies and community organizations around the city. Additional events and initiatives in celebration of the Harris Theater's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season will be announced over the coming months.

*Leadership support for the 2023-24 season is provided by: Irving Harris Foundation and Joan W. Harris, Alexandra C. and John D. Nichols, Abby McCormick O'Neil and D. Carroll Joynes, Caryn and King Harris, Chauncey and Marion D. McCormick Family Foundation, Patricia A. Kenney and Gregory J. O'Leary, and Kenneth R. Norgan.*

## **SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2023-24 HTP MAINSTAGE, MIX AT SIX, FAMILY SERIES, AND CHAMBER MUSIC SERIES ON SALE NOW**

Subscriptions are on sale now, available [online](#) or through the Harris Theater Box Office. Subscribers save up to 40% on tickets and receive unique benefits to enhance the experience and convenience of their time at the Harris including free exchanges, restaurant partner discounts, and access to special events with artists throughout the season.

The Harris Theater Box Office is open for phone support 12-5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and on performance days. To reach the Box Office, call 312.334.7777 or email [info@harristheaterchicago.org](mailto:info@harristheaterchicago.org).

## 2023-24 AT A GLANCE:

### **Resident Company Celebration**

*20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Special Event*

Saturday, September 9, 2023

The Harris Theater's 20th anniversary season opens with a festival of performances, educational activities, and special events featuring a diverse roster of Resident Companies, independent artists, and community partners. Full schedule and artist lineup to be announced in spring 2023.

### **Marquis Hill**

*Mix at Six*

Wednesday, September 27, 2023 / 6:00PM

From his beginnings as one of Chicago's most thrilling young trumpeters, to his current status as an internationally renowned musician, composer, and bandleader, Marquis Hill has worked tirelessly to break down the barriers that divide musical genres. Contemporary and classic jazz, hip-hop, R&B, Chicago house, neo-soul—to Hill, they're all essential elements of the profound African American creative heritage he's a part of. Hill's Harris Theater debut will open the 2023-24 *Mix at Six* series.

### **Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center**

*American Panorama*

*Chamber Music Series*

Tuesday, October 3, 2023 / 7:30PM

With an annual residency at the Harris since 2012, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (CMS) is one of the theater's longest-standing artistic partners. CMS opens the 2023-24 season with a program celebrating beautiful and uplifting music, including Aaron Copland's *Appalachian Spring Suite* for 13 players and featuring CMS Co-Artistic Directors David Finckel and Wu Han.

Burleigh        *Southland Sketches* for Violin and Piano (1916)

Dvořák        Quintet in E-flat major for Two Violins, Two Violas, and Cello, Op. 97, "American" (1893)

Foote        Nocturne and Scherzo for Flute and String Quartet (1918)

Copland       *Appalachian Spring Suite* for Ensemble (1944)

### **Arooj Aftab, Vijay Iyer, Shahzad Ismaily**

*Love in Exile*

*HTP Mainstage*

Wednesday, October 11, 2023 / 7:30PM

Arooj Aftab, Vijay Iyer, and Shahzad Ismaily collaborate for the first time on a new project and recording, with a release and limited tour set for 2023. *Love in Exile* creates lush, haunting collaborative soundscapes of meditation and yearning. Vocalist Arooj Aftab described the project as “about self-exile, and the search for freedom and identity, and finding it through love and music.”

**Sir John Eliot Gardiner**

**Monteverdi Choir + English Baroque Soloists**

***J. S. Bach: Mass in B minor BWV 232***

*HTP Mainstage*

Friday, October 20, 2023 / 7:30PM

Revered as one of the world’s most innovative and dynamic musicians, Sir John Eliot Gardiner returns to the Harris on a limited North American tour. Gardiner will conduct the Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists in two distinct programs, opening with Bach’s epic *Mass in B minor*. Composed at the end of Bach’s life, the Mass recycles pieces written in the previous decades and welds them together in a compendium of different styles and approaches, perhaps mindful of creating a lasting legacy.

**Sir John Eliot Gardiner**

**Monteverdi Choir + English Baroque Soloists**

***George Frideric Handel: L’Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato***

*HTP Mainstage*

Saturday, October 21, 2023 / 7:30PM

Revered as one of the world’s most innovative and dynamic musicians, Sir John Eliot Gardiner returns to the Harris on a limited North American tour. The riotous variety of moods in Handel’s *L’Allegro*, one of his most inventive, varied, and characteristically English works, will be celebrated by the Monteverdi Choir and a team of brilliant young solo singers as well as by the English Baroque Soloists—the piece has notable solos for horn, flute, bassoon, organ, bells, and cello.

**Akram Khan Company**

***Jungle Book reimagined***

*HTP Mainstage*

Thursday, November 9, 2023 / 7:30PM

Friday, November 10, 2023 / 7:30PM

Saturday, November 11, 2023 / 2:00PM

Akram Khan’s *Jungle Book reimagined* is a new work based on the much-loved story by Rudyard Kipling. Khan and his team have reimagined the journey of Mowgli through the eyes of a refugee caught in a world devastated by climate change. They tell the story of a child who will help us to listen again, not to our voices but to the voices of the natural world that we, the modern world, try to silence. *Jungle Book reimagined* speaks to all generations to remind, to relearn, and to reimagine a new world together.

**Nella**

*Mix at Six*

Wednesday, November 15, 2023 / 6:00PM

Born in Venezuela, Latin GRAMMY® Award-winner Nella Rojas has skyrocketed to international renown, fueled by her powerhouse voice and undeniable presence, coming to the Harris for the first time in 2023. Merging the folklore roots of Venezuela, modern production, and Andalusian inspirations, Nella's sound resonates in every corner of the globe.

**Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center**

***Brandenburg Concertos***

*Chamber Music Series*

Wednesday, December 13, 2023 / 7:30PM

CMS returns in December 2023 with Bach's complete *Brandenburg Concertos*, performed in their original instrumentation—each year in a different order with an evolving roster of the finest CMS musicians. With their novel instrumentation and irresistible energy, the six concertos are uplifting to all who hear them and have become an annual tradition at the Harris.

**Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center**

***An Evening with David Finckel and Wu Han***

***Featuring Richard Lin, violin; Tim Ridout, viola***

*Chamber Music Series*

Thursday, January 25, 2024 / 7:30PM

CMS completes its 2023-24 season in Chicago with a look to the future. In the first half, David Finckel and Wu Han explore the range of cello-piano duo repertoire in selections including Debussy's *Sonata for Cello and Piano*, the first truly modern work in the genre. In the second half, the CMS Co-Artistic Directors are joined by two young artists from the Bowers Program, dedicated to nurturing the next generation of great chamber musicians: Taiwanese-American violinist Richard Lin and BBC New Generation Artist Tim Ridout, viola, performing Dvořák's heartfelt *Piano Quartet No. 2*.

Debussy	Sonata for Cello and Piano (1915)
Adolphe	<i>Couple</i> for Cello and Piano (1998)
Shostakovich	Sonata in D minor for Cello and Piano, Op. 40 (1934)
Dvořák	Quartet in E-flat major for Piano, Violin, Viola, and Cello, Op. 87 (1889)

**Jazzmeia Horn**

*Mix at Six*

Friday, February 2, 2024 / 6:00PM

Jazzmeia Horn is an American jazz singer and songwriter, multi-GRAMMY Award nominee, and winner of the 2015 Thelonious Monk Institute International Jazz Competition. Praised by *The New York Times* as "among the most exciting young vocalists in jazz, with a proud traditionalism that keeps her tightly linked to the sound of classic figures like Nancy Wilson and Betty Carter, but a vivacity of spirit and conviction that places her firmly in the present," Horn will make her Harris debut on the *Mix at Six* series.

**Jazzmeia Horn***Family Series*

Saturday, February 3, 2024 / 2:00PM

American jazz singer and songwriter Jazzmeia Horn brings a special storyteller-style program which will premiere on the *Family Series*. Horn, who has a forthcoming children's book based on the new album *Messages*, will blend works from her GRAMMY-nominated albums and stories from her life and career to engage audiences of all ages in her unique sound and musical influences.

**Los Angeles Master Chorale / Peter Sellars*****Music to Accompany a Departure****HTP Mainstage*

Friday, February 9, 2024 / 7:30PM

Acclaimed director Peter Sellars, conductor Grant Gershon, and 24 singers of the Los Angeles Master Chorale make their Harris Theater debut with a deeply personal meditation on what it means to say goodbye in times of struggle. The luminous music of Baroque composer Heinrich Schütz serves as the inspiration for this ceremony of remembrance and devotion cradling a work of soaring vocal purity and solo voices interacting with a constantly shifting combination of choral forces.

**Black Grace***HTP Mainstage*

Friday, March 1, 2024 / 7:30PM

Black Grace is New Zealand's leading contemporary dance company. Founded by Neil Ieremia in 1995, the company's work draws from his Samoan and New Zealand roots to create innovative dance works that reach across social, cultural, and generational barriers. This week-long engagement will include conversations, workshops, and performances for all ages in the company's Chicago debut.

**Black Grace*****Family Matinee****Family Series*

Saturday, March 2, 2024 / 2:00PM

Black Grace is New Zealand's leading contemporary dance company. Founded by Neil Ieremia in 1995, the company's work draws from his Samoan and New Zealand roots to create innovative dance works that reach across social, cultural, and generational barriers. This *Family Series* matinee will introduce young audiences to the storytelling and movement language of Black Grace, narrated by Ieremia, and will include audio description and ASL interpretation.

**New York City Ballet*****Masters at Work: Balanchine + Robbins****HTP Mainstage*

Thursday, March 21, 2024 / 7:30PM  
Saturday, March 23, 2024 / 2:00PM

The 2006 presentation of New York City Ballet, one of the foremost ballet companies in the world, marked a new era for the Harris Theater—the beginning of *Harris Theater Presents*. Now under the leadership of Artistic Director Jonathan Stafford and Associate Artistic Director Wendy Whelan, NYCB returns to Chicago its own 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary season in two distinct programs celebrating past, present, future.

Peter Ilyitch Tchaikovsky / George Balanchine  
Frédéric Chopin / Jerome Robbins  
Paul Hindemith / George Balanchine

*Serenade*  
*In the Night*  
*The Four Temperaments*

**New York City Ballet**  
**21<sup>st</sup> Century Choreography**

*HTP Mainstage*

Friday, March 22, 2024 / 7:30PM  
Saturday, March 23, 2024 / 7:30PM

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Caroline Shaw / Justin Peck  
Arvo Pärt / Christopher Wheeldon  
Caroline Shaw / Pam Tanowitz  
James Blake / Kyle Abraham

*Partita*  
*Liturgy*  
*Gustave le Gray No. 1*  
*Love Letter (on shuffle)*

**Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Wendy Whelan, Francesca Harper**  
***Carnival of the Animals***

*HTP Mainstage*

Wednesday, April 10, 2024 / 7:30PM

*Carnival of the Animals* is a new evening-length piece by spoken word artist and activist Marc Bamuthi Joseph, legendary dancer Wendy Whelan, and acclaimed choreographer/director Francesca Harper. Rooted in the iconic Saint-Saëns composition dating back to 1886, this contemporary vision comes to life with poignant spoken word and transcendent movement, creating a multidisciplinary mixtape that imagines the animals that reside in the contemporary political jungle. *Carnival of the Animals* launches from the Saint-Saëns work and imagines the animals within a present-day ecosystem that intersects the personal, the political, and the environmental with humans living in dangerous times, imbuing democracy itself with the animal instinct to survive.

**Dubhe Ensemble, featuring Joseph Conyers**  
***Chamber Music Series***

Thursday, April 25, 2024 / 7:30PM



Citizen musician, entrepreneur, and youth advocate Joseph Conyers embarks on a new project as artistic director and founder of the chamber music collective, Dubhe Ensemble. Dubhe Ensemble will make its Chicago debut at the Harris on the *Chamber Music Series*, with an exceptional roster of musicians and educators including Melissa White (Violin), Juan-Miguel Hernandez (Viola), and Yumi Kendall (Cello), and an extended residency in partnership with Merit School of Music and Chicago Musical Pathways Initiative.

**Alexis Lombre**

*Mix at Six*

Tuesday, May 7, 2024 / 6:00PM

Alexis Lombre is a pianist, vocalist, composer, and Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) member from Chicago who discovered early that the true essence of music is not just about what you hear but how music makes you feel. An inaugural New Music USA Next Jazz Legacy Awardee, Lombre brings her singular blend of avant-garde, hip-hop, R&B, gospel, and jazz to her Harris Theater debut in 2024, with a *Mix at Six* set featuring new material from her forthcoming album.

**2023-24 HARRIS THEATER PRESENTS: SERIES AND ARTISTS**

**HTP Mainstage**

**Arooj Aftab, Vijay Iyer, Shahzad Ismaily**

*Love in Exile*

*HTP Mainstage*

Wednesday, October 11, 2023 / 7:30PM

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**Monteverdi Choir + English Baroque Soloists**

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***Carnival of the Animals***

*HTP Mainstage*

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**Family Series**

**Jazzmeia Horn**

*Family Series*

Saturday, February 3, 2024 / 2:00PM

**Black Grace**

***Family Matinee***

*Family Series*

Saturday, March 2, 2024 / 2:00PM

**Mix at Six**

**Marquis Hill**

*Mix at Six*

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**Chamber Music Series**

**Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center**

***American Panorama***

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**About the Joan W. and Irving B. Harris Theater for Music and Dance**

The Harris Theater is Chicago's home for music and dance, connecting diverse audiences with artists from across the city, the nation, and the world. An anchor institution of Millennium Park and the first multi-use performance venue built in downtown Chicago since 1929, the Harris was established in 2003 to create a much-needed home for the city's vibrant community of midsize performing arts organizations. Today, the nonprofit Harris Theater features some of the most diverse arts and culture offerings in the city, from its Chicago-based Resident Companies to the world-renowned visiting artists who perform on its stage through the *Harris Theater Presents* series.

The Harris represents a distinctive model for artistic excellence, collaboration, and creative symbiosis, making the performing arts relevant and accessible to the widest possible audience. Acting as both a home base for and a supportive partner of its Resident Companies, the Harris provides state-of-the-art performance space and ongoing support to nearly 30 Chicago-based performing arts organizations. Its 1,500-seat multi-use theater brings innovative and boundary-pushing productions from more than 32 countries across six continents to Chicago, creating unique opportunities for dialogue between

Chicagoans and the world's leading artists, thinkers, and innovators. The organization's signature *Harris Theater Presents* series has featured acclaimed artists and ensembles including Batsheva Dance, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, English National Ballet, Joshua Bell, Joyce DiDonato, Sir John Eliot Gardiner and the Monteverdi Choir, Angélique Kidjo, and Paris Opéra Ballet. The Theater's education and community engagement initiatives build bridges between artists and community members, providing master classes, artist talks, and free tickets for more than 35 partner organizations throughout Chicago.

To learn more about the Harris Theater, Chicago's home for music and dance in Millennium Park, visit [harristheaterchicago.org](http://harristheaterchicago.org) and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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