



THE CROSSING

KNEE PLAYS

#GLASSFEST // ANNENBERG CENTER RESIDENT ENSEMBLE

Conceived and Directed by Donald Nally

Lighting/Projections Jeff Sugg

Music Philip Glass and David Byrne

Texts Robert Wilson and David Byrne

There will not be an intermission.

Friday, February 21 @ 8 PM

Saturday, February 22 @ 8 PM

Prince Theatre

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Media support for #GLASSFEST provided by *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

PROGRAM NOTES

Drawn from Robert Wilson's massive productions *Einstein on the Beach* and *the CIVIL warS*, these two diverse and mesmerizing sets of musical knee plays are substantial works on their own, serving as a record of the time of their creation. In the original David Byrne work, Robert Wilson wanted to transform a tree into a book, into a boat and back into a tree. Byrne was interested in how that may play out under the influence of Noh theatre. Wilson and Philip Glass were focused on the transformative nature of Einstein's work and life. Transformation is paramount to the *Knee Plays*, and while the tree and the physicist remain as shadows looming behind our Knee Play reincarnations, they are not here; their spirit of transformation and connection guide the evening which finds the singers of *The Crossing* moving into roles that stretch their identities. At one moment they sing and in the next, they are the instrument-wielding band, or a response to the call of Dito van Reigersberg (in a rare cameo), or philosophers with only a voice, reed or drum and words to try to make the connections that Wilson, Glass and Byrne were exploring. We investigate identity. We laugh at ourselves. And we are transformed, physically. The spirit of Japanese theatre returns to the *Knee Plays*, if only as an attempt to understand *The Other*. To connect. To be the knee.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

The Crossing

The Crossing is a professional chamber choir conducted by Donald Nally and dedicated to new music. It is committed to working with creative teams to make and record new, substantial works for choir that explore and expand ways of writing for choir, singing in choir and listening to music for choir. Many of its nearly ninety commissioned premieres address social, environmental and political issues.

The Crossing collaborates with some of the world's most accomplished ensembles and artists, including the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, American Composers Orchestra, Network for New Music, Lyric Fest, Piffaro, Annenberg Center, Beth Morrison Projects, Allora & Calzadilla, Bang on a Can, and the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE). Similarly, The Crossing often collaborates with some of world's most prestigious venues and presenters, such as the Park Avenue Armory, Annenberg Center at the University of Pennsylvania, National Sawdust, David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center, Disney Hall in Los Angeles, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, Haarlem Choral Biennale in The Netherlands, The Kennedy Center in Washington, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall, Symphony Space in New York, Winter Garden with WNYC, and Duke, Northwestern, Colgate and Notre Dame Universities. The Crossing holds an annual residency at the Warren Miller Performing Arts Center in Big Sky, Montana where they are working on an extensive, multi-year project with composer Michael Gordon and filmmaker Bill Morrison.

With a commitment to recording its commissions, The Crossing has issued 19 releases, receiving two Grammy® Awards for Best Choral Performance (2018, 2019), and three Grammy® nominations in as many years. The Crossing, with Donald Nally, was the American Composers Forum's 2017 Champion of New Music. They were the recipients of the 2015 Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence, three ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming, and the Dale Warland Singers Commission Award from Chorus America.

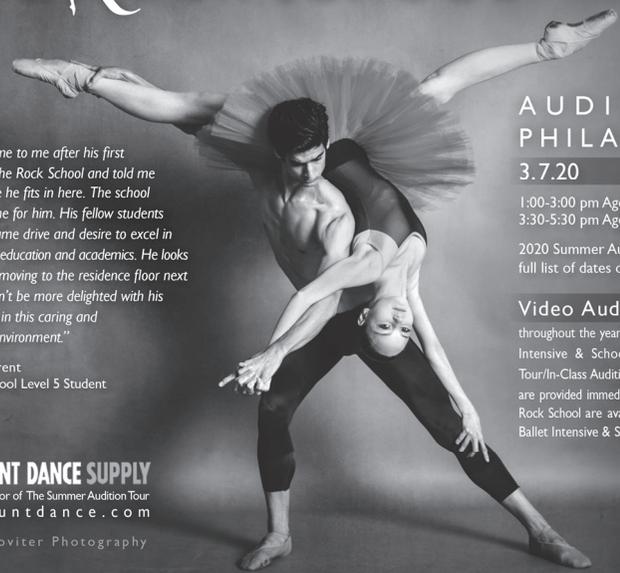
Donald Nally (Director)

Nally conducts The Crossing, the internationally acclaimed, Grammy® Award-winning professional choir that commissions, premieres and records only new music. He holds the John W. Beattie Chair of Music at Northwestern University where he is professor and director of choral organizations. Nally has served as chorus master at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Welsh National Opera, Opera Philadelphia, and for many seasons, at the Spoleto Festival in Italy. Nally has commissioned over 100 works and, with The Crossing, has produced 17 recordings, winning two Grammy® Awards. He

was the American Composers Forum 2017 Champion of New Music and received the 2017 Michael Korn Founders Award from Chorus America. His ensembles have twice received the Margaret Hillis Award for Excellence in Choral Music. Nally has worked closely with the artists Allora & Calzadilla and composer David Lang on projects in London, Osaka, Cleveland, Edmonton and Philadelphia. In the 2018-19 season, he was a visiting resident artist at the Park Avenue Armory, music director for the world premiere of Lang's *The Mile-Long Opera*, directing 1,000 voices on the High Line in Manhattan, as well as chorus master for the New York Philharmonic for world premieres by Lang and Julia Wolfe.

Jeff Sugg (Lighting/Projections)

Sugg is an award-winning designer with over 20 years in the performing arts. His work ranges from experimental to classical to Broadway. Select credits include: Broadway: *Tina: The Musical*, *All My Sons*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Sweat*, *Bring It On* and *33 Variations*. West End: *Tina: The Musical*. Music: *Fire In My Mouth* (New York Philharmonic), *Anthracite Fields* (Julia Wolfe's Pulitzer® Prize-winning piece) and Prince's final appearance on *Saturday Night Live*.



THE ROCK SCHOOL SUMMER BALLET INTENSIVE 2020

AUDITION in PHILADELPHIA
3.7.20

1:00-3:00 pm Age 8-13
3:30-5:30 pm Age 14+

2020 Summer Auction Tour
full list of dates online

Video Auditions Accepted
throughout the year for both the Summer Ballet Intensive & School Year Program. Audition Tour/In-Class Audition level placements & results are provided immediately. In-Class Auditions at The Rock School are available for both the Summer Ballet Intensive & School Year Program.

"My son came to me after his first month at The Rock School and told me he feels like he fits in here. The school is truly home for him. His fellow students have the same drive and desire to excel in their dance education and academics. He looks forward to moving to the residence floor next fall. I couldn't be more delighted with his experience in this caring and nurturing environment."

- Rock Parent
Rock School Level 5 Student

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