

The Annenberg Center Presents PHILADANCO in a Live Streamed Performance, Thursday, October 29

(Philadelphia – October 21, 2020) — **The Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts** presents **PHILADANCO**, streamed live from the Annenberg Center on **Thursday, October 29 at 7 PM**. Celebrated for its innovation, creativity and preservation of predominantly African-American traditions in dance, PHILADANCO returns to the Annenberg Center stage after last season's popular holiday hit, *Xmas Philes*. Dancer/choreographers Janine Beckles and Joe González will perform an evening of solos and duets, and then will be joined by the company's legendary founder and executive and artistic director Joan Myers Brown for a post-show Q&A. Visit [AnnenbergCenter.org](https://www.annenbergcenter.org) for more information.

The program will highlight social justice and current issues. *Rosa* (excerpt), with choreography by Billy Wilson, music by Roberta Flack, and costumes by Natasha Guruleva, is a vivid tribute to Rosa Parks, the civil rights activist of the 1960's who refused to sit in the segregated back of the bus in Montgomery, Alabama. *Section II – For Five* (excerpt from *A Movement for Five*), choreographed by Dawn Marie Bazemore with music by Sigur Rós, and costumes by Natasha Guruleva, was inspired by the events surrounding the "Central Park Five." *A Movement for Five* aims to uncover the structure of a community and socio-political system that failed to protect the lives of five innocent young boys living in Harlem in 1989. The program is completed by *With-Held*, choreographed by Janine Beckles and Joe González with music by Ólafur Arnalds, a work that questions how to hold on to someone while being withheld from them.

About the Artists

Janine Beckles (Dancer/Choreographer)

A native of New York City, Beckles started dancing at the age of six at Dance Theatre of Harlem, where she stayed for eight years under a fellowship scholarship. She then continued her training at LaGuardia High School and the Ailey School (performing *Memoria*, *Hymn* and *Revelations*), both on full scholarship. She received a BFA in dance performance and a BA in sociology from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX, where she also became a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Beckles was a National Foundation on the Arts award recipient in modern dance and a member of Dallas Black Dance Theatre for five years. Beckles has also done commercial work as a dancer for Beyoncé in the 2016 MTV Video Music Awards. For the 2018-19 season, she was selected as a Visiting Teaching Fellow for the School of American Ballet and is currently a lead dancer and company Graham teacher for PHILADANCO, where she is entering her 10th season. While on tour, Beckles has taught masterclasses at USC Kaufman, UMass Amherst, UNC and other universities and colleges. Most recently, Beckles became the newest board member of the Philadelphia Volunteer Lawyers Association and completed the Martha Graham Teacher Workshop this past June. She is currently in graduate school studying to obtain her MBA with a concentration on leadership.

Joe González (Dancer/Choreographer)

Born and raised in Boston, González started dancing at the age of 13 at the Roxbury Center for the Performing Arts. He is a graduate of the Boston Arts Academy where he was a dance major. He

participated in programs such as Boston Conservatory's Summer Dance Intensive, the American Dance Festival, Bates Dance Festival and Springboard Dance Montréal in 2010 and 2011. González received his BFA from Boston Conservatory where he premiered several works in choreography showcases. He also premiered two commissioned works at Bryn Mawr College in 2018 and 2020. González currently tours nationally and internationally as a performing artist with PHILADANCO and with Jo-Mé Dance, a company he co-founded to promote cooperative diversity and cultural awareness in the dance community. He has previously toured and performed for Anna Myer and Dancers, Prometheus Dance, Dawn Marie Bazemore's #dbdanceproject, the Putty Dance Project, Dance Iquail and Waheed-Works, founded by PHILADANCO artist-in-residence Tommie-Waheed Evans. While he continues to work as a performing artist and choreographer, González also currently serves as Executive Artistic Director and Choreographer for Jo-Mé Dance, Artistic Director of PHILADANCO's D/3 Youth Ensemble, an adjunct dance professor at Temple University and a dance educator at the Boston Arts Academy.

About the Company

The award-winning Philadelphia Dance Company (PHILADANCO), a resident company of the Kimmel Center, is currently in its 50th anniversary season, celebrating over 50 years of providing brilliant dance performances and exceptional dance training to audiences and dancers throughout the U.S. and around the world. Continuing its original mission "to present the highest quality of professional dance performance and to provide exceptional training for the improvement of skills for emerging professional dancers and choreographers in a nurturing environment while increasing the appreciation of dance among its many communities," PHILADANCO survives and thrives despite the current economic climate as it moves gracefully into its next decade.

Since its inception in 1970, PHILADANCO has had a significant impact on the dance world. As a cultural ambassador representing the U.S., the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the city of Philadelphia, its artistic direction and renowned national and international guest choreographers have developed a reputation of producing a dance repertory with passion, power, skill and diversity. A stellar faculty (handpicked by Joan Myers Brown, founder of PHILADANCO) has trained over 4,500 dancers in a comprehensive program achieving the highest level of technical skills in dance and performance. PHILADANCO'S unique blend of dance styles, a roster of 50-60 concert performances and approximately 45 annual residencies have made them one of the most sought-after modern dance companies in the country.

The company has received countless recognitions including a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship and the prestigious National Choreography Planning Grant. In 1988, PHILADANCO made history when it organized the first two International Conferences for Black Dance Companies in Philadelphia. Since then, more than 600 people have assembled annually for the International Conference on Black Dance, headed by the International Association of Blacks in Dance. PHILADANCO has regularly engaged with the community through Drexel University, the University of Pennsylvania, the Annenberg Center, Breaking Barriers and others. Other notable collaborative successes include *James Brown: Get on the Good Foot* with The Apollo Theater Foundation, Inc. and *Straight Outta Philly* with Rennie Harris Puremovement.

PHILADANCO continues to provide quality arts instruction to young people through authentic learning experiences that engage the mind, heart and body. Its record of performing opportunities, commissioned works and life-changing experiences has left a remarkable legacy in Philadelphia.

"PHILADANCO's dancers are a miracle of skill and energy. They work in a range of idioms most companies don't even try to possess... A company that can do more than just anything. It can represent the possibilities of human spirit through dance." - *Dance Magazine*

Photographs of PHILADANCO can be accessed in the Annenberg Center's Press Room.

About the Annenberg Center's 2020-21 Digital Season

The Annenberg Center's fall 2020 digital season comprises five livestreamed performances by top dance companies, three outstanding jazz artists making their Annenberg Center debuts, and one collaborative early music performance, in addition to screenings of four recently released independent films. The live performances will be broadcast using state-of-the-art digital technology from the Prince or Zellerbach Theatre, integrating live chat, and concluding with interactive discussions with the creators and performers. Livestreamed performances will be available online for 48 hours after the start time for those who purchased access.

About the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts

The Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts serves as a major cultural destination and crossroads connecting the University of Pennsylvania and the Greater Philadelphia region through innovative human expression in theatre, music, dance and film, serving an annual audience of over 80,000. The Annenberg Center also serves as a key resource for the arts at Penn, connecting master artists with Penn students in support of and as an enhancement to the arts curriculum. Student performing arts groups are also key users of the Annenberg Center's multiple performance and rehearsal spaces, while also staffing many operational roles throughout the academic year. In reflection of Penn's core values as a world-respected academic institution, the Annenberg Center emphasizes artistic and intellectual excellence, diversity and rigor in its presentations; prioritizes broad inclusiveness in the artists, audiences and groups it serves; manages outstanding performance, conference and meeting facilities; and stresses comprehensive event planning, production support and customer service. The Annenberg Center is a major provider of performing arts access for school children and actively engages a broad range of primary, secondary and post-secondary student audiences and inclusive constituencies from the campus, community and surrounding region. Visit AnnenbergCenter.org.

CALENDAR LISTING

LIVESTREAM

PHILADANCO

Thursday, October 29, 7 PM

Program

Rosa (excerpt)

Section II – For Five (Excerpt from *A Movement for Five*)

With-Held

Dancers Janine Beckles, Joe González

Celebrated for its innovation, creativity and preservation of predominantly African-American traditions in dance, PHILADANCO returns to the Annenberg Center stage after last season's popular holiday hit, *Xmas Philes*. Dancers Janine Beckles and Joe González will perform an evening of solos and duets and then will be joined by the company's legendary founder and executive and artistic director Joan Myers Brown for a post-show Q&A.

This is an original, live event performed on the Annenberg Center stage and streamed online. It will include an interactive Q&A with the performers.

Access Information for PHILADANCO

Visit AnnenbergCenter.org to purchase access to this show until 7:30 PM on October 29.

The Annenberg Center Presents PHILADANCO

The performance may be watched live at 7 PM on October 29 to participate in the chat and artist Q&A. It will be available on-demand to ticketholders through October 31.

Visit the Annenberg Center's [FAQs](#) for additional details.

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