

# NEWS

Press Contact:  
Online Press Room:  
Twitter:

Rachel Joyce 612.375.7635 rachel.joyce@walkerart.org  
press.walkerart.org  
WalkerArtMedia

## WALKER ART CENTER AND NORTHROP CELEBRATE MERCE CUNNINGHAM'S LEGACY WITH PERFORMANCE OF HIS WORK BY CCN-BALLET DE LORRAINE

"The whole experience, music and dancing was an exhilarating rush."  
—*Washington Post*

Minneapolis, January 25, 2017—The acclaimed [CCN-Ballet de Lorraine](#) celebrates Merce Cunningham's legacy with a rare chance to see two of his groundbreaking works. The evening features the dramatic, Walker-commissioned *Fabrications* and the "organized chaos" of *Sounddance*, performed at a high velocity from start to finish to a thundering electronic score by David Tudor.

The program also includes *Devoted*, a new ballet by the young choreographic duo Cecilia Bengolea and François Chaignaud (part of Trajal Harrell's *Mimosa* at Out There 2013), with a score by Philip Glass. Copresented with Northrop.

The performance at Northrop, Thursday, February 16, at 7:30 pm, opens with [Sounddance](#). Created in 1975 after spending nine weeks with the Paris Opera Ballet, Cunningham set out to create a work for his own dancers that would be "vigorous, fast, complex." "The general impression," he wrote, "is of a space observed under a microscope." The dancers enter and exit through a tent-like opening in the upstage décor designed by Mark Lancaster. The powerful, driven electronic score is by renowned composer David Tudor.

The second piece is [Fabrications](#). This 1987 dance is constructed of a gamut of 64 movement phrases, corresponding to the 64 hexagrams in the *I Ching* (the Chinese *Book of Changes*). According to Cunningham, the title refers to both meanings of the verb "to fabricate": to combine parts to form a whole, and to invent or concoct, even to lie. The dance features the music by Emanuel Dimas de Melo Pimenta, performed live by the composer, and a striking visual design by artist Dove Bradshaw.



CCN-Ballet de Lorraine Performing *Sounddance* Photo: Laurent Philippe



CCN-Ballet de Lorraine Performing *Devoted* Photo: Arno Paul

Lastly, the program features [Devoted](#), a new contemporary ballet by the young French choreographic duo Cecilia Bengolea and François Chaignaud. This piece, which features dancers en pointe and in the more traditional ballet style, is set to a score by Philip Glass. Of the work, the choreographers say they aspired to “create a continuity between the classical and modern past and today, drawing fleeting lines toward the past and speculation about the future.”

Under the artistic direction of [Petter Jacobsen](#), CCN-Ballet de Lorraine and its company of 26 dancers is one of the most important companies working in Europe, performing contemporary creations while retaining and programming a rich and extensive repertory.

Northrop is located at 84 Church St SE, Minneapolis,

CCN-Ballet de Lorraine is presented as a part of the Walker’s *Merce Cunningham: Common Time* exhibition on view February 8-July 30, 2017.

### **Tickets**

Tickets to CCN-Ballet de Lorraine are \$55, \$45, \$35 (\$44, \$36, \$28 Walker members) and are available at [walkerart.org/tickets](http://walkerart.org/tickets) or by calling 612.375.7600.

**Group sales:** Groups of 10+ save 15% off original ticket prices or 25% off for schools and educational groups. To purchase group sales tickets, email [nropgrps@umn.edu](mailto:nropgrps@umn.edu) or call Bridget Reddan at 612-625-1578.

### **Discounted Rush Tickets**

\$10 for U of M Students  
\$20 General Student

Rush tickets can be purchased online, over the phone, or in-person at the Northrop box offices beginning at 10 am the morning of the performance. Receive two discounted tickets per qualifying person with appropriate I.D. Rush tickets are based on availability.

### ***Merce Cunningham: Common Time* Walker Art Center February 8-July 30, 2017**

Merce Cunningham’s dynamic artistic collaborations are the subject of a major interdisciplinary survey organized by the Walker, home to the complete scenic and costume archive of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company (MCDC). Renowned as both choreographer and dancer, Cunningham (American, 1919–2009) revolutionized dance through his partnerships with leading artists who created costumes, lighting, films, music, and décor and whose independent creative instincts he held in the highest regard. *Common Time* offers a journey through a range of experiential installations that unfold at the Walker in seven galleries, the Walker’s McGuire Theater, the Walker Cinema, and public spaces throughout the museum.

Exploring Cunningham's notion that movement, sound, and visual art could share a "common time," the exhibition presents Cunningham's work through rare and never-before seen moving image presentations and installations of stage décor and costumes from the MDCDC Collection. These are contextualized through more than 60 works from a range of artists, including composer John Cage, Cunningham's lifelong collaborator, and William Anastasi, Charles Atlas, Trisha Brown, Tacita Dean, Jasper Johns, Morris Graves, Rei Kawakubo, Robert Morris, Bruce Nauman, Isamu Noguchi, Nam June Paik, Yvonne Rainer, Robert Rauschenberg, Frank Stella, Elaine Summers, David Tudor, Stan VanDerBeek, Andy Warhol, and many others.



CCN-Ballet de Lorraine Performing *Fabrications* Photo: Bernard Prudhomme

Cunningham embraced an expanded possibility of dance, music, and visual art that reads like a how-to guide for pushing the boundaries of art for subsequent generations. In this spirit, the exhibition will also feature new performing arts commissions as well as live dance and music in the theater and galleries. Presentations include a series of in-gallery *Events*, site-responsive collages of Cunningham repertory performed by dancers from the final company as well as new commissions from leading figures in contemporary choreography and composition, including Charles Atlas, Beth Gill, Maria Hassabi, John King, Rashaun Mitchell, and Silas Riener, among others.

The landmark exhibition will investigate the unique working methods, profound relationships, and influence of a choreographer whose singular approach to sharing a "common time" remains one of the most inspirational models of the 20th century for interdisciplinary practice.

*Merce Cunningham: Common Time* is organized by the Walker Art Center, and copresented with the [Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago](#). The exhibition is curated by Fionn Meade and Philip Bither with Joan Rothfuss and Mary Coyne.

### **Walker Art Center Related Events:**

#### ***Merce Cunningham: Common Time* Performance**

Revolutionary artists Merce Cunningham and his partner and collaborator John Cage radically remade dance and music over six decades, transforming our perception of the world. As part of the exhibition *Merce Cunningham: Common Time*—the largest survey of his work yet mounted—Cunningham-connected movement and music performances will span the Walker's stages, galleries, and public spaces.

This extensive interdisciplinary show features live dance and music in the theater as well as the galleries, including stagings of Cunningham's choreography by dancers from the final company and new dance commissions in his spirit. These new works include pieces by Beth Gill, Maria Hassabi, and Rashaun Mitchell + Silas Riener with Charles Atlas—all of whom, like Cunningham before them, make individualistic forms of rigorously abstract movement art propelling today's dance forward. The Walker's Merce Cunningham Dance Company Collection forms the backbone of the Walker-organized exhibition, exploring the lasting impact of one of America's most important figures in contemporary art.

## Northrop Related Events:

### Film series

#### ***Cage/Cunningham***

Tuesday, Feb 7, 6:30pm

[Best Buy Theater](#)

Free and open to the public

*Cage/Cunningham* documents the 50 year collaboration between two revolutionary American artists, composer John Cage and choreographer Merce Cunningham.

### U of M Libraries and Northrop Present

#### **Gallery Exhibit: What the Fluxus: Manifestations Through Visual and Performing Arts**

Jan 16–Feb 20, 2017

4<sup>th</sup> Floor Northrop Gallery

*What the FLUXUS?* is a two-part exhibition celebrating the visual, literary, and performing artists that traversed an internationally critical period in a way that challenged—both culturally and politically—how art was made, perceived, and experienced. Complementing the [CCN-Ballet de Lorraine](#) performance as part of Northrop's [Dance Season](#), the exhibit features the intersection of dancer and choreographer [Merce Cunningham](#) with composers [John Cage](#) and [David Tudor](#), artist [Robert Rauschenberg](#), and artists that formed the [FLUXUS](#) family including [Yoko Ono](#), [Dick Higgins](#), and [Nam June Paik](#).

Open during regular Northrop building hours.

More of this exhibition, including original works at:

[The T.R. Anderson Gallery](#) at [Wilson Library](#)

Mon-Fri, 8:30 am-4:30 pm

### Northrop Presents

#### **Ballet de Lorraine Performance Preview**

Thursday, February 16, 6:15pm

[Best Buy Theater](#)

Free and open to the public

Gain insight into the performance at an in-depth conversation about the company and the evening's program.

### The Institute for Advanced Study Presents

IAS Thursdays: FLUXUS: Manifestations Through Visual and Performing Arts

Thursday, February 2, 3:30 pm

[Best Buy Theater](#)

Free and open to the public

Fluxus art in the 1960s and 70s championed concepts of time, chance, impermanence, and the banal, blurring life and art. Appearing on the streets and public environs beyond theaters and traditional exhibition spaces, artist collaborations merged the visual and performing arts. Complementing the Ballet de Lorraine Northrop Dance event celebrating Merce Cunningham's culminating works, Deborah Boudewyns, the curator of the Gorman Rare Arts Book Collection, and other scholars will talk about the exhibition of rare materials that illustrates

the connection between the visual artists, dancers, and musicians significant to Fluxus art, performance, and Merce Cunningham's legacy.

### **Northrop at The University of Minnesota**

Northrop is an epicenter of discovery and transformation that connects the University of Minnesota and communities beyond by celebrating innovation in the arts, performance, and academics.

### **Acknowledgments**

*Merce Cunningham: Common Time* is organized by the Walker Art Center. Lead support for the project is provided by the Barnett and Annalee Newman Foundation and the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Generous support is also provided by Agnes Gund and the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation.

Major support for the Walker's commissions and presentation is provided by the William and Nadine McGuire Commissioning Fund, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.



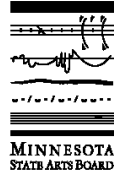
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The Walker Art Center's performing arts programs are made possible by generous support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation through the Doris Duke Performing Arts Fund, the William and Nadine McGuire Commissioning Fund, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

### **Producers' Council**

Performing Arts programs and commissions at the Walker are generously supported by members of the Producers' Council: Goodale Family Foundation, Nor Hall and Roger Hale; King's Fountain/Barbara Watson Pillsbury and Henry Pillsbury; Emily Maltz; Dr. William W. and Nadine M. McGuire; Leni and David Moore, Jr./The David and Leni Moore Family Foundation; Mike and Elizabeth Sweeney; and Frances and Frank Wilkinson.

Premier Partners



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

The Walker Art Center is located at 1750 Hennepin Avenue—where Hennepin meets Lyndale—one block off Highways I-94 and I-394, in Minneapolis.

For public information, call 612.375.7600 or visit [walkerart.org](http://walkerart.org). Stay connected via your mobile device and follow us on Twitter and Facebook.