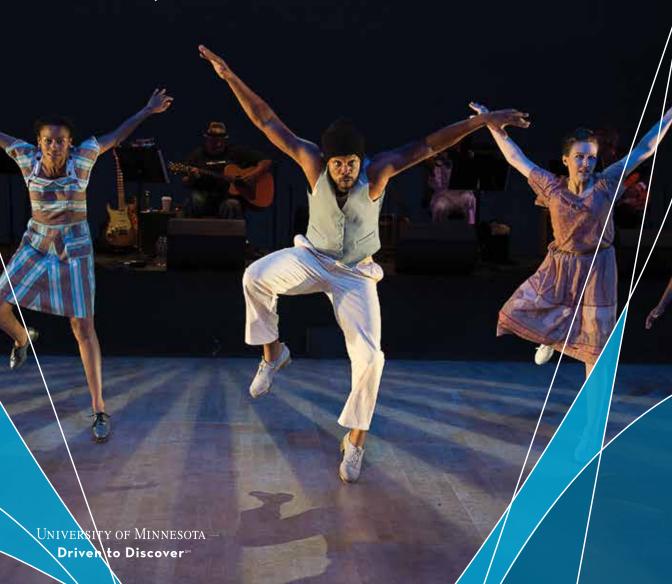
**2015 // 16 SEASON** 

**Northrop Presents** 

# DORRANCE DANCE with Toshi Reagon and BIGLovely

Thu, Nov 19, 7:30 pm Carlson Family Stage

The Blues Project





Christine Tschida. Photo by Patrick O'Leary, University of Minnesota.

Dear Friends of Northrop,

I'm so excited that tonight is finally here—the night Northrop welcomes Michelle Dorrance and *The Blues Project* in an irresistible outpouring of joyous energy and relentless rhythm. Since I first saw this work more than a year ago, I have been anxious to share it with you.

Groundbreaking is an understatement for this dancer and choreographer who was the first tap artist to win the Princess Grace Award, and recently added a Best Production Bessie Award and the well-known "Genius" grant to her trophy shelf. Upon awarding that prestigious Fellowship Award, the MacArthur Foundation noted, "Michelle Dorrance is ... breathing new life into a uniquely American art form in works that combine the musicality of tap with the choreographic intricacies of contemporary dance. (She) uses her deep understanding of the technique and history of tap to deconstruct and reimagine its artistic possibilities."

The praise doesn't stop there. The New York Times applauded Dorrance's "wonderful comic timing and compellingly syncopated physicality" and she was described by The New Yorker as "one of the most imaginative tap choreographers working today."

As modest as she is talented, Dorrance would be quick to acknowledge co-choreographers and co-creators Derick K. Grant and Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards, along with the entire powerhouse ensemble that takes the stage with her tonight. And once again, we have the thrill of live music, courtesy of versatile American rock and folk musician Toshi Reagon and her band BIGLovely. Since tap is primarily an aural dance form, with the dancers creating complex rhythms and syncopations through technical feats of footwork, this collaboration of dancers and musicians is a perfect fit.

"I think tap dance is the ultimate art form, at least for me," Dorrance says. "To be able to be a dancer and a musician at the same time, there's nothing like it. ...There's something organic in your biorhythms, your heartbeat. And to be able to demonstrate that inside of a moving form is phenomenal."

Phenomenal. That's what I thought. I hope you do, too!

Sincerely,

Christine Tschida
Director of Northrop

Clinate Taluda

**NEXT UP AT NORTHROP:** Happy Holidays to all as we take a break until January. Please remember the great dance and live music you've seen at Northrop in your year-end charitable giving! And join us again on Saturday, January 30, when Hubbard Street Dance Chicago brings us a program of today's most exciting contemporary choreographers: Crystal Pite, Jiří Kylián, William Forsythe, and Nacho Duato.

Northrop at the University of Minnesota Presents

## DORRANCE DANCE with TOSHI REAGON and BIGLovely

## in THE BLUES PROJECT

**Created by MICHELLE DORRANCE, DERICK K. GRANT, TOSHI REAGON, and DORMESHIA SUMBRY-EDWARDS** 

**Composer and Musical Director**, TOSHI REAGON

Choreography by MICHELLE DORRANCE, DERICK K. GRANT, and DORMESHIA SUMBRY-EDWARDS with solo improvisation by the dancers Additional African Choreography, KARIDA GRIFFITH Top/Up Rocking Consultant, EPHRAT ASHERIE

Dancers CHRISTOPHER BROUGHTON

ELIZABETH BURKE MICHELLE DORRANCE DERICK K. GRANT KARIDA GRIFFITH

CLAUDIA RAHARDJANOTO DORMESHIA SUMBRY-EDWARDS

BYRON TITTLE

NICHOLAS VAN YOUNG GABE WINNS, Understudy

Acoustic Guitar & Vocals

Electric Guitar

ADAM WIDOFF

Electric Bass

FRED CASH

Violin JULIETTE JONES

**Drums & Percussion** SHIRAZETTE TINNIN

**Technical Direction** TONY MAYES

Lighting DesignKATHY KAUFMANNLighting SupervisorSERENA WONGCostume DesignANDREW JORDAN



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

This presentation is also supported by the Arts Midwest Touring Fund, a program of Arts Midwest that is funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional contributions from the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Crane Group, and General Mills Foundation.



## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MICHELLE DORRANCE



"To me, Toshi Reagon is a revolutionary, but simultaneously an artist who honors and embodies tradition. Musically she blows genre out of the water but also carries a tremendous folk, blues, and spiritual music history. On top of loving her music since I was 18 years old, I wanted to work with her because she wields music the way I want to wield tap dance—by manifesting the spirit of the great American traditions. I see Derick K. Grant and Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards in a very similar light. Both were mentored by torchbearers of tap dance's legacy and grew up performing alongside the master hoofers of the swing and bebop eras, yet they are two of the most unique, creative, and cutting edge hoofers on the planet. These three artists have inspired the exploration of music, sound, and movement in this work—thank you for joining us!" -Michelle Dorrance

**MICHELLE DORRANCE** (Artistic Director, Choreographer, and Dancer/ Soloist), founder and artistic director of Dorrance Dance, is one of the most soughtafter tap dancers of her generation and "one of the most imaginative tap choreographers working today" (The New Yorker). A 2015 MacArthur Fellow, 2014 Alpert Award Winner, 2013 Jacob's Pillow Dance Award winner, 2012 Princess Grace Award Winner, 2012 Field Dance Fund Recipient, and 2011 Bessie Award Winner, Dorrance performs, teaches, and choreographs throughout the world. Mentored by Gene Medler, Dorrance grew up performing with the North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble and has since performed with: STOMP, Manhattan Tap, Savion Glover's Ti Dii, JazzTap Ensemble, Barbara Duffy & Co, Rumba Tap, Derick Grant's Imagine Tap!, and Jason Samuels Smith's Chasing the Bird, to rave reviews. She holds a BA from NYU and teaches on faculty at Broadway Dance Center. More at michelledorrance.com.

## THE DANCERS



**DERICK K. GRANT** (Choreographer and Dancer/Soloist) is a performer, choreographer, and director who has an established career that spans over three decades. Under the direction of Tony Award winner George C. Wolfe, he was an original

company member and Dance Captain for Bring In 'Da Noise, Bring In 'Da Funk at both The Public Theater and on Broadway and starred in the role of 'da beat for the first National Tour. Grant created the critically acclaimed show Imagine Tap!; his choreography has been featured on Fox's hit series So You Think You Can Dance; and he has performed and recorded with Grammy Award winner Dan Zanes. Grant was the recipient of the Princess Grace Award for Upcoming Young Artist and The Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Featured Actor, two Los Angeles Ovation Awards for choreography and Best Ensemble Performance in Noise/Funk, and was most recently recognized for Best Choreography for Imagine Tap!. He is currently a corporate Tap spokesperson for SoDanca and continues to transform and inspire dance communities around the world.



### **DORMESHIA SUMBRY-EDWARDS**

(Choreographer and Dancer/Soloist) is known for setting high standards in the world of tap dance. Tap coach to the king of pop, Michael Jackson, over the course of 11 years, she received

a Bessie Award for her featured performance in Jason Samuels Smith & Company at the Joyce Theater and an Astaire Award for Best Female Performer for her featured performance in Broadway's After Midnight. She is currently on the board as the Tap Advisor for Dance Magazine and was the official Tap Spokesperson for Capezio, including being featured in their international advertising campaign. Performances include Tony Award-winning productions on

Broadway such as After Midnight, Black and Blue, and Bring In Da'Noise, Bring In Da'Funk; international tour of Bring in Da'Noise, Bring in Da'Funk (dance captain/principal dancer/ understudy to the lead role); national tour of Wild Woman Blues; and Debbie Allen's SAMMY (the life and times of Sammy Davis Jr.). She recently performed as a special guest at NJPAC with Grammy Recording Artist and fellow After Midnight star Fantasia. Sumbry-Edwards was also nominated for Best Actress for the starring role in The Rise and Fall of Miss Thang (Lavender House Films), which toured film festivals nationwide. Other notable film credits include TAP with Gregory Hines; Spike Lee's Bamboozled (assistant choreographer/actress); and The Rodgers and Hart Story: Thou Swell, Thou Witty. Sumbry-Edwards' choreography has been featured on national and international stages as well as in Michael Jackson's music video "Rock Your World," and in weekly shows at the world-famous Cotton Club in Harlem.



**CHRISTOPHER BROUGHTON** (Dancer) began his career at age 12 under Paul and Arlene Kennedy at Universal Dance. He joined their acclaimed Kennedy Tap

Company, where he received the national NAACP ACT-SO Award

twice. He now travels worldwide both as a soloist and with Jason Samuels Smith's A.C.G.I., Rasta Thomas' Tap Stars, and Dorrance Dance. Performances include New York City Center's Cotton Club Parade; JUBA! Masters of Tap and Percussive Dance at the Kennedy Center; and Broadway's Tony & Astaire Award-winning production After Midnight. Broughton owes his sincerest gratitude to his sister, Chantel Heath, who introduced him to the world of dance; Tonie Nicholas, son of the legendary Fayard Nicholas; and Paul and Arlene Kennedy, without whom he wouldn't be where he is today.



**ELIZABETH BURKE** 

(Dancer) has been working with Michelle Dorrance's award-winning Dorrance Dance since the company's inception in 2010/2011 and prior to that spent 11 years under the tutelage of her mentor, Gene Medler, in the acclaimed North Carolina

Youth Tap Ensemble (NCYTE) (1999-2010). She is also an alumna of the School at Jacob's Pillow (2014) and Marymount Manhattan College (BA Political Science, BA Communication Arts, magna cum laude, 2014). Burke teaches regularly in New York City at the American Tap Dance Foundation (ATDF) and also works with Bessie Award-winner Nicholas Van Young's SoundMovement Dance Company in addition to other New York City-based choreographers.



**KARIDA GRIFFITH** 

(Dancer) is from Portland, Oregon! Stage: Cirque du Soleil's Banana Shpeel, Radio City Rockettes, Black and Blue (Henry LeTang & Dianne Walker), NY City Center's Fall for Dance Festival, Sinatra (Des MacAnuff & Casev

Nicholaw), Spoleto Festival USA, CTFD Gala (Randy Skinner), CREATIONS (Producer), NYC Tap Festival, Jacob's Pillow. Television: Boardwalk Empire (HBO), Tony Awards, The Today Show. Companies: Dorrance Dance, Cotton Club Sophisticated Ladies, Barbara Duffy & Co, and the Children's Theatre Company (Board of Directors). Griffith loves teaching students of all ages, and is currently on the Tap Faculty at Broadway Dance Center. More at karidagriffith.com.



**CLAUDIA RAHARDIANOTO** 

(Dancer), born and raised in Berlin, Germany, started dancing professionally at the age of nine at the Deutsche Oper Berlin. Named one of "25 To Watch" by Dance Magazine in 2010 and featured on the cover

of Dance Teacher Magazine in 2011, Rahardjanoto has danced with and learned from Andreas Dänel, Sven Göttlicher, Dianne Walker, Ted Levv. Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards, Michelle Dorrance, Derick Grant, Brenda Bufalino, Roxane Butterfly, Andrew Nemr, Barbara Duffy, Jane Goldberg, Jared Grimes, Max Pollak, Michael Minery, the late Harold 'Stumpy' Cromer, and the legendary Mable Lee, amongst others. She is grateful to be able to share her passion and love for tap dance through her performances and teaching worldwide.



BYRON TITTLE (Dancer) has been dancing since the age of 5 in his hometown of New York. Starting with tap and ballet, he soon grew to enjoy the different genres and aesthetics in the entire realm of dance. He began tapping with the American

Tap Dance Foundation's

Tap City Youth Ensemble, where he met Michelle Dorrance. He has toured the nation with Tap Kids, performed on FOX's The X Factor (Brian Friedman, Tessandra Chavez, Tucker Barkley) and most recently performed for Janet Jackson on the 2015 BET Awards.

## THE DANCERS



GABE WINNS (Dancer) was born in San Diego, California, and began dancing at the age of 11. Since then, his love for tap dance has never stopped growing. He has toured both nationally and internationally as a cast member of Tap Kids,

including the 5 star reviewed cast at the 2009 Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland. Since moving to New York City in January of 2013, Winns has made his presence felt, working with numerous choreographers, including Michelle Dorrance, Cartier Williams, Lisa LaTouche, and Aaron Tolson, as well as teaching at various studios in the city.



NICHOLAS VAN
YOUNG (Dancer), a
New York-based dancer,
choreographer, musician,
and master teacher, began
his professional career
under Acia Gray and Deidre
Strand with Tapestry Dance
Company in Austin, TX,
eventually as a principal

dancer and resident choreographer. Since moving to New York, he has performed with Manhattan Tap, RumbaTap, Dorrance Dance, "Beat the Donkey," has toured as a drummer for Darwin Deez and spent almost a decade performing with *STOMP*. Van Young recently premiered his dance company, Sound Movement, and is working closely with Michelle Dorrance on their collaborative project, *ETM*.



## THE MUSICIANS



#### **TOSHI REAGON**

(Composer & Music Director, Vocals, Acoustic Guitar) has been described as "a talented, versatile singer, composer, producer and musician with a profound ear for sonic Americana— from folk to funk, from blues to rock" by

critic/blogger Eva Yaa Asantewaa of InfiniteBody. "She masters each of these genres with vocal strategies that easily spiral and swoop from the expressively sinuous to the hard-charging, a combination of warmth and mischief." While her expansive career has landed her comfortably in residence at Carnegie Hall, the Paris Opera House, and Madison Square Garden, you can just as easily find Reagon turning out a music festival, intimate venue, or local club. Her dance and theater collaborations include work with Urban Bush Women, Jane Comfort and Company, LAVA, and two operas with her mother Bernice Johnson Reagon and Robert Wilson. Reagon has been the recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) award for Music Composition and The Black Lily Music and Film Festival award for Outstanding Performance. She is a National Women's History Month Honoree and is the 2010 recipient of OutMusic's Heritage Award. In 2011 she received a Stonewall Honors Award with her partner J. Bob Alotta. Reagon founded the festival Word\*Rock\*& Sword: A FESTIVAL Celebration of Women's Lives. It is now in its fifth year and occurred most recently in September 2015 in New York City for eight days.



FRED CASH (Electric Bass) "His list of recording and performance credits is too long to list here. He comes from Chicago, Illinois. Thank God he decided to land in NYC, because the NY music scene has been made better by his participation. He is a

longtime member of the band BIGLovely but has created great work with Morley, Carl Hancock Rux, Alicia Keys, Mary J. Blige, Martha Redbone, the late great Sekou Sundiata; on and on I could go. This man makes everyone he plays with better. This is not a bio—it's a testimony." –Toshi Reagon



JULIETTE JONES (Violin)
After years of classical
and conservatory training,
Jones moved to New York
City from Buffalo, New York
and established herself
as a multi-genre acoustic
and electric violinist. She
currently performs as a
live and studio recording

artist and also works extensively with bands, DJs, and solo artists. A Broadcast Music Incorporated (BMI) composer and songwriter, Jones completed album projects for Ryan Leslie, Donnie McClurkin, and Donald Lawrence under the direction of Darin Atwater. Jones has taped for Late Night with Jimmy Fallon, MTV's Unplugged, Saturday Night Live, Victoria's Secret Fashion Show, Good Morning America, The Late Show with David Letterman, and BET's 106 & Park. Jones performed her solo debut with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra in 2003, and has since performed with Florence + The Machine, Nicki Minaj, Kid Cudi, April Nevels, Tye Tribbett, Richard Smallwood, Hezekiah Walker, Kim Burrell, and Sheila E.

## THE MUSICIANS



#### SHIRAZETTE TINNIN

(Drums/Percussion) was born and raised in North Carolina. Her sound resonates with jazz, soul, and many other styles of music. An in-demand drummer in New York City, she has performed with Alicia Keys on BET in Black

Girl's Rock (2012), toured with Tia Fuller at the Umbria Jazz Festival, Molde Jazz Festival and the Turkish Ambassadors, while leading her own group, The Shirazette Experiment Core-Tet. Tinnin is also collaborating with numerous other artists, and is the resident drummer for the Gabriel Alegria Afro-Peruvian Sextet. She strives to keep the motion of jazz music progressive in all of her endeavors. Tinnin is an active clinician, teacher, health coach and author, writing articles for *Modern Drummer* and *Tom Tom Magazine*. She is currently working on the release of her debut album as a bandleader, and is signed with the new record label Hot Tone Music. Tinnin endorses Canopus Dtums, Sabian Cymbals, Latin Percussion, Beato Bags, and KickPort.



#### **ADAM WIDOFF**

(Guitar) is a talented multi-instrumentalist who currently can be found playing guitar with Toshi Reagon and BIGLovely and also with P-Funk veterans Clip Payne, Lige Cury, and Gary Shider in a vicious unit called *Drugs*. He

has studied Indian music extensively and was a student of sitar master Ustad Jamaluddin Bhartiya. Widoff spent time as a guitarist for Lenny Kravitz during the *Let Love Rule* era. Other credits include Memorial Garage, Karl Denson, Mercury Rev, Marc Copely, and with David Torn on McKinley on many more live and studio appearances.



## **STAFF**

ANDREW JORDAN (Costume Design) is a visual artist working in various media including sculpture, performance, fashion, costume design, and photography. He received his MFA with an emphasis in sculpture form the Cranbrook Academy of Art and his BFA in Fine Arts where he minored in Media Studies from the Columbus College of Art and Design. Jordan experiments with the interplay between various art forms driven by his interest in the relationship of sculpture, installation, and puppetry to the movement of the human body. More at andytoad.com.

**KATHY KAUFMANN** (Lighting Designer), born and raised in New York City, is a two-time Bessie award recipient whose work has been seen throughout the U.S., Canada, Europe, and Asia. She has been resident lighting designer at Danspace Project for over 15 years, working with such artists as Meredith Monk, Reggie Wilson, Kota Yamazaki, Cori Olinghouse, Adrienne Truscott, Douglas Dunn, Roseanne Spradlin, and Will Rawls. She designs regularly for many companies including David Parker and the Bang Group, Eiko and Koma, Gina Gibney, Ben Munisteri, Joanna Kotze, Jacques D'Amboise, and Sally Silvers, among others. Recent projects include Rebecca Davis's Bloowst windku at HERE, Keely Garfield's WOW, and Larissa Velez-Jackson's Star Crap Method at the Chocolate Factory. A proud member of Dorrance Dance since its inception, she has designed the lighting for SOUNDspace, The Blues Project, Delta to Dusk, and ETM: The Initial Approach. Kaufmann teaches at Sarah Lawrence College and lights special events for the Food Network.

TONY MAYES (Technical Director/Production Manager) has been producing since 2001 when he began working with the American Tap Dance Foundation's Tap City, the New York City Tap Festival. Since then he has produced, designed, stage managed, toured with, and performed in countless productions in New York and nationally. "It's always an honor to work with such talent."

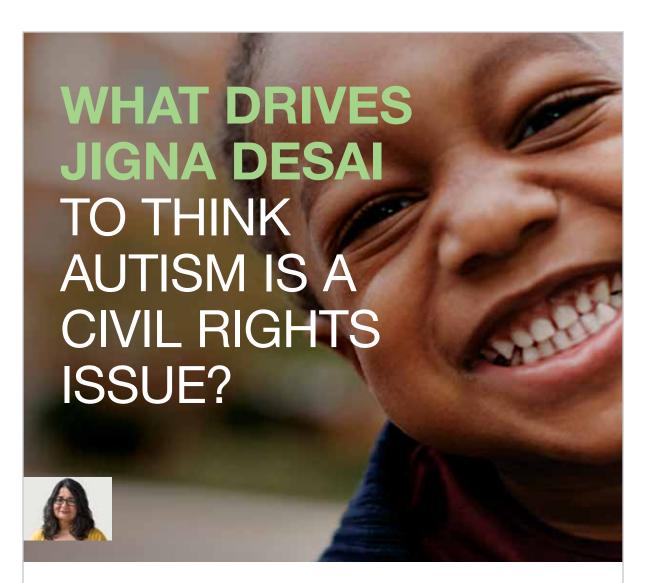
**SERENA WONG** (Lighting Supervisor) is a Brooklyn-based freelance lighting designer for theater and dance. Her designs have been seen at New York Live Arts, Irondale Arts Center, the New Ohio, and Danspace. She is the resident lighting designer for New York Theatre Ballet, and enjoys beekeeping and bread baking.

#### For booking information

contact Lotus Arts Management, Sophie Myrtil-McCourty, President, at 125-28 Queens Boulevard, Suite 346, Kew Gardens, NY 11415. Tel: 347-721-8724 Email: sophie@lotusartsmgmt.com Website: lotusartsmgmt.com







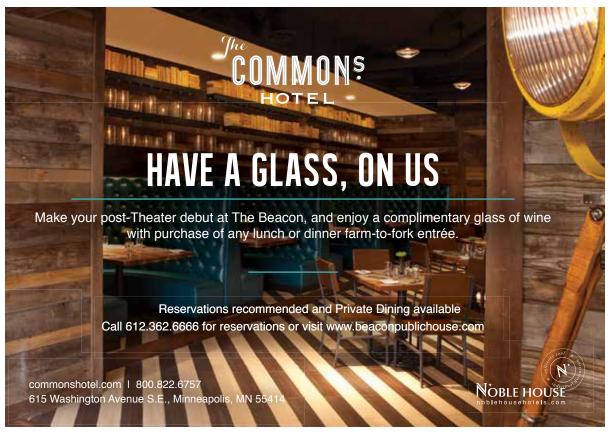
Many view autism as a condition needing a cure. But what if it's not? What if neurological differences such as autism, ADHD, and dyslexia are a valuable part of human diversity? That's what drives Dr. Jigna Desai at the University of Minnesota to remove barriers and stigma that prevent these members of our society from reaching their full potential. "All brains may not be created the same," she says, "but they all deserve equal rights." umn.edu/desai

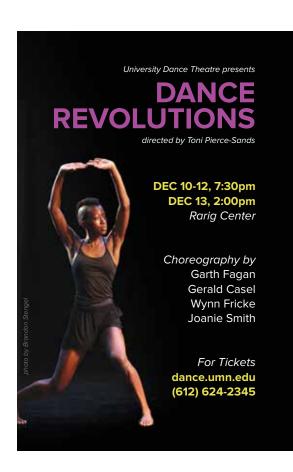


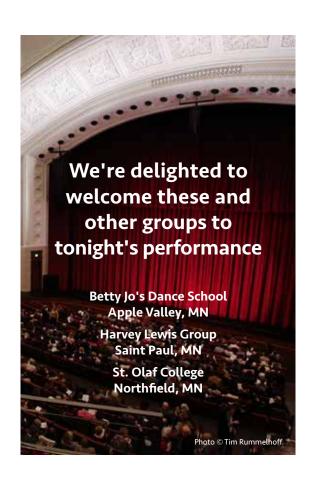
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Surdyk's Café is on the first floor, west side of Northrop. Hours: 7:30 am-7:00 pm, Monday-Thursday, and 7:30am-5:00 pm, Friday. Surdyk's concessions (including wine and beer) are located on the east and west sides of each level before and during performances happening on the Carlson Family Stage.

#### Restrooms

Restrooms are located on every level and side of the building, including family restrooms (except on the fourth floor, where there is a women's restroom on the east side, and a men's restroom on the west side only).

#### **General Ticket Information**

For any ticketing questions, visit U of M Tickets and Events on the ground floor of west and east sides of the building or visit northrop.umn.edu for the most current listing of events.

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If a guest wishes to transfer from their wheelchair to fixed seats, the wheelchair will be taken to the outer lobby to comply with local fire code regulations. At the end of the performance an usher will return the wheelchair to the guest.

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Use of cameras and recording equipment are not permitted in the theater. Please be considerate and turn off your cell phones or other electronic devices during the performance.

#### **Motorist Assistance**

University of Minnesota provides free jump starts, vehicle unlocking, and flat tire changes to vehicles in University parking facilities Mon-Fri, 7:00 am-10:00 pm. Call 612-626-PARK (7275) for assistance.

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Trained security monitors are available 24/7 to walk or bike with anyone on campus. This free service is provided by the University of Minnesota Police Department. Please call 612-624-WALK (9255) or ask an usher to contact them for you.

#### **Questions?**

If you have any questions or concerns, please ask an usher or anyone with a Northrop name tag.

## **NORTHROP STAFF**

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## **UP NEXT!**

**Northrop Presents** 

HUBBARD STREET DANCE CHICAGO

Sat, Jan 30, 8:00 pm

Solo/Echo Falling Angels NNNN Gwawa

Returning after captivating Northrop audiences two years ago, with a contemporary dance program of unparalleled precision and versatility