

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Memoria (World Premiere – 1979)

IN MEMORY – IN CELEBRATION

Choreography: Alvin Ailey
Staged by: Masazumi Chaya
Music: Keith Jarrett
Costumes: A. Christina Giannini
Lighting: Chenault Spence

*This work is dedicated to the joy...the beauty...the creativity...
and the wild spirit of my friend Joyce Trisler. —Alvin Ailey*

In the tumultuous time of 1979 when Mr. Ailey's great, perennial friend from his Lester Horton days, choreographer Joyce Trisler, died prematurely, he began choreographing [*Memoria*](#). Later, he wrote, "*Memoria* is about Joyce's life, my memories of her, my image of her. Although these are very abstract images, nobody has ever asked me what *Memoria* is about. People everywhere understand it. Making the dance was a very deep and wrenching experience for me."

The ballet is structured in two parts—"In Memory" and "In Celebration"—to the sublime music of Keith Jarrett. *Memoria* marked the first time Mr. Ailey combined Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater with Ailey II and advanced students from The Ailey School.



AAADT in Alvin Ailey's *Memoria* with Kansas City Area Dance Students. Photo by Steve Wilson.

"...a serious stage drama, with mystery and poetry." – *The New York Times*

"...Mr. Ailey has paid Miss Trisler the fine tribute of creating a work that has a universal quality. It is a dance of both exultation and quiet but deep feeling." – *The New York Times*

"...a homage to the late Joyce Trisler that grows more poignant and more golden every season." – *The New York Times*

"...a rhapsodic ensemble number that unfolds like the opening of a blossom." – *The Washington Post*

"A work of love that brims over with the joys of life." – *San Francisco Chronicle*



Keith Jarrett. Photo by Rose Anne Colavito.

Keith Jarrett

Keith Jarrett, pianist, composer and bandleader, is one of the most prolific, innovative, and iconoclastic musicians to emerge from the late 20th century. Jarrett was born May 8, 1945 in Allentown, Pennsylvania. At the age of three he began playing piano. He undertook the study of classical music at age eight, and at 15 he studied formal composition before moving to Boston to study briefly at the Berklee College of Music. As a pianist (though that is by no means the only instrument he plays), he literally changed the conversation in jazz by introducing an entirely new aesthetic regarding solo improvisation in concert. Capable of playing in a wide variety of styles and recorded over 80 albums as a leader in jazz and classical music. He has won the Down Beat Critics Poll, as a pianist, multiple times including consecutively between 2001 and 2008.

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the New York State Council on the Arts.

Memoria Music Credit Information

Songs: “Runes” & “Solara March” (Keith Jarrett – Cavelight Music)

Keith Jarrett, Jan Garbarek, Charlie Haden, Members of the RSO Stuttgart, Mladen Gutesha. Published 1976 ECM Records.