



Dance theater returns to Baltimore after riots forced cancellation

By: Sarah Caldwell

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A year ago, the renowned Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater was forced to cancel a performance in Baltimore because of unrest. The company makes an emotional return to the Lyric for two nights starting Tuesday.

The dancers have a message of hope and optimism. Most remember where they were when the riots erupted and how it made them feel, including dancers Jacqueline Green and Daniel Harder, who are both from Maryland.

"I remember just getting on a plane and about to find our seat, and takeoff was in 10 minutes, when someone came up to me and asked how was my family with everything going on in Baltimore," Green said.

"It's almost hard to describe the myriad of emotions you go through watching this happen in a city you are affiliated with, and that you love," Harder said.

Harder and Green found out about the unrest while on tour with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. Green, who is a graduate of Baltimore School for the Arts, recalls the shock and confusion.

"I'm sitting on a plane wondering what is going on and whether my family was OK," Green said. "Then we land and hear about all of those things that were happening. It was crazy."

It was a tumultuous time that brought city to a halt. Exactly one year later, Green and Harder take the stage at the Lyric Tuesday and Wednesday as part of Alvin Ailey's 20-city tour, and yet they said this performance feels unlike any other.

Green will also take the spotlight alone Tuesday night.

She will be dancing a routine that Ailey choreographed especially for his mother, but dedicated to women everywhere. Green has one particular woman in mind.

"My mother has never seen me perform it, and I will be performing it tonight here in Baltimore for the first time," she said. "I'm overwhelmed. I'm trying not to think about it, but I'm very excited."

Along with Green and Harder's families, the Baltimore family as a whole is now a city rising.

Watch video here:

<http://www.wbalTV.com/entertainment/dance-company-returns-to-baltimore-after-riots-forced-cancellation/39223488>