

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

The Golden Section (1983) (New Production 2017)

Choreography: Twyla Tharp

Restaged by: Shelley Washington

Music: David Byrne

Set, Décor, and Costumes: Santo Loquasto

Lighting: Jennifer Tipton



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Twyla Tharp's *The Golden Section*. Photo by Paul Kolnik

Tony Award-winner Twyla Tharp's *The Golden Section* was presented as the grand finale of the Broadway production *The Catherine Wheel* in 1981. Two years later, *The Golden Section* became a stand-alone work celebrated for its pure-dance expression of blissful joy. The critically-acclaimed ballet, first performed by the Company in 2006, pushes the limits of human physicality as Ailey dancers soar in Tharp's daring, driving choreography with breathtaking leaps and finely-honed partnering. Set to a new wave rock score by David Byrne, it offers "dancing of astonishing beauty and power" (*The New Yorker*).

"Clifton Brown, probably the most powerful virtuoso of the Ailey men but one relatively shy of applying any Broadway pizzazz, comes into his own here; he rises to Ms. Tharp's challenges as if he's been released, and his absorption becomes transporting." –*The New York Times*

"Tharp... shot us to Heaven in a fifteen-minute finale called "The Golden Section" dance of supreme, skyrocketing virtuosity. The Golden Section will be revived by the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, which, with its fearless dancers, is well-equipped to perform it." – *The New Yorker*

Twyla Tharp

Since graduating Barnard College in 1963, Ms. Tharp has choreographed more than one hundred sixty works: one hundred twenty-nine dances, twelve television specials, six Hollywood movies, four full-length ballets, four Broadway shows and two figure skating routines. By combining different forms of movement – such as jazz, ballet, boxing and inventions of her own making – Ms. Tharp's work expands the boundaries of ballet and modern dance.

In 1965, Ms. Tharp founded her dance company, Twyla Tharp Dance. In addition to choreographing for her own company, she has created dances for the American Ballet Theatre, The Paris Opera Ballet, The Royal Ballet and the New York City Ballet to name a few. Tharp's highlights on Broadway include *SINGIN' IN THE RAIN* and the dance musical *MOVIN' OUT* (2002), which was set to the music and lyrics of Billy Joel and *COME FLY AWAY*, set to songs sung by Frank Sinatra. In film, Ms. Tharp has collaborated with director Milos Forman on *HAIR*, *RAGTIME* and *AMADEUS*, with Taylor



Twyla Tharp. Photo by Richard Avedon courtesy of [The Richard Avedon Foundation](#)

Hackford on *WHITE NIGHTS* and James Brooks on *I'LL DO ANYTHING*. In 1992, Ms. Tharp published her autobiography *PUSH COMES TO SHOVE*. She went on to write *THE CREATIVE HABIT: Learn it and Use it for Life*, followed by *THE COLLABORATIVE HABIT: Life Lessons for Working Together* and she's currently working on a fourth book.

Tharp has received one Tony Award, two Emmy Awards, nineteen honorary doctorates, the Vietnam Veterans of America President's Award, the 2004 National Medal of the Arts, the 2008 Jerome Robbins Prize, and a 2008 Kennedy Center Honor. Her many grants include the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fellowship. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Philosophical Society, and an Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

The Golden Section
Music Credit Information

Song: **Five Golden Sections**

Composed by: David Byrne

Performed by: David Byrne featuring Yogi Horton, Douglas Gray and John Chernoff

Song: **What a Day That Was**

Composed by: David Byrne

Performed by: David Byrne featuring John Cooksey and Steve Scales

Song: **Big Blue Plymouth**

Composed by: David Byrne

Performed by: David Byrne featuring Sue Halloran and Yogi Horton

Song: **Light Bath**

Composed by: David Byrne

Performed by: David Byrne featuring John Chernoff

Commissioned by the Twyla Tharp Dance Foundation, Inc. "The Catherine Wheel" premiered September 22nd, 1981 at the Winter Garden Theatre, New York City.

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