

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Greenwood (World Premiere – 2019)

Choreography: Donald Byrd

Rehearsal Associates: Mikhail Calliste, Jamal Story, Derek Crescenti, & Stephanie Guiland

Music: Emmanuel Witzthum

Sound Designer: Robertson Witmer

Costume Designer: Doris Black

Lighting Designer: Jack Mehler

Celebrated choreographer Donald Byrd draws on the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre as his main source for *Greenwood*, a riveting ensemble work with music by Israeli violist and composer Emmanuel Witzthum. As a TONY nominee (*The Color Purple*), Bessie Award-winner (*The Minstrel Show*), and 2019 Doris Duke Artist Award recipient, Byrd is an “unabashed eclectic” (*The New York Times*) celebrated for his creation of compelling characters and exploring complex societal issues through dance. As his fifth work for the company, *Greenwood* navigates through one of the worst incidents of racial violence in US history and explores the story through different lenses of those who were affected.

“Donald Byrd is the **genius choreographer** behind *Greenwood*. He executes **this work with unstoppable imagination and metronome timing...**”

Medium

“...Donald Byrd’s **moving, challenging** *Greenwood* about the 1921 Tulsa, Okla., massacre.”

The New York Times



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in Donald Byrd’s *Greenwood*.

Photo by Paul Kolnik

Donald Byrd



Donald Byrd. Photo by Brian Smale

Donald Byrd, a TONY nominee (*The Color Purple*), Bessie Award-winner (*The Minstrel Show*) and a 2019 Doris Duke Artist Award recipient, is a masterful choreographer often referred to as a “citizen artist” for his ability to craft works that stimulate dialogue through powerful, timely stories and moving social commentary. Byrd has created more than 100 dance works for his own groups as well as for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, Philadelphia Dance Company (Philadanco), Pacific Northwest Ballet, and Joffrey Ballet among many others. Among his more recent projects for Spectrum Dance Theater, where he has been artistic director since 2002, has been a group of works that focus on racial terrorism during the Jim Crow era (lynching), police shootings of un-armed black people, and slavery in its

contemporary manifestation (human trafficking). Other productions that showcase his ability to navigate complex societal issues through dance include “Interrupted Narratives/War,” which tells stories from the war in Iraq, “The Theater of Needless Talents,” which focuses on the artist victims of the Holocaust, and a cycle of three evening-length works that sought to inspire thoughtful discourse around a post-9/11, globalized America.

From 1978 to 2002, Byrd was the artistic director of Donald Byrd/The Group, a critically acclaimed contemporary dance company. He regularly teaches around the country and has been a cultural envoy for the U.S. Department of State and a fellow at the Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue based at Harvard. Currently, in addition to his work at Spectrum, he serves on the Diversity Task Force and the SDC Journal-Editorial Board of Pier Review Section for the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC) and has previously served as Seattle Arts Commissioner. Byrd has been recognized with many awards and prizes, including a Masters of Choreography Award from The Kennedy Center; a Fellowship at The American Academy of Jerusalem; a United States Artists Fellowship; and the Mayor’s Arts Award for his sustained contributions to the city of Seattle.

Emmanuel Witzhum

Emmanuel Witzhum is an Israeli musician, violist and composer, multidisciplinary artist, and lecturer. He studied at the Manhattan School of Music, NYC with Michael Tree of the Guarneri Quartet. He Performed with numerous orchestras such as the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra in NYC, the Berlin Staatskapelle, Ensemble Intercontemporain and others. As electronic musician and composer, he participated at the year-long cursus at IRCAM, Paris and was guest composer of the DAAD artists program in Berlin. Performed at the ZKM, the 104 Paris, the Matadero Madrid, the Jewish Museum Berlin amongst others and recorded for Deutsche Grammophon under Pierre Boulez with Ensemble Intercontemporain.

Greenwood

Music Credit Information

(not in order as you hear them in ballet)

Song: Pulsation Voices

Original composition by: Emmanuel Witzhum

Song: Ominous

Original composition by: Emmanuel Witzhum

Song: With Pianos

Original composition by: Emmanuel Witzhum

Song: In the Last Light

Joint compositions by: Emmanuel Witzhum and Craig Tattersall

Song: Known Things

Joint compositions by: Emmanuel Witzhum and Craig Tattersall

Song: “Move Members Move”

By: Rosie Hibler and family

Album: *Negro Folk Music of Alabama: Religious*

Recorded in Alabama by Harold Courlander, with the cooperation of The Viking Fund

Song: “My Soul Is A Witness”

By: Austin Coleman and the Joe Washington Brown & Group

Album: *Negro Religious Field Recordings, Volume 1 – From Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee*