

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Pas de Duke (1976)
(New Production - 2013)

Choreography: Alvin Ailey
Restaged by Masazumi Chaya
Music: Duke Ellington
Costumes: Rouben Ter-Arutunian
Lighting Design: Chenault Spence

Pas de Duke was Alvin Ailey's modern dance translation of a classical pas de deux honoring two of the most renowned dancers in the world, Judith Jamison and Mikhail Baryshnikov and celebrating the musical genius of the late Duke Ellington (1899-1974). Last staged for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater during the 2006-2007 season, it was originally presented as part of the festival "Ailey Celebrates Ellington" at Lincoln Center's New York State Theater in 1976, commemorating the nation's bicentennial with America's two great art forms - modern dance and jazz music. Ailey choreographed five sections that capture the sassy sophistication of "The Duke's" jazz music: the introduction to "Such Sweet Thunder" (1957); the pas de deux to "Sonnet for Caesar" (1975); the male solo to "Sonnet for Hank Cinq" (1957); the female solo to "Unclothed Woman" (1948); and the finale to "Old Man's Blues" (1930), which captured the exuberance of the star dancers' qualities and techniques as the male and female soloists mirror each other toe-to-toe and line-for-line in this playful, good-natured competition.

"A test of physical endurance, the pas de deux still challenges performers with its unlikely balance of glittering play and high-powered technical feats from ballet, jazz and modern dance, all set to the soaring, pulsing music by Ailey's beloved Duke Ellington."

The New York Times

"...one of those special dances that lives in new ways with each new set of performers."

The New York Times



Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's Antonio Douthit-Boyd and Linda Celeste Sims in Alvin Ailey's *Pas de Duke*. Photo by Paul Kolnik.

Duke Ellington

Born in Washington, D.C. in 1899, composer, pianist and band-leader Duke Ellington was one of the most influential figures in the history of music. In the early 1930's his band established its fame at the Cotton Club in New York City, with a sound Ellington called "American Music" rather than jazz. In his fifty year career, the "Duke" played over 20,000 performances in Europe, Latin America, the Middle East as well as Asia, and is best remembered for the over 3,000 songs that he composed before his death in 1974, including *It Don't Mean a Thing if It Ain't Got That Swing*, *Sophisticated Lady*, *Mood Indigo*, *Solitude* and *Satin Doll*. Ellington's popular compositions set the bar for generations of jazz, pop, theatre and soundtrack composers to come.

Pas de Duke
Music Credit Information

Music: "Such Sweet Thunder" (1957)
"Sonnet for Caesar" (1957)
"Sonnet to Hank Cinq" (1957)
"Clothed Woman" (1948)
"Old Man's Blues" (1930)

Composed by: Duke Ellington
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