

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Suspended Women (2000)

Ailey Company Premiere (December 12, 2014)

Choreography by Jacquelyn Buglisi

Music by Maurice Ravel

Music interpolations by Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR)

Costumes by A. Christina Giannini

Lighting Design by Clifton Taylor

Rehearsal Director: Helen Hansen French

Suspended Women was choreographed in 2000 by the celebrated former Martha Graham Dance Company dancer, prolific choreographer, and master teacher, Jacquelyn Buglisi. Set to music by Maurice Ravel, with interpolations composed by Daniel Bernard Roumain, it has since been recognized as one of her signature works. The original staging of the ballet casts 12 ghost-like female dancers who, dressed in tattered period costumes, seem to express various states of frenzy and despair through off-balance and collapsing movements. Throughout the 18-minute piece, four male dancers intermittently enter and exit the stage, weaving through the women's ever-shifting patterns. The work takes its inspiration from the life and writing of Sor Juana St. Ines de la Cruz, speaks to the challenges and strength of women across the ages and is dedicated to all women since the beginning of time 'suspended'. *The New York Times* dance critic Anna Kisselgoff called *Suspended Women* "mesmerizing" after its premiere. *Dance Magazine* has described Buglisi's choreography as a series of "images that seduce the eye as much as the imagination, with shapes, luminous textures, and stilled moments in time that offer an adventure in perception." *Suspended Women* will be the first work by Jacquelyn Buglisi to enter the Ailey repertory.

"...Buglisi's stirring paean to the commonality of feminine experience across the ages, percussive changes in gaze, quick falls to the floor, and wrenching torsos bespeak lifetimes of objectification and emotional strength cloaked in passivity. With the stony entrance of four aloof men, suddenly the women are lifted to magnificent heights, flung to the floor, and tossed around. When the men depart, a softness overtakes the choreography, bringing the piece to a calm...conclusion, the women forever haunted by the spirit of male force."

Backstage Magazine

"...mesmerizing: 12 ghostly women in hoop skirts and petticoats circled and collapsed in various states of angst to Mr. Roumain's interpolations on a Ravel concerto. The entrance of four men was both intrusive and welcome: a meditation on woman's lot."

The New York Times

JACQUelyn BUGLISI



JACQUelyn BUGLISI (*Artistic Director*). In her four decade career as an award-winning choreographer, artistic director, dancer, and master teacher, Ms. Buglisi has made an indelible impact on the field of dance. She has created 100 ballets using literature, history and heroic archetypes to illuminate the human condition. Following her illustrious career with The Martha Graham Dance Company, Ms. Buglisi became artistic director and co-founder of Buglisi Dance Theatre. BDT performs worldwide at venues including The Joyce Theater, The Kennedy Center, Jacob's Pillow, Vail International Dance Festival, and the Melbourne Festival in Australia. Ms. Buglisi's *Table of Silence 9/11*, a ritual for peace with 154 dancers at Lincoln Center, earned proclamations from Governor Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio. Her commissions include North Carolina Dance Theatre, Ailey II, The Juilliard School, Teatro Danza Contemporanea di Roma, Prague International Festival, Richmond Ballet, Father Fame Foundation, New York Flamenco Festival Madrid, and The Martha Graham Dance Company. Ms. Buglisi has been the modern department chair of The Ailey School since 1990. Honors: National Endowment for the Arts fellowships, American Dance Guild Award, Fiorello LaGuardia Award, Altria's Women Choreographer Award, and Kaatsbaan Playing Field Award for her masterpiece *Requiem*. www.buglisidance.org

JOSEPH-MAURICE RAVEL

Joseph-Maurice Ravel (March 7, 1875 - December 28, 1937) was born in France near the Spanish border, to Swiss and Basque parents. Maurice Ravel was born on March 7, 1875, in Ciboure, France. Ravel was admitted to the Paris Conservatoire at age 14, and later studied with Gabriel Fauré. His ballet *Daphnis et Chloé* was commissioned by Sergey Diaghilev. In 1952, the Monte Carlo Opera presented the premiere of “L’enfant et les sortilèges,” Ravel’s collaboration with famed French novelist Colette. Other pieces include the orchestral works *La Valse* and *Boléro*. His distinctive music style grew out of a love of the French Baroque, Bach, Mozart, Chopin, Spanish folk traditions, and American jazz and blues. Considered one of the most prominent figures associated with the Impressionist movement, Ravel remains the most widely popular of all French composers. Ravel died in Paris in 1937.

DANIEL BERNARD ROUMAIN (DBR)

DBR’s acclaimed work as a composer and a performer has spanned more than two decades, and has been commissioned by venerable artists and institutions worldwide. Proving that he’s “about as omnivorous as a contemporary artist gets” (*The New York Times*), DBR is perhaps the only composer whose collaborations span the worlds of Philip Glass, Cassandra Wilson, Bill T. Jones, Savion Glover and Lady Gaga. His collaborations with Jacquelyn Buglisi include *Suspended Women* (2000), *Butterflies and Demons* (2013) – a work about human trafficking that premiered during Buglisi Dance Theater’s 20th anniversary season at The Joyce Theater.

DBR made his Carnegie Hall debut in 2000 with the American Composers Orchestra performing his *Harlem Essay for Orchestra*, a Whitaker commission. He would go on to compose works for the Albany Symphony (*Harvest for Baritone Voice and Orchestra*); the American Composers Orchestra (*Call Them All: Fantasy Projections for laptop, orchestra, and film*); the Boston Pops Orchestra (*Woodbox Violin Concerto*); the Dogs of Desire Ensemble (*Grace for Two Sopranos and Chamber Orchestra*); Carnegie Hall (*Five Chairs and One Table*); the Library of Congress (*Numerical Music*); and the Stuttgart Symphony (*We March!: Concerto for Guitar and String Orchestra* premiered by Eliot Fisk). Additionally, Roumain’s music has been performed by the Brooklyn Philharmonic, Cincinnati Symphony, Des Moines Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Memphis Symphony, New Haven Symphony Orchestra, New Jersey Symphony, New World Symphony, Noord Nederlands Orkest, and the Vancouver Symphony, among many others. *Dancers, Dreamers, and Presidents* is a 2010 Sphinx Commissioning prize and was performed by the Detroit Symphony, Nashville Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic, Virginia Symphony, and other member orchestras of an esteemed consortia. DBR earned his doctorate in Music Composition from the University of Michigan under the tutelage of William Albright, William Bolcom, and Michael Daugherty. DBR is currently working on *We Shall Not Be Moved*, a new chamber opera commissioned by Opera Philadelphia, *Meditations for Raising Boys*, a new oratorio commissioned by Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, and *BOUNCE: A Basketball Opera in 4 Quarters*, commissioned by Ardea Arts.

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Suspended Women

Music Credit Information – listed in order as you hear them in ballet

Piano Concerto in G major, Movement II *Adagio Assai* composed by Maurice Ravel. By arrangement with Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., Sole Agent in the United States, Canada and Mexico for Durand S.A. Editions Musicales, a Universal Music Publishing Group company, publisher and copyright owner.