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BAM and Mark Morris Dance Group present

The Hard Nut

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House

Dec 14 & 15, 20—22 at 7:30pm

Dec 15 & 22 at 2pm; Dec 16 & 23 at 3pm

Running time: approx. two hours including intermission

Based on the book by **E.T.A. Hoffmann**,
The Nutcracker and the Mouse King
Music by **Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky**,
The Nutcracker, Op. 71

Mark Morris Dance Group

Choreography by **Mark Morris**

Featuring the

MMDG Music Ensemble and

The Hard Nut Singers

Conducted by **Colin Fowler**

Set design by **Adrienne Lobel**

Costume design by **Martin Pakledinaz**

Lighting design by **James F. Ingalls**

Production based on the work of **Charles Burns**

Season Sponsor:

**Bloomberg
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Leadership support for dance at BAM provided by *The Harkness Foundation for Dance*

Support for the Signature Artists Series provided by *the Howard Gilman Foundation*

Major support for dance at BAM provided by *The SHS Foundation*

MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP

MICA BERNAS SAM BLACK KARLIE BUDGE* DURELL R. COMEDY
BRANDON COURNAVY DOMINGO ESTRADA, JR. LESLEY GARRISON LAUREN GRANT
SARAH HAARMANN DEEPA LIEGEL* AARON LOUX LAUREL LYNCH
DALLAS McMURRAY MINGA PRATHER* BRANDON RANDOLPH
NICOLE SABELLA CHRISTINA SAHAIDA* BILLY SMITH NOAH VINSON

*apprentice

ELISA CLARK RITA DONAHUE JOHN HEGINBOTHAM
AMBER STAR MERKENS JUNE OMURA SPENCER RAMIREZ

JANELLE BARRY DEREK CRESCENTI JOHN EIRICH ROBERT LEWIS WENDY REINERT JOSHUA TUASON

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
MARK MORRIS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NANCY UMANOFF

MMDG MUSIC ENSEMBLE
THE HARD NUT SINGERS
COLIN FOWLER Conductor

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The Hard Nut

Marie	Lauren Grant
Fritz	June Omura
Louise/Princess Pirlipat	Lesley Garrison
Dr. Stahlbaum/King	Mark Morris
Mrs. Stahlbaum/Queen	John Heginbotham
Housekeeper/Nurse	Brandon Randolph
Drosselmeier	Billy Smith
Nutcracker/Young Drosselmeier	Aaron Loux
Barbie Doll	Elisa Clark
Robot	Spencer Ramirez
Party Guests	Sam Black, Durell R. Comedy, Rita Donahue, Domingo Estrada, Jr., Laurel Lynch, Dallas McMurray, Amber Star Merkens, Nicole Sabella, Noah Vinson
Changers	Derek Crescenti, Spencer Ramirez, Minga Prather
Rat King	Deepa Liegel
Rat Soldiers	Janelle Barry, Mica Bernas, Karlie Budge, Sarah Haarmann, Wendy Reinert, Christina Sahaida
G.I. Joe Soldiers	Brandon Cournay, John Eirich, Robert Lewis, Spencer Ramirez, Joshua Tuason
Snow	Janelle Barry, Mica Bernas, Sam Black, Karlie Budge, Elisa Clark, Durell R. Comedy, Rita Donahue, John Eirich, Domingo Estrada, Jr., Lesley Garrison, Sarah Haarmann, Deepa Liegel, Laurel Lynch, Dallas McMurray, Amber Star Merkens, Minga Prather, Spencer Ramirez, Wendy Reinert, Nicole Sabella, Christina Sahaida, Joshua Tuason, Noah Vinson
Rat Queen	Deepa Liegel
Spanish	Domingo Estrada, Jr., Amber Star Merkens
Arabian	Elisa Clark, Durell R. Comedy, Laurel Lynch, Spencer Ramirez, Joshua Tuason
Chinese	Janelle Barry, Mica Bernas, John Eirich
Russian	Sam Black, Rita Donahue, Dallas McMurray, Minga Prather, Wendy Reinert, Christina Sahaida
French	Brandon Cournay, Sarah Haarmann, Nicole Sabella, Noah Vinson
Suitors	Durell R. Comedy, John Eirich
Dentist	Robert Lewis
Flowers	Mica Bernas, Sam Black, Karlie Budge, Elisa Clark, Rita Donahue, Domingo Estrada, Jr., Sarah Haarmann, Laurel Lynch, Dallas McMurray, Amber Star Merkens, Minga Prather, Nicole Sabella, Joshua Tuason, Noah Vinson

ACT I

Dr. and Mrs. Stahlbaum's annual Christmas Eve Party. Their children Fritz, Marie, and Louise wait in the den. Party dances: polka, hokey-pokey, hesitation, stroll, bump, waltz. Friend of the family Drosselmeier brings animated toys that he's made. He gives a Nutcracker to the children. Fritz breaks it. The children fight. Dr. Stahlbaum changes the subject. The guests go home. The family goes to bed. The housekeeper cleans up.

Marie can't sleep and comes downstairs to see if the Nutcracker is resting comfortably. At midnight she is frightened by rats. Everything in the room grows to giant size. G.I. Joes led by the Nutcracker battle rats led by the mutant Rat King. Marie kills the Rat King with her slipper. She falls unconscious. The Nutcracker is transformed into a young man. Marie is tucked in. A worried Drosselmeier makes his way through the blizzard.

—curtain—

ACT II

Marie is in a fever. Drosselmeier comes to see if Marie is resting comfortably and tells her one of his stories:

THE HARD NUT

Once upon a time a King and a Queen had a beautiful baby girl named Pirlipat. The Queen's old enemy the Rat Queen threatened to ruin little Pirlipat. The nurse and the cat were left to guard the baby at night. While the nurse and cat slept, the Rat Queen destroyed Princess Pirlipat's face. The Royal Family was horrified by the sight of their formerly beautiful daughter. The Rat Queen explained that the Princess would regain her beauty only after a young man cracked the hard nut, Krakatuk, with his teeth and stepped backwards seven times. The King commanded Drosselmeier to find the hard nut or face decapitation. Drosselmeier set off in search of the hard nut. He traveled the world for fifteen years before finding it back at home.

The ugly teenage Pirlipat watched as one young man after another attempted to crack the hard nut. The last one to try was Drosselmeier's own nephew. He succeeded. On his seventh step backward he stepped on the Rat Queen, killing her. Pirlipat became beautiful and rejected the young Drosselmeier as he started to become ugly—like a nutcracker..

At this point Marie interrupts the story and offers her love to young Drosselmeier. Mrs. Stahlbaum acknowledges her daughter's new maturity with a flower dance. Everyone in the world joins Marie and young Drosselmeier in celebrating their love. The two go away together forever.

EPILOGUE

Louise and Fritz are sent to bed.

—curtain—

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840—93) began his career as a civil servant. In 1862, he gave up his job and enrolled at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. He was offered the Professorship of Harmony at the newly opened Moscow Conservatory in 1866. After the success of his first piano concerto, he began a correspondence with Nadezhda von Meck, a wealthy widow, whose financial support enabled him to devote himself to composition. They remained correspondents until a misunderstanding in 1890 ended their relationship, but they never actually met. Tchaikovsky entered a disastrous marriage in 1877, possibly in an attempt to conceal his homosexuality; a separation followed an attempted suicide after only 11 weeks of marriage. Despite his subsequent depressions, he managed to produce his most successful opera, *Eugene Onegin* (1877—78), his Fourth Symphony (1878), and his Violin Concerto (1878) during this period. In 1881, he gave up teaching at the conservatory and for the next seven years was deeply involved in composition. His death from cholera in St. Petersburg, after imprudently drinking unboiled water, occurred soon after the first performance of his Symphony No. 6 (*Pathétique*) in 1893.

MARK MORRIS was born on August 29, 1956, in Seattle, WA, where he studied with Verla Flowers and Perry Brunson. In the early years of his career, he performed with the companies of Lar Lubovitch, Hannah Kahn, Laura Dean, Eliot Feld, and the Koleda Balkan Dance Ensemble. He formed the Mark Morris Dance Group (MMDG) in 1980, and has since created over 150 works for the company. From 1988 to 1991, he was director of dance at Brussels' Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, the national opera house of Belgium. In 1990, he founded the White Oak Dance Project with Mikhail Baryshnikov. Much in demand as a ballet choreographer, Morris has created 22 ballets since 1986 and his work has been performed by companies worldwide, including San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Ballet du Grand Théâtre de Genève, and Royal New Zealand Ballet. Noted for his musicality, Morris has been described as "undeviating in his devotion to music" (*The New Yorker*). He began conducting performances for MMDG in 2006 and has since conducted at Tanglewood Music Center, Lincoln Center, and



Photo: Beowulf Sheehan

BAM. He served as music director for the 2013 Ojai Music Festival. He also works extensively in opera, directing and choreographing productions for the Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, English National Opera, and the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, among others. He was named a Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation in 1991 and has received 11 honorary doctorates to date. He has taught at the University of Washington, Princeton University, and Tanglewood Music Center. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society, and has served as an Advisory Board Member for the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative. Morris has received the Samuel H. Scripps/American Dance Festival Award for Lifetime Achievement, the Leonard Bernstein Lifetime Achievement Award for the Elevation of Music in Society, the Benjamin Franklin Laureate Prize for Creativity, the International Society for the Performing Arts' Distinguished Artist Award, Cal Performances Award of Distinction in the Performing Arts, the Orchestra of St. Luke's Gift of Music Award, and the 2016 Doris Duke Artist Award. In 2015, Mark Morris was inducted into the Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney Hall of Fame at the National Museum of Dance in Saratoga Springs, NY. Morris opened the Mark Morris Dance Center in Brooklyn, NY, in 2001 to provide a home for his company, subsidized rental space for local artists, outreach programs for children and seniors, and a school offering dance classes to students of all ages and abilities.

The **MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP** was formed in 1980 and gave its first performance that year in New York City. The company's touring schedule steadily expanded to include cities in the US and around the world, and in 1986 it made its first national television program for the PBS series *Dance in America*. In 1988, MMDG was invited to become the national dance company of Belgium, and spent three years in residence at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels. The Dance Group returned to the US in 1991 as one of the world's leading dance companies. Based in Brooklyn, MMDG maintains strong ties to presenters in several cities around the world, most notably to its West Coast home, Cal Performances in Berkeley, CA, and its midwest home, the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. MMDG also appears regularly in New York, Boston, Seattle, and Fairfax. In New York, the company has performed at New York City Center's Fall for

Dance Festival, regularly performs at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts' Mostly Mozart and White Light Festivals, and collaborates yearly with BAM on performances and master classes. From the company's many London seasons, it has received two Laurence Olivier Awards and a Critics' Circle Dance Award for Best Foreign Dance Company. Reflecting Morris' commitment to live music, the Dance Group has featured live musicians in every performance since the formation of the MMDG Music Ensemble in 1996. MMDG regularly collaborates with renowned musicians, including cellist Yo-Yo Ma, pianist Emanuel Ax, mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe, and jazz trio The Bad Plus, as well as leading orchestras and opera companies, including the Metropolitan Opera, English National Opera, and the London Symphony Orchestra. MMDG frequently works with distinguished artists and designers, including painters Robert Bordo and the late Howard Hodgkin, set designers Adrienne Lobel and Allen Moyer, costume designers Martin Pakledinaz and Isaac Mizrahi, and many others. MMDG's film and television projects include *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Hard Nut*, *Falling Down Stairs*, two documentaries for the UK's *South Bank Show*, and PBS' *Live from Lincoln Center*. In 2015 Morris' signature work *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* had its national television premiere on PBS' *Great Performances*. While on tour the Dance Group partners with local cultural institutions and community organizations to present arts and humanities-based activities for people of all ages and abilities.

COLIN FOWLER (MMDG Music Director, conductor) began his musical studies at the age of five in Kansas City and went on to study at the prestigious Interlochen Arts Academy. He continued his education at The Juilliard School, where he received his Bachelor of Music degree in 2003 and his Master of Music degree in 2005. While at Juilliard, he studied piano with Abbey Simon, organ with Gerre Hancock and Paul Jacobs, harpsichord with Lionel Party, and conducting with James dePriest and Judith Clurman. A versatile musician and conductor, Fowler works in many arenas of the music scene in NYC. He is a veteran of numerous Broadway shows, most recently performing in the Tony Award-winning musical *Jersey Boys*. A seasoned church musician, Fowler has led choirs and services at Calvary Baptist Church, Trinity Wall Street, and is currently the organist at Marble Collegiate Church on Fifth Avenue. He also leads services and concerts at Park

Avenue Synagogue, where he has served as music director since 2012. As a classical soloist and collaborative artist, he has performed and recorded with world renowned musicians and ensembles, including Deborah Voigt and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He began to collaborate with the Mark Morris Dance Group in 2005 and has since then performed over 40 pieces with the company on almost every keyboard instrument possible, including the harmonium and toy piano, and has conducted performances of *Mozart Dances*, *Acis and Galatea*, and *The Hard Nut*. Hailed by *The New York Times* as "invaluable" and "central to Morris' music," he was appointed music director in 2013.

The **MMDG MUSIC ENSEMBLE**, formed in 1996, is integral to the Dance Group. "With the dancers come the musicians...and what a difference it makes" (*Classical Voice of North Carolina*). The Ensemble's repertory ranges from 17th- and 18th-century works by John Wilson and Henry Purcell to more recent scores by Ethan Iverson, Lou Harrison, and Henry Cowell. The musicians also participate in the Dance Group's educational and community programming at home and on tour. The Music Ensemble is led by Colin Fowler who began to collaborate with MMDG in 2005 during the creation of *Mozart Dances*.

THE HARD NUT SINGERS, led by MMDG Music Director Colin Fowler and MMDG Choral Director Elise Gaugert, are students from The School at the Mark Morris Dance Center, Brooklyn Friends School, Brooklyn Technical High School, and MS 51 William Alexander. The Hard Nut Singers perform in the "Snow" section in Mark Morris' festive holiday classic *The Hard Nut*. Audience members will also enjoy caroling with The Hard Nut Singers prior to each performance on the front steps of BAM.

ADRIANNE LOBEL (scenic design) began working with Mark Morris in 1986 on *Nixon in China*. Since then she has designed his *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*, *The Hard Nut*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, *Platée*, *King Arthur*, and *Acis and Galatea*. As a stage designer she has worked in opera, dance, on and off-Broadway, in regional theater in America, and in Europe for over 30 years. Some highlights (other than working with Morris) include *An American Tragedy* at the Met, *The Magic Flute* at Glyndebourne, *Passion* and *A Year with Frog and Toad* on Broadway, and *Così fan tutte* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, directed by Peter

Sellers, at Pepsico Summerfare. She has been nominated for many awards and has won the Obie, the Lucille Lortel, the Jefferson, and Long Wharf's prestigious Murphy Award. She recently had a show of paintings at the Bowery Gallery in Chelsea. Both her theater and her painting work can be viewed at adriannelobel.com.

MARTIN PAKLEDINAZ (1953—2012)

(costume design) designed costumes for theater, opera, and dance. He collaborated with Mark Morris on works for the Mark Morris Dance Group, San Francisco Ballet, and Boston Ballet, in addition to works by Tomasson, Stowell, Wheeldon, and Balanchine, among others. New York theater credits include *Blithe Spirit* and *Gypsy* with Patti Lupone; *The Pirate Queen*; *The Pajama Game*; *The Trip to Bountiful*; *Thoroughly Modern Millie*; *Wonderful Town*; *The Wild Party*; *Kiss Me, Kate*; *Waste*; and *A Life*. His work in opera includes *Rodelinda* and *Iphigenie en Tauride* for the Metropolitan Opera; *Tristan und Isolde*, *Adriana Mater*, and *L'Amour de Loin* for the Paris Opera/Bastille; and works in Salzburg, Seattle, Santa Fe, and Chicago. Projects include *Lend Me a Tenor*, directed by Stanley Tucci on Broadway; *The Glass Menagerie* with Judith Ivey, Gordon Edelstein directing, off-Broadway; and two operas for the Opera Theatre of St. Louis, *Eugene Onegin* and *The Golden Ticket*, a world premiere based on Roald Dahl's *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, directed by Kevin Newbury and James Robinson. He was awarded two Tony Awards, and the Drama Desk, Obie, and Lucille Lortel awards, among others.

JAMES F. INGALLS (lighting design) has designed several pieces for Mark Morris including *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Metropolitan Opera); *King Arthur* (English National Opera); *Sylvia*, *Sandpaper Ballet*, *Maelstrom*, and *Pacific* (San Francisco Ballet); *Platée* (Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and New York City Opera); *Mozart Dances*; *Romeo and Juliet: On Motifs of Shakespeare*; *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*; and *Dido and Aeneas* (MMDG). His work at BAM includes *The Master Builder*, directed by Andrei Belgrader, *Split Sides* with Radiohead and Sigur Rós for Merce Cunningham Dance Company, and John Adams' *El Niño*, *The Death of Klinghoffer*, and *Nixon in China*, all directed by Peter Sellers. Recent designs for dance include *The Nutcracker* (Pacific Northwest Ballet, Seattle), Twyla Tharp's 50th Anniversary Tour (US and NY State Theatre), *The Sleeping Beauty*, choreographed by Alexei Ratmansky (Teatro alla Scala Ballet and ABT), *Celts*,

choreographed by Lila York (Boston Ballet), and *Sea Lark and Death and the Maiden* (Paul Taylor Dance Company). Recent theater work includes *Desdemona*, directed by Peter Sellers (UCLA/CAP, Melbourne and Sydney Festivals), and *Druid Shakespeare*, directed by Garry Hynes (Galway, Irish tour and Lincoln Center Festival). He often collaborates with Melanie Rios Glaser and the Wooden Floor dancers in Santa Ana, CA.

CHARLES BURNS was born in Washington, DC.

He currently lives in Philadelphia with his wife, painter Susan Moore, and their two daughters, Ava and Rachel. His illustrations and comics have been widely published in Europe and the US in such magazines as *RAW*, *Time*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Believer*, and *Rolling Stone*. His books include *Thrilling Detective Stories* (Pantheon, 1988), *Blood Club* (Kitchen Sink, 1991), *Skin Deep* (Penguin Books, 1992), *Facetasm* (Gates of Heck, 1992), *Black Hole* (Fantagraphics, 2004), *X'ed Out* (Pantheon, 2010), *The Hive* (Pantheon, 2012), *Sugar Skull* (Pantheon, 2014), and *Last Look* (Pantheon, 2016).

JANELLE BARRY is from Orange County, CA, and earned her BFA in dance performance from Chapman University. Since moving to New York, she has performed with the Metropolitan Opera, Esse Aficionado, I KADA Contemporary Dance Company, and the Czech-American Marionette Theatre. Barry currently teaches dance to all ages at the Mark Morris Dance Center as well as for the Dance for PD® program. She is grateful to her family, friends, and teachers for their love and support.

MICA BERNAS, originally from Manila, Philippines, received her training at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Dance School. She later joined Ballet Philippines as member of the corps de ballet, performing as a soloist from 2001—06. Since moving to New York in 2006, Bernas has worked with Marta Renzi Dance, Armitage Gone Dance, Gallim Dance, Barkin/Selissen Project, and Carolyn Dorfman Dance (2007—13). She was a guest artist with the Limón Dance Company, performing at the 2013 Bienal Internacional de Danza de Cali in Bogotá, Colombia; Lincoln Center's Koch Theater; and at the Joyce Theater for the company's 70th Anniversary in 2015. Bernas also teaches at the Limón Institute and has been on the faculty for BIMA at Brandeis University since 2011. She joined MMDG as an apprentice in January 2017 and became a company member in August 2017.

SAM BLACK is originally from Berkeley, CA, where he began studying tap at the age of nine with Katie Maltsberger. He received his BFA in dance from SUNY Purchase, and currently teaches MMDG master classes and Dance for PD®. He first appeared with MMDG in 2005 and became a company member in 2007.

KARLIE BUDGE grew up in Knoxville, TN dancing with the Tennessee Children's Dance Ensemble (TCDE). She graduated magna cum laude with a BA in dance and BS in statistics in 2016 from Case Western Reserve University and danced with Graham 2 dance company. Budge has performed works by Mark Morris, Pascal Rioult, Larry Keigwin, Martha Graham, Ted Shawn, Bertram Ross, Virginie Mécène, Adam Barruch, Michael Mao, and Randy Duncan. She has presented her choreography throughout New York City in Playscape2016, NEXT@Graham, NYC10, SoloDuo Festival, and four Martha Graham School showings. She received the Pearl Lang Award for Excellence in Choreography in 2017. Budge joined MMDG as an apprentice in September 2018.

ELISA CLARK, originally from the Washington, DC area, trained at the Maryland Youth Ballet, prior to receiving a BFA from The Juilliard School under the directorship of Benjamin Harkavy. Clark first worked with the Mark Morris Dance Group in 2005, and was a full-time company member until 2011, during which time she won a Princess Grace Award. She was also a member of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (2013—17), Battleworks Dance Company (2001—06), and the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company (2001, 2011—12), in addition to performing with the Nederlands Dans Theater and with the Metropolitan Opera at New York City's Lincoln Center, in works by Jiří Kylián and Crystal Pite, respectively. Clark is currently on faculty at the American Dance Festival and at the University of the Arts, as well as being an artistic assistant and répétiteur to Robert Battle, where she is responsible for restaging his work. She has a longstanding collaborative relationship with Carolyn Adams, teaches master classes worldwide, and is a certified Life Coach. elisaclark.com

DURELL R. COMEDY, a native of Prince Georges County, MD, began dancing at the age of six with Spirit Wings Dance Company. He graduated from the visual and performing arts program of Suitland High School in 2004 and magna cum laude from George Mason University, receiving his BFA in dance

performance in 2008. Since then, he has worked and performed with the Metropolitan Opera, Troy Powell, and Kyle Abraham, among others. Comedy was a member of the Limón Dance Company from 2009—15, performing principal and soloist roles. He has appeared as a soloist dancer in Baltimore Opera Company's *Aida* and worked with Washington National Opera from 2013—14 as a principal dancer and dance captain. He was a former fellowship student at the Ailey School and a 2014 adjunct faculty member at George Mason University's School of Dance. Comedy began his apprenticeship with MMDG in November 2015 and became a company member in 2016.

BRANDON COURNAY is originally from Walled Lake, MI and received his BFA from The Juilliard School. As a freelance artist, he has performed with the *Radio City Christmas Spectacular*, MMDG, Morphoses, the Metropolitan Opera, New York Theatre Ballet, The Chase Brock Experience, Schoen Movement Company, Dance Heginbotham, and KEIGWIN + COMPANY. TV/film/industrial credits include PBS' *Great Performances*, *Musical Chairs* (HBO), *Puma*, *Sesame Street*, and Target. As an educator and répétiteur, Cournay has worked with Pennsylvania Ballet, Whim W'Him, The Juilliard School/Nord Anglia Education, and universities nationwide. Offstage, he has worked with companies in multiple capacities from artistic direction to administrative management. For many years, he was the rehearsal director and associate artistic director of KEIGWIN + COMPANY. In addition, Cournay has assisted numerous choreographers on creative projects in theater, film, and dance. He joined MMDG as an apprentice in March 2018 and became a company member in October 2018.

DEREK CRESCENTI originates from Detroit, MI and received his BFA from the University of Michigan. He danced with Donald Byrd's Spectrum Dance Theater in Seattle, WA from 2011 to 2014 and has also performed with KEIGWIN + COMPANY and The Bang Group. In 2016 he worked with the Mark Morris Dance Group in *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* and *The Hard Nut*. He currently performs with Megan Williams, Daniel Gwirtzman Dance Company, and Randy James' all-male company, 10 Hairy Legs.

RITA DONAHUE was born and raised in Fairfax, VA, and attended George Mason University. She graduated magna cum laude in 2002, receiving

a BA in English and a BFA in dance. Donahue danced with bopi's black sheep/dances by kraigpatterson and was a MMDG company member from 2003 to 2017.

JOHN EIRICH was raised in Florida where he earned his BFA in dance from New World School of the Arts and was a student at Jacob's Pillow Contemporary Traditions Program. Eirich was a member of Taylor 2 from 2006—10, has been a member of TAKE Dance since 2007, and joined Dušan Týnek Dance Theatre in 2010. He has performed in *The Magic Flute* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis directed by Isaac Mizrahi (2014), *Missa Brevis* with Limón Dance Company, and *L'Allegro, il Penseroso, ed il Moderato* and *The Hard Nut* with the Mark Morris Dance Group. Eirich is a founding member of Dance Heginbotham.

DOMINGO ESTRADA, JR., a native of Victoria, TX, studied martial arts and earned his black belt in 1994. He danced ballet folklorico through his church for 11 years. Estrada earned his BFA in ballet and modern dance from Texas Christian University and had the honor of working with the late Fernando Bujones. During his undergraduate studies he attended the American Dance Festival where he had the privilege of performing *Skylight*, a classic work by choreographer Laura Dean. He debuted with MMDG in 2007 and became a company member in 2009. Estrada would like to thank God, his family, and all who support his passion.

LESLEY GARRISON grew up in Swansea, IL and received her early dance training at the Center of Creative Arts in St. Louis, MO, and Interlochen Arts Academy in Interlochen, MI. She studied at the Rotterdamse Dansacademie in the Netherlands and holds a BFA from Purchase College. She first performed with MMDG in 2007 and became a company member in 2011. Garrison teaches at The School at Mark Morris Dance Center and for the Dance for PD® program.

LAUREN GRANT, honored with a New York Dance and Performance Bessie Award for her career with the Mark Morris Dance Group, has danced with MMDG since 1996, appearing in over 60 of Mark Morris' works. In addition to staging Morris' repertory on his company and at universities, Grant teaches ballet and modern technique for numerous professional dance companies and schools around the globe and is an adjunct faculty member at Montclair State

University. Her writing has been published in the journals *Dance Education in Practice*, *Ballet Review*, *Dance Magazine*, and *InfiniteBody*. She also serves as a panelist for the New York State Council on the Arts. Grant earned her MFA in dance from Montclair State University (where she was a member of the Alpha Epsilon Lambda Honor Society) and her BFA in dance from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. She is a recipient of the prestigious American Association of University Women Career Development Grant, the Sono Osato Scholarship for Graduate Studies, and the Caroline Newhouse Grant—all in support of her scholarly pursuits. Originally from Highland Park, IL, she lives in Brooklyn with her husband David Leventhal (former MMDG dancer and current Dance for PD® Program Director) and their son, born in 2012.

SARAH HAARMANN grew up in Macungie, PA and received training at the Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Performing Arts under the direction of Kimberly Maniscalco. She graduated magna cum laude with a BFA in dance from Marymount Manhattan College in 2012. Haarmann has had the pleasure of performing with Pam Tanowitz Dance, Jessica Lang Dance, Dylan Crossman Dans(ce), Pat Catterson, Denisa Musilova, and Bill Young. She joined MMDG as an apprentice in January 2017 and became a company member in August 2017.

JOHN HEGINBOTHAM is from Anchorage, AK and graduated from The Juilliard School in 1993. He was a member of Mark Morris Dance Group from 1998—2012. In 2011, he founded Dance Heginbotham, which has been presented by BAM, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Kennedy Center, Joyce Theater, Lincoln Center, and Metropolitan Museum of Art, among others. In 2016, DH toured Indonesia, Laos, and the Philippines with DanceMotion USASM, a cultural diplomacy initiative of the US Department of State, produced by BAM. In February 2017, DH premiered *Lola* at the Kennedy Center, performed with the world-renowned violinist Joshua Bell and the National Symphony Orchestra. Active as a freelance choreographer, recent projects include *Candide* (Orlando Philharmonic, 2016); *Oklahoma!* (Bard Summerscape, 2015); *Angels' Share* (Atlanta Ballet, 2014); Isaac Mizrahi's *The Magic Flute* (Opera Theatre of St. Louis, 2014), and *Peter and the Wolf* (Guggenheim Works and Process, 2013). Heginbotham is the recipient of the 2014 Jacob's Pillow Dance Award and a 2017—18 New York City Center Choreography Fellowship. danceheginbotham.org

ROBERT LEWIS was born in Grand Rapids, MI, and raised in Los Angeles. After graduating from the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts Lewis' studies took him to Purchase, NY where he earned a BFA in dance from the Conservatory of Dance at SUNY Purchase. While in New York, Lewis had the pleasure of training abroad for a semester at the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts. Lewis has performed works by Nelly van Bommel, Twyla Tharp, Samuel Pott, Stephen Petronio, Darshan Singh Bhuller, Sarah Mettin, Korhan Basaran, Kevin Wynn, and Bill T. Jones.

DEEPA LIEGEL grew up dancing with Cornish Preparatory Dance, Leela Kathak Dance, and Seattle Theater Group in Seattle, WA. She received her BFA in dance performance with honors and a minor in arts management from Southern Methodist University in 2017. Since moving to New York, Liegel has performed with Barkha Dance Company, *Broadway Bares*, Monica Kapoor, and apprenticed with the Limón Dance Company. She joined the Mark Morris Dance Group as an apprentice in September 2018.

AARON LOUX grew up in Seattle, WA, and began dancing at the Creative Dance Center as a member of Kaleidoscope, a youth modern dance company. He began his classical training at the Cornish College Preparatory Dance Program and received his BFA from The Juilliard School in 2009. He danced at the Metropolitan Opera and with Arc Dance Company before joining MMDG in 2010.

LAUREL LYNCH began her dance training at Petaluma School of Ballet in California. She moved to New York to attend The Juilliard School where she performed works by Robert Battle, Margie Gillis, José Limón, and Ohad Naharin. After graduation Lynch danced for Dušan Týnek Dance Theatre, Sue Bernhard Danceworks, and Pat Catterson. Lynch joined MMDG as an apprentice in 2006 and became a company member in 2007. Many thanks to Gene and Becky.

DALLAS McMURRAY, from El Cerrito, CA, began dancing at age four, studying jazz, tap, and acrobatics with Katie Maltsberger and ballet with Yukiko Sakakura. He received a BFA in dance from the California Institute of the Arts. McMurray performed with the Limón Dance Company in addition to works by Jiří Kylián, Alonzo King, Robert Moses, and Colin Connor. McMurray performed with MMDG as

an apprentice in 2006 and became a company member in 2007.

AMBER STAR MERKENS, originally from Newport, OR, began her dance training with Nancy Mittleman. She received her BFA from The Juilliard School and danced with the Limón Dance Company before receiving the Princess Grace Award and joining Mark Morris Dance Group in 2001. During her many years dancing with MMDG, she performed in featured and soloist roles, including *Dido/the Sorceress* in *Dido and Aeneas*. She has presented her own choreography both in New York and abroad, taught workshops and camps at the Mark Morris Dance Center, and worked as a freelance photographer for MMDG, Silkroad, and Brooklyn Rider, among others. After the birth of her second child in 2013, Merkens transitioned into another passion, one of supporting new families, and founded Mother to Mother Postpartum, LLC. She is thrilled to be dancing again with MMDG in *The Hard Nut*. Merkens would like to thank her family for their continuous support.

JUNE OMURA was born in New York and then moved to Birmingham, AL, where she grew up studying ballet, modern, character, and mime. She first appeared with the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1986, joining the company in 1988 for the move to Brussels, Belgium and the creation of masterworks like *L'Allegro, il Penseroso, ed il Moderato* and *The Hard Nut*. Later highlights of her long and fortunate career spent dancing for Morris included working with Yo-Yo Ma in the film *Falling Down Stairs*, to Bach's Third Cello Suite, and being honored with a 2005 Bessie Award. Now primarily a high school English teacher and mother of three, Omura is also currently teaching freshman composition as an adjunct lecturer at SUNY-New Paltz. She is indebted to her beautiful family for just everything.

MINGA PRATHER, a Dallas, TX native, received her training from Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, and later graduated with honors in dance from the Ailey/Fordham BFA program. Prather has had the pleasure of performing with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and Nimbus Dance Works performing works by Alvin Ailey, Alejandro Cerrudo, William Forsythe, Ohad Naharin, Crystal Pite, and Twyla Tharp. She received an award from the National Young Arts Foundation for Modern Dance in 2014. Prather joined MMDG as an apprentice in September 2018.

SPENCER RAMIREZ is thrilled to be returning to the stage with the Mark Morris Dance Group this winter. He began his training in the DC-Metropolitan area at the Metropolitan Fine Arts Center, the Maryland Youth Ballet, the Houston Ballet, and eventually moved to New York City to study at The Juilliard School. He started his professional career with the Mark Morris Dance Group where he traveled around the world both performing and teaching from 2010 to 2013. He has also performed as a guest artist with Malashock Dance and BODYTraffic in Los Angeles and with Dance Heginbotham in New York. He is now pursuing a career in musical theater and has performed regionally in *MAME* (Riverside Theater), *Newsies* (Tuacahn Center for the Arts), *Shrek* (Tuacahn Center for the Arts), and *Mamma Mia* (Tuacahn Center for the Arts). Thank you to Mark and the rest of the family for having me back.

BRANDON RANDOLPH began his training with the School of Carolina Ballet Theater in Greenville, SC, under the direction of Hernan Justo. At age 14, he was accepted into the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities, where he studied with Stanislav Issaev and Bobby Barnett. Randolph received his BFA in dance from Purchase College in 2012. There he had the opportunity to perform with Dance Heginbotham as well as repertory by Stephen Petronio, Lar Lubovitch, Paul Taylor, and George Balanchine. Randolph began working with MMDG in 2013 and became a company member in 2014.

WENDY REINERT grew up in Saratoga Springs, NY training in classical ballet before attending Idyllwild Arts Academy in Southern California and discovering modern dance. She graduated from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts in 2003, where she performed in works by Nacho Duato, Trisha Brown, and Robert Battle. Since graduating, she has worked with Kun Yang Lin/dancers, Cherylyn Lavagnino Dance, Peridance Ensemble, and Lorena Egan Dance, among others, and performs regularly with the Metropolitan Opera Ballet. She is also a professional aerial dancer and circus artist performing her own work throughout the city.

NICOLE SABELLA is from Clearwater, FL, where she studied at the Academy of Ballet Arts and the Pinellas County Center for the Arts at Gibbs High School under Suzanne B. Pomerantzeff. In 2009, she graduated from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, PA, earning her BFA in modern dance performance and the "Outstanding Performance in Modern Dance" Award. She was

a performer with Zane Booker's Smoke, Lilies, and Jade Arts Initiative. Sabella first performed with MMDG in 2013 and became a company member in 2015.

CHRISTINA SAHAIDA grew up in Pittsburgh, PA and began her early dance training at the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School. In 2012, she graduated with honors from Butler University, receiving a BFA in dance performance. She has worked with Ballet Quad Cities, Texture Contemporary Ballet, and most recently the Big Muddy Dance Company in St. Louis, MO. Sahaida joined the Mark Morris Dance Group as an apprentice in July 2017.

BILLY SMITH grew up in Fredericksburg, VA and attended George Mason University under a full academic and dance talent scholarship. He graduated magna cum laude in 2007 and received achievement awards in performance, choreography, and academic endeavors. While at George Mason he performed the works of Mark Morris, Paul Taylor, Lar Lubovitch, Doug Varone, Daniel Ezralow, Larry Keigwin, Susan Marshall, and Susan Shields. Smith's own piece, *3-Way Stop*, was selected to open the 2006 American College Dance Festival Gala at Ohio State University and his original choreography for a production of *Bye Bye Birdie* garnered much critical praise. An actor as well, Smith's regional theater credits include Tulsa in *Gypsy*, Mr. Mistoffelees in *CATS*, and Dream Curlly in *Oklahoma!*. Smith danced with Parsons Dance from 2007—10. He joined MMDG as a company member in 2010.

JOSHUA TUASON is a freelance dance artist originally from San Francisco where he began his training at the San Francisco Ballet and later obtained a BFA from Marymount Manhattan College. He was a member of the Martha Graham Ensemble and has participated in various reconstructions of Merce Cunningham's work through the Cunningham Trust. Former member of the Stephen Petronio Company (2009—17) he has also worked with Ian Spencer Bell, Ellen Cornfield, Wendy Osserman, Pat Catterson, and Pam Tanowitz.

NOAH VINSON is originally from Springfield, IL and received his BA in dance from Columbia College, Chicago. He was named *Dance Magazine* "Dancer on the Rise" in 2009 and assisted Mark Morris in the creation of his most recent work for Houston Ballet, *The Letter V*, which premiered in 2015. He began dancing with MMDG in 2002 and became a company member in 2004.

Mark Morris Dance Group



MICA BERNAS



SAM BLACK



KARLIE BUDGE



DURELL R. COMEDY



BRANDON COURNAY



DOMINGO ESTRADA, JR.



LESLEY GARRISON



LAUREN GRANT



SARAH HAARMANN



DEEPA LIEGEL



AARON LOUX



LAUREL LYNCH



DALLAS McMURRAY



MINGA PRATHER



BRANDON RANDOLPH



NICOLE SABELLA



CHRISTINA SAHAIDA



BILLY SMITH



NOAH VINSON



ELISA CLARK



RITA DONAHUE



JOHN HEGINBOTHAM



AMBER STAR MERKENS



JUNE OMURA



SPENCER RAMIREZ



JANELLE BARRY



DEREK CRESCENTI



JOHN EIRICH



ROBERT LEWIS



WENDY REINERT



JOSHUA TUASON

MMDG MUSIC ENSEMBLE

Colin Fowler, <i>Music Director, Conductor</i>	VIOLA Melissa Reardon, <i>principal</i>	OBOE Kemp Jernigan	TROMBONE Dave Nelson Mike Lormand
VIOLIN I Georgy Valtchev, <i>concert-master</i> Anna Elashvili Michelle Ross Rebecca Anderson Keats Dieffenbach Jennifer Curtis Tina Bouey Alexander Shiozaki	Adda Kridler Caitlin Lynch Irena McGuffee Stephanie Griffin	ENGLISH HORN Roni Gal-Ed	BASS TROMBONE Jeff Caswell
VIOLIN II Benjamin Russell, <i>principal</i> Maxim Moston Rachel Shapiro Karen Dekker Alexander Fortes Rhiannon Banerdt	CELO Wolfram Koessel, <i>principal</i> Alexander Scheirle Alan Richardson Claire Marie Solomon	CLARINET Todd Palmer Jo-Ann Sternberg	TUBA Marcus Rojas
	DOUBLE BASS Tony Flynt, <i>principal</i> Andrew Trombley	BASS CLARINET Pascal Archer	HARP Adam Phan
	FLUTE Lance Suzuki Anna Urrey Andrew Rehrig	BASSOON Damian Primis Edward Burns	TIMPANI Matthew Gold
	PICCOLO Andrew Rehrig	FRENCH HORN Michael Atkinson Sara Cyrus Zohar Schondorf Will de Vos	PERCUSSION Sean Ritenauer Chris Thompson
		TRUMPET Sycil Mathai Steve Madancy	CELESTE Amir Farid

For Music Ensemble photos, please visit mmdg.org/bios

THE HARD NUT SINGERS

MS 51 William Alexander (Dec 14 at 7:30pm, Dec 16 at 3pm)

Mimi Broderick, *Choral Director*

Brooklyn Friends School (Dec 15 & 20 at 7:30pm)

Lisa Whitson Burns, *Choral Director*

Brooklyn Technical High School, Women's Choir (Dec 15 at 2pm, Dec 21 at 7:30pm)

Basia Ravi, *Choral Director*

Brooklyn Technical High School, Technical Difficulties A Capella* (Dec 15 at 2pm, Dec 21 at 7:30pm)

Basia Revi, *Choral Director*

Students of The School at the Mark Morris Dance Center (Dec 22 at 2pm & 7:30pm, Dec 23 at 3pm)

Elise Gaugert, *Choral Director*

*Singing carols before the performance on the front steps of BAM

Mark Morris Dance Group

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Thanks to Maxine Morris.

Sincerest thanks to all the dancers for their dedication, commitment, and incalculable contribution to the work.

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The Mark Morris Dance Group is a member of Dance/USA and the Downtown Brooklyn Arts Alliance.

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