

# David Dorfman Dance



## 2021/2022 Press Kit

*“I believe in the healing power of art—and dance in particular. I see the body as a political and emotional force. I love using mine as an expressive power.”*

-David Dorfman

[daviddorfmandance.org](http://daviddorfmandance.org)

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**Since its founding in 1987**, David Dorfman Dance (DDD) has performed extensively throughout North and South America, Great Britain, Europe and Central Asia. DDD has regularly performed in New York City at major venues, including The Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Joyce Theater, The Kitchen, Danspace Project/St. Mark's Church, La Mama Theater, The Duke on 42nd Street, The Met Breuer, and the 92nd St. "Y"/Harkness Dance Festival. David Dorfman, the company's dancers, and DDD's artistic collaborators have been honored with eight New York Dance and Performance (Bessie) Awards.

DDD promotes the appreciation and critical understanding of dance by realizing the creation of new works by choreographer David Dorfman and his artistic collaborators. In advocating his mission "to get the whole world dancing," Dorfman's work has enjoyed broad and diverse audiences nationally and internationally. DDD creates dance that seeks to de-stigmatize the notion of accessibility and interaction in post-modern dance by embracing audiences with visceral, meaningful dance, music and text. By sustaining a vision to create innovative, inclusive, movement-based performance that is radically humanistic, DDD maintains a core commitment to examine and unearth issues and ideas that enliven, incite, and excite audiences in dialogue and debate about social change and a myriad of other topics.

Recently celebrating its 30th anniversary, DDD has inspired, mentored and served as a springboard for a new generation of culturally and aesthetically diverse dancemakers including DDD alumni Kyle Abraham, Raja Kelly, Kendra Portier, and Jennifer Nugent, among others.

In 2014, DDD was invited to tour Turkey, Tajikistan, and Armenia with DanceMotion USA. In March 2016, DDD performed at the opening day of the Met Breuer Museum in New York City, dancing to an original live score by Ken Thomson throughout the day in the Sunken Garden. The company embarked on a landmark tour to Athens, Greece in the summer of 2016, working with community athletes, dancers, and mixed ability movers to animate the new Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center for their Metamorphosis Festival. DDD's newest evening length work, *Aroundtown* had its World Premiere at Bates Dance Festival in July 2017, and its NY Premiere at BAM's Next Wave Festival in November 2017. In May, 2018 DDD partnered with USAID El Salvador to bring dance to youth in El Salvador. Together they pledged to use their bodies for peace rather than war. DDD has a robust season planned in the coming year, which will include the Premiere season of *(A)Way Out of My Body* presented at NYU Skirball Center April 2022 and the initial research and development phase of a new work, *TRUCE SONG*. This in-process project will also serve as a collaboration with Contemporary Dance Wyoming through a newly established relationship with Dancers' Workshop in Jackson, WY where DDD serves as Commissioned Artist-in-Residence. All of these efforts help DDD promote its mission of Kinetic Diplomacy: if you're dancing, you're not hurting another human being.



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## David Dorfman (CC MFA '81)

In 1987 David founded David Dorfman Dance (DDD) with the intention of creating politically and socially relevant work. Whether he is celebrating the prophetic possibilities of music and dance in his Sly & the Family Stone-inspired “Prophets of Funk,” exploring the principles of political activism in “underground” or sharing the stage with local athletes in “The Athlete's Project,” David and his dancers radiate a genuine belief that we can achieve a more just and loving society through movement. A master educator, David is a tenured professor at Connecticut College, choreographed Broadway's “Indecent,” and has received multiple awards incl. a 2019 USA Fellowship in Dance, a Guggenheim fellowship, 4 NEA fellowships, a Bessie, The Martha Hill Fund for Dance's Mid-Career Award, and a Lucille Lortel.

Dorfman's choreography has been produced in New York City at venues ranging from the Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Joyce Theater, The Kitchen, Dance Theater Workshop, The Duke on 42nd Street, Danspace Project/St. Mark's Church, P.S. 122, and Dancing in the Streets. His work has been commissioned widely in the U.S. and in Europe by Bedlam Dance Company (London), d9 Dance Collective (Seattle), Eisenhower Dance Theatre (Detroit), and the Prince Music Theater in Philadelphia for the musical *Green Violin*, for which he won a 2003 Barrymore Award for best choreography. Dorfman toured an evening of solos and duets, *Live Sax Acts*, with friend and collaborator Dan Froot, most recently in New York City and at the Harare International Festival of the Arts in Zimbabwe, and a half-evening duet, *Menne Awn Frauen*, created with Stuart Pimsler.

He appeared on several episodes of *A Chance to Dance*, a reality show on OvationTV starring Dorfman's pals, the BalletBoyz who invited David Dorfman Dance to make a three-minute video for RandomAct/Channel 4UK. *We Don't Own a Dog* came out of that invitation—an excerpt can be seen at <https://youtu.be/QN7N-s0xcsM>.

Dorfman has been a guest artist at numerous institutions across the country and abroad. As a performer, he toured internationally with Kei Takei's Moving Earth and Susan Marshall & Co. Dorfman holds a BS in business administration from Washington University in St. Louis. With love, David thanks long-time mentors Martha Myers and the late Daniel Nagrin, his late folks Jeanette and Oscar, and his in-house family project Lisa Race and Samson Race Dorfman.

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**Watch the Trailer:** <https://vimeo.com/411213916>

*(A)Way Out of My Body* uses “out of body” experience as a metaphor for our times and our body politic. Dancers propel themselves through space and time, attempting to pass the barrier of reality and plight into the realm of positivity and growth. This collective story of searching for personal “truths” among fantastical sensations is seen through breath-taking lighting and visual design by the brilliant theater maker Andrew Schneider, highlighting the otherworldly-ness of our dreams, desires, our every day, and new worlds awaiting us. The performances feature a four-person band, performing music written specifically for the piece.

**“I believe in the healing power of art—and dance in particular. I see the body as a political and emotional force. I love using mine as an expressive power,”** states Dorfman.

*(A)Way Out of My Body*, which had its premiere in February 2020 at Connecticut College, represents a new era for the company as it enters its 4th decade of making dances. Always lauded as making “full throttle, big-hearted” choreography, 65-year old David Dorfman sets out to make his most personal work yet. DDD will produce the Premiere Season of *(A)Way Out of My Body* presented at NYU Skirball in April 2022. This NYC Premiere is the culmination of several years of work on this specific piece, and was originally supposed to begin touring in October, 2020, but was delayed due to COVID-19.

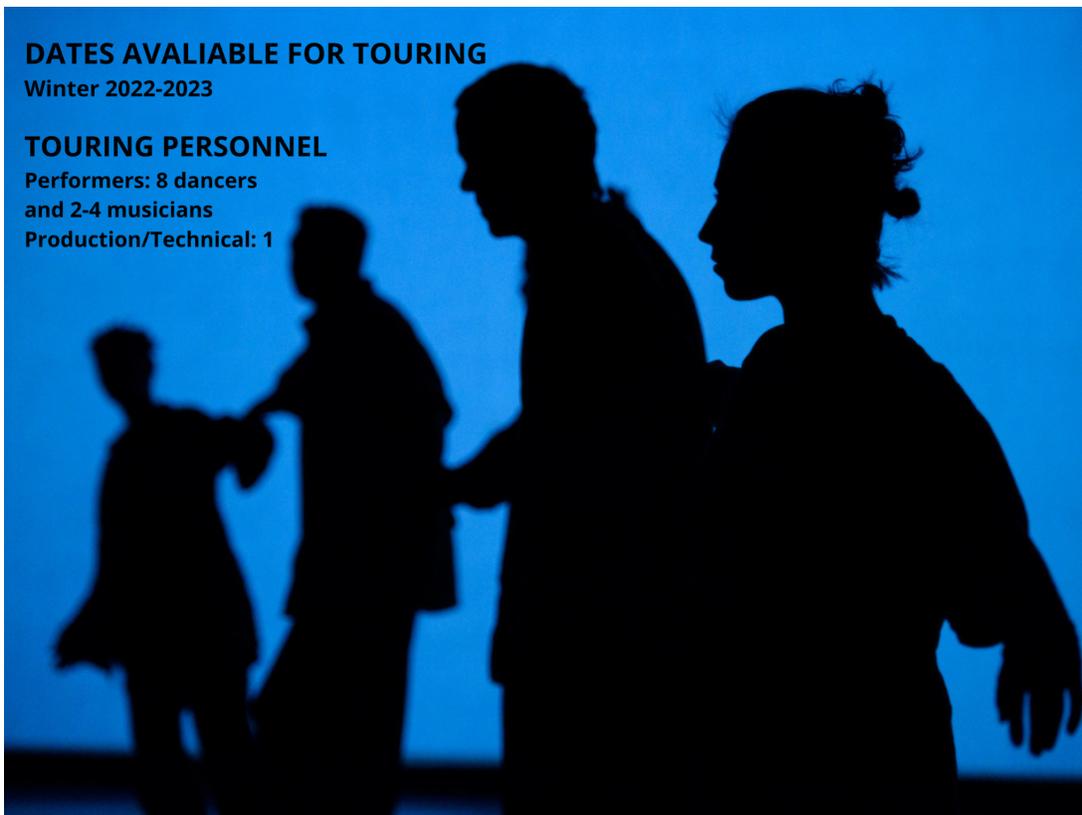
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**DATES AVAILIABLE FOR TOURING**

Winter 2022-2023

**TOURING PERSONNEL**Performers: 8 dancers  
and 2-4 musicians

Production/Technical: 1



Photos by Maria Baranova and Jack Beal

Conceived and Directed by David Dorfman

Choreography and text by David Dorfman Dance

Visual Designer: Andrew Schneider

Original Score: Samuel Crawford, Zeb Gould, Jeff Hudgins and Liz de Lise

Costumes: Oana Botez

**MASTER CLASSES specific to *(A)Way Out of My Body*:****MOVEMENT IS NECESSARY**

For DDD's newest creation, *(A)Way Out of My Body*, movement of our precious bodies - in any way, shape, or form - becomes all important. In our unpredictable world, filled with daily obstacles of all kinds, how do we navigate toward positive change, resilience and empathic behavior? Our answer is to dance through life with each other: safely and with magical risk appropriate for the occasion. We need to move in new directions – discover paths we have only dreamt of. By employing improvisation combined with choreographed sequences, dancers of all ages and experiences can find joy and discovery in this workshop. We will have fun!

**KINETIC DIPLOMACY**

DDD has worked throughout the world for decades combining text and movement to access personal, political, and humorous stories – blending seamlessly both literal and abstract notions of presence, equity and agency. As we continue to construct our new evening of performance, *(A)Way Out of My Body*, workshop participants will move, write and speak to their most pressing issues. As our intent is always to “get the whole world dancing”, to this end, no previous dance experience is required – just a willingness to explore. If we can all move together, especially with people unfamiliar to us, we can make a more empathic world in real time.

# Repertory

DDD's creative projects include:

- **TRUCE SONG (in process)** will be a meditation on peace, power and capitalism. With influences ranging from the books "After Anatevka - Tevye in Palestine" and "See: Under Love;" to the documentary "The Fog of War;" and inhabited by texts and embodiments of visionaries such as Greta Thunberg, Bernie Sanders, Rue Mapp, and Wilma Subra. Truce Song asks the essential question, "If we can stop fighting and destroying for a day, weekend or month - why not forever". Original movement, text and music will mine the subject matter doggedly and with humor, as we reveal in real time the depths of our power-crazed world. The work will ultimately be a reflection on hope; our hope is *TRUCE SONG* spurs peaceable action.
- **Aroundtown (2017)** is a kinetic poem that examines the varied, unique and sometimes divided notions of LOVE- it's meaning, purpose, and platform. With original music, text, and visuals, the work explores commitment, community, and intimacy in times of violence and strife. DDD's trademark empathy, sly humor, and bombastic physicality are harnessed to examine LOVE as both sociopolitical and intimate weather systems. ○ <https://vimeo.com/244850621>
- **Come, and Back Again (2013)** is an evening-length elegiac exploration of the virtuosity of daily life, vulnerability, and mortality. Driven by the charged poetry and unapologetic, raw ferocity of indie, punk, and folk-rock music including venerated artists such as Atlanta, GA band "Smoke" and Patti Smith, the godmother of punk, five dancers and five musicians embark on a kinetic anthem of reckless personal abandon - taking on time, and how memory influences and manages our slippery, elastic existence. ○ <https://vimeo.com/63349738>
- **Prophets of Funk (2011)** is an evening that celebrates Sly and the Family Stone's groundbreaking, visceral, powerful music, and the struggles and celebration of everyday people. Dorfman and Sly and the Family Stone find common purpose in the prophetic possibilities of music and dance that invite everyday people to find ardor in the muck and mess — the funk — of life. ○ <https://vimeo.com/121075092>
- **underground (2009)** explores the principles of political activism in the 1960s, in particular, the activities of the Weather Underground and asks the questions: when can activism become terrorism, or vice versa, and is condoned or endorsed killing/destruction ever justified? ○ <https://vimeo.com/80938730/3f2efa785f>
- **Disavowal (2008)** is inspired by the life and legend of radical abolitionist and (in)famous "race traitor" John Brown, is a flight of movement imagination on the stakes of racial identity, commitment, and the possibility of freedom and choice under conditions of white supremacy. *Disavowal* probes the fight versus flight relationship between militancy, civility, and conviction, asking: What price are we willing to pay for our deepest commitments? What are we willing to die for and to live for? ○ <https://vimeo.com/130803727>

Please visit our website for additional repertory information. Photos available upon request.  
[daviddorfmandance.org](http://daviddorfmandance.org)

# What the Press is Saying

*“...[Dorfman] has never shied away from open-hearted explorations of self and society, channeling big ideas into raw hyper-athletic movement that calls for go-for-broke dancers.”*

**– The New York Times**

*“...big hearted, idea-driven, smart and shaggy...”*

**– Deborah Jowitt, Arts Journal**

*“...full throttle, non-stop, exuberant dancing; high kicking, hip-swiveling, pelvis thrusting, backflipping, head bobbing, toe tapping FUN.”*

**– Bess J. M. Hochstein, Rural Intelligence**

*“...Dorfman’s energetic ensemble keeps alive the gospel of humanity, theatricality and good ol’ soul.”*

**– Julie Mullins, City Beat Cincinnati**

*“...the viewer is never bored when watching his work unfold.”*

**– Alaine Handa, The Luxury Spot Blog**

*“...his resilience is remarkable.”*

**– Tobi Tobias, Bloomberg News**

# Selection of Articles

[Award-winning choreographer wants audiences to see themselves on stage](#)

*South Coast Today*

[A Transcendent 'Indecent' at the Huntington](#)

*The Boston Globe*

["with a shadow of..." And Euphoric Submersion into Unknowing](#)

*Pittsburgh in the Round*

[David Dorfman Announced as a United States Fellow](#)

United States Artists

[New London's Adam Schmidt and David Dorfman bring dance program to at-risk youths in El Salvador](#)

*The Day*

[What Wendy's Watching: David Dorfman Portrays Hope & Tenderness](#)

*Dance Magazine*

[Dorfman wins Lortel Award for 'Indecent' choreography](#)

*The Day*

[Getting Site-Specific at The Met](#)

MetMuseum.org

[Why I Dance](#)

*Dance Magazine*