

Thursday and Friday, December 13–14, 2018, 8pm
Saturday, December 15, 2018, 2pm and 8pm
Sunday, December 16, 2018, 3pm
Zellerbach Playhouse

Big Dance Theater

17c

Conceived and directed by Annie-B Parson
Co-directed by Paul Lazar
Choreographed by Annie-B Parson and the company

Tei Blow, *sound design*
Joanne Howard, *set design*
Oana Botez, *costume design*
Joe Levasseur, *lighting design*
Jeff Larson, *video design*

Performed by
Elizabeth DeMent, Cynthia Hopkins, Paul Lazar,
Mikéah Jennings, and Kourtney Rutherford

Produced by Aaron Mattocks
Aaron Amodt, *production manager*
Ilana Khanin, *production stage manager*
David Bova, *“Elizabeth” wig design and construction*

Eben Hoffer, *associate sound design*
Andreea Mincic, *associate set design*
Andrew Lulling, *sound engineer*
Jorge Morales Picó, *video assistant/operator*
Joseph Silovsky and Infinite Studios, *set construction*
Talla Dia/Talla Design, Karen Boyer, *costume construction*

Written and freely adapted by Annie-B Parson
from source texts by Samuel Pepys, Margaret Cavendish, Euripides,
Eugène Ionesco, Claire Tomalin, The Nerd Next Door/Leesa Ricci,
Jill Johnston, and annotator comments on www.pepysdiary.com.

*17c will be performed without an intermission
and will last approximately 70 minutes.*

Cal Performances' 2018–19 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.



17c is the newest Big Dance Theater ensemble work, built around the problematic 17th-century diaries of Samuel Pepys. Pepys danced, sang, strummed, shopped, strove, bullied, and groped—and he recorded all of it in his diary, completely unfiltered. From his bunions, to his infidelities, to his perversions, to his meetings with the King, he needed to get his daily life down on paper, or he felt lost. While Pepys has a shockingly contemporary self-awareness, he is emboldened by—and oblivious to—his unacknowledged bias against women and aggression toward them, and writes openly about it. He is complicated, and this makes him valuable to observe, interrogate, and challenge through the lens of a contemporary feminist discourse. A startling precursor to our own social media culture, Pepys possessed a similar compulsion to assign an almost constant real-time meaning to his daily existence, to examine himself, and obsessively report it.

Using all the data we can find—the copiously prolific diaries themselves, Margaret Cavendish's 17th-century radical feminist play *The Convent of Pleasure*, three centuries of marginalia, and the ongoing annotations of the web-based devotees at www.pepysdiary.com—*17c* dismantles an unchallenged historical figure and embodies the women's voices omitted from Pepys' intimate portrait of his life. Big Dance Theater continues its formal fascination with building systems of dance that challenge theater, while allowing the structure of the work itself to bring contemporary meaning to the making and un-making of our subjective past.

Founded in 1991, **Big Dance Theater** is known for its inspired use of dance, music, text, and visual design. The company often works with wildly incongruent source material, weaving and braiding disparate strands into multi-dimensional performance. Led by artistic director Annie-B Parson, Big Dance has delved into the literary work of such authors as Twain, Tanizaki, Wellman, Euripides, and Flaubert, and dance is used as both frame and metaphor to theatricalize these writings. For more than 25 years, Big Dance Theater has worked to create more than 20 dance/theater works, generating

each piece over months of collaboration with its associate artists, a longstanding, ever-evolving group of actors, dancers, composers, and designers.

Big Dance Theater received New York Dance and Performance Bessie Awards in 2002 and 2010; the company was awarded an OBIE in 2000 and BDT company members have received five other Bessie Awards and an OBIE award for their work with Big Dance. In 2007 the company received the first-ever Jacob's Pillow Dance Award. Big Dance Theater has been presented around the world, including in France, Italy, Belgium, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Brazil, and Germany, and in the USA in venues including the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Dance Theater Workshop, The Kitchen, City Center, The Performing Garage, New York Live Arts, The Chocolate Factory, Classic Stage Company, Japan Society, Under the Radar, American Realness, PS122's COIL Festival, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, the Museum of Contemporary Art (Chicago), Walker Art Center, Yerba Buena, On the Boards, UCLA Live, ICA Boston, American Dance Institute (ADI), Fusebox Festival/Austin, CounterCurrent Festival/Houston, and Spoleto Festival USA. Additionally, in 2013–14, the artistic directors and design team were invited to create a commission featuring Mikhail Baryshnikov; under the Big Dance Theater creative umbrella in partnership with Baryshnikov Productions, *Man in a Case* toured nationally to Hartford Stage, Shakespeare Theater in Washington (DC), Berkeley Repertory Theater, the Broad Stage in Los Angeles, ArtsEmerson/Boston, and the MCA/Chicago. Other recent commissions have come from Dance Umbrella Festival/The Old Vic in London, Les Subsistances in Lyon, Chaillot Theatre National in Paris, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Walker Art Center, Carolina Performing Arts, and the Old Vic/London.

Recent Awards: 2015 Olivier Award nominee (London) for Annie-B Parson (*Here Lies Love*); 2014 Prelude Festival's FRANKY Award: Annie-B Parson and Paul Lazar; 2014 Doris Duke Performing Artist Award: Annie-B Parson; 2014 Foundation for Contemporary Arts

Grants to Artists Award: Annie-B Parson; 2013 New York Foundation for the Arts Artist Fellowship: Annie-B Parson; 2012 United States Artists Fellowship : Annie-B Parson; 2010 New York Dance and Performance Bessie Award for Outstanding Production: *Comme Toujours Here I Stand*.

Annie-B Parson co-founded Big Dance Theater in 1991. She has choreographed and co-created more than 20 works for the company, ranging from pure dance pieces, to adaptations of found text, plays, and literature, to original works combining wildly disparate materials. Her work with Big Dance has been commissioned by organizations including the Brooklyn Academy of Music, National Theater of Paris/Chaillot, Japan Society, Walker Art Center, Les Subsistances in Lyon, and many others.

Outside of Big Dance, Parson has created choreography for opera, pop stars, television, movies, theater, ballet, symphony orchestras, advertising, objects, museums, augmented reality, and 1,000 amateur singers. Most recently, Parson directed and choreographed David Byrne's new *American Utopia* tour; and earlier this year, a dance for Sadler's Wells/Co. of Elders in London. Other work includes David Byrne's musical *Here Lies Love* at both the Public Theater and the National Theater in London; Byrne's 2012 world tour with St. Vincent and a marching band; and Byrne's and Brian Eno's 2008 world tour. Parson also created the staging/choreography for St. Vincent's 2017 and 2014 world tours, as well as St. Vincent's collaboration with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, *The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon*, and *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*. Parson currently has two large-scale works in repertory in the Martha Graham Dance Company, and she created a solo for Wendy Whelan commissioned by the Royal Ballet. Parson choreographed 1,000 singers for a work by David Lang at the Mostly Mozart Festival at Lincoln Center. She choreographed the world premiere of David Bowie/Ivo Van Hove's *Lazarus* at New York Theatre Workshop, which opened in London in 2016 at the King's Cross Theatre. Her dances are featured in the film *Ride, Roar, Rise*

about David Byrne, among others. Her work for theater, opera, and film includes plays by Lucas Hnath, Sarah Ruhl, and Suzann Lori Parks, as well as the Meryl Streep/Jonathan Demme movie *Ricki and the Flash* and Nico Muhly's opera *Dark Sister*. She has also choreographed for orchestras and bands, including a full-length work for the ETHEL string quartet.

Her awards include the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award (2014), an Olivier Award nomination in choreography (2015), a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grants to Artists Award (2014), a USA Artists Grant in theater (2012), a Guggenheim Fellowship in choreography (2007), two Bessie Awards (2010, 2002), and a "Frankie" Award (2016). Parson was honored by PS122 in 2016; has been nominated for the CalArts/Alpert Award seven times; and has received three Lucille Lortel Award nominations (2014, 2012, 2011). She was a YCC choreographer at the American Dance Festival, and she is currently a Fellow at the Center for Ballet Arts.

Since 1993 Parson has been an instructor of choreography at New York University's Experimental Theater Wing. She was featured in *BOMB* magazine, and has contributed articles to *Ballet Review* and *Movement Research Journal*, a drawing to *The Brooklyn Rail*, and a piece for Dance USA on the state of dance/theater in the United States. Parson has also given a talk on the synthesis of poetics and the film script *Terms of Endearment* at the Poetry Center. As an artist curator, she has curated shows including Merce Cunningham's memorial *We Give Ourselves Away at Every Moment*, *Dancer Crush* at NYLA, and *Sourcing Stravinsky* at DTW. Parson tours a lecture on abstraction called *The Virtuosity of Structure*, and her book *Dance by Letter* is published by 53rd State Press. She is at work on drawing a dance autobiography in charts.

Paul Lazar (performer) is a founding member of Big Dance Theater. He has co-directed and acted in works for Big Dance since 1991, including commissions from the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Walker Art Center, Dance Theater Workshop, Classic Stage Company, and

the Japan Society. Outside of Big Dance, Lazar directed Howard Fishman's *A Star Has Burnt My Eye* at BAM in 2016, Christina Masciotti's *Social Security* at the Bushwick Starr in 2015, *Elephant Room* at St. Ann's Warehouse for the company Rainpan 43 in 2012, and Young Jean Lee's Obie Award-winning *We're Gonna Die* in 2011. He directed a new version of *We're Gonna Die* in 2015, featuring David Byrne, at the Melt-down Festival in London. Lazar also directed *Bodycast: An Artist Lecture* by Suzanne Bocanegra and starring Frances McDormand for the 2014 BAM Next Wave Festival; and *Major Bang* for the Foundry Theatre at St. Ann's Warehouse. He recently created a solo dance with text by John Cage, live music by Lea Bertucci, and choreography by Annie-B Parson called *Cage Shuffle*, which premiered at the American Realness festival in New York City and has toured to the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis and A.P.E. Arts in Northampton, MA. Lazar has performed with the Wooster Group in *Brace Up!*, *Emperor Jones*, *North Atlantic*, and *The Hairy Ape*. Other stage acting credits include Richard Maxwell's *Samara* at Soho Rep, *Tamburlaine* at Theatre For A New Audience, Young Jean Lee's *Lear*, *The Three Sisters* at Classic Stage Company, Richard Maxwell's *Cowboys and Indians* at Soho Rep, *Richard III* at Classic Stage Company, *Svejk* at Theatre for a New Audience, Irene Fornes' *Mud* at the Signature Theater, and Mac Wellman's *1965 UU* at the Chocolate Factory Theatre. He has acted in over 30 feature films, including *Snowpiercer*, *The Host*, *Mickey Blue Eyes*, *Silence of the Lambs*, *Beloved*, *Lorenzo's Oil*, and *Philadelphia*. His honors include two Bessie Awards (2010, 2002), the Jacob's Pillow Creativity Award in 2007, and the Prelude Festival's Frankie Award in 2014, as well an Obie Award for Big Dance in 2000. Lazar has taught at Yale, Rutgers, the William Esper Studio, and the Michael Howard Studio, and currently teaches at New York University. Last spring, he directed Mac Wellman's *Three Americanisms* at the Theater, Dance, and Media Department of Harvard University.

Aaron Amodt (*production manager*) is a Floridian who is most at home in the swamp but

will settle for a humid summer in New York. He started out by doing pyro for Seaworld and Ringling Brothers Circus, but now builds sets in downtown NYC. Work as technical director includes *Gatz* (Elevator Repair Service), *Everyone's Fine With Virginia Woolf* (Elevator Repair Service), *objects in mirror AR closer than they appear* (Sensorium), *ms. estrada* (The Flea), *Fill Fill Fill Fill Fill Fill* (The Flea), and *A Billion Nights On Earth* (Lucidity Suitcase Intercontinental). Other credits include *Othello* (New York Theatre Workshop), *Lazarus* (New York Theatre Workshop), *The Select* (Elevator Repair Service). Find Amodt's theater photography at <http://www.aaronamodt.com>.

Tei Blow's (*sound designer*) work incorporates photography, video, and sound from live instrumentation and found media artifacts. It has been featured at Hartford Stage, Dance Theater Workshop, Lincoln Center Festival, The Kitchen, BAM, the Public Theater, Broad Stage, MCA Chicago, MFA Boston, Kate Werble Gallery, Baryshnikov Arts Center, Wadsworth Atheneum, and at theaters around the world. He has performed and designed for: The Laboratory of Dmitry Krymov, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Big Dance Theater, and David Neumann/Advanced Beginner Group. Blow has received a New York Dance and Performance Bessie Award for Outstanding Sound Design and a 2016 NYSCA Individual Artist Grant.

Oana Botez (*costume designer*) is a Princess Grace, Barrymore, and Drammy Award winner, and a NEA/TCG Career Development Program Recipient. New York: BAM Next Wave, Bard SummerScape, Baryshnikov Arts Center, The David H. Koch Theater/Lincoln Center, Soho Rep, LCT3, The Public Theater, Classic Stage Company, The Joyce Theater, Big Apple Circus, BRIC Arts Media, 59East59, La MaMa, and HERE Arts Center. Regional: The Wilma Theater, Portland Stage Company, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Hartford Stage Company, Long Wharf Theater, Berkeley Rep, ArtsEmerson, Shakespeare Theatre Company, The Walker Arts Center, Peak Performances, ADI, Curtis Institute of Music. International: Bucharest

National Theater, Arad National Theater, Blandra Theater, Théâtre National de Chaillot, Les Subsistances, Budapest National Theater, Cluj Hungarian National Theater, Bucharest Operetta Theater, International Festival of Contemporary Theater, Le Quartz, La Filature, Centro Cultural Universidad del Pacífico, Palazzo Simoncelli, Edinburgh International Festival, and Singapore Arts Festival. Botez is a graduate of Bucharest Art Academy and received her MFA in design from NYU/Tisch School of the Arts. She teaches figure drawing and costume design at MIT, and resides in Manhattan. www.oanabotez.com.

Elizabeth DeMent (*performer*) is a New York-based performer originally from Ukiah, CA. She is a graduate of the Juilliard School and has been working as a dancer/performer/actor ever since. DeMent has worked with Peridance Ensemble, the Metropolitan Opera Ballet, Liz Gerring Dance Company, Stephen Petronio, Jodi Melnick, Patrick Corbin, Dance Heginbotham, Christina Masciotti, and Half-Straddle. She is proud to have worked extensively as associate choreographer to Annie-B Parson on several projects, including *Here Lies Love*, St. Vincent's *Digital Witness* tour, and David Byrne's *American Utopia* tour. DeMent won a Bessie Award for her outstanding performance in *17c* presented by the Brooklyn Academy of Music in November 2017.

Cynthia Hopkins (*performer*) is an internationally acclaimed musical performance artist; she writes songs, records albums, and creates groundbreaking musical performance works that intertwine truth and fiction, blurring the lines between edification and entertainment. She has produced eight performance works, eight albums of original music, and one museum installation. Her work has received many awards, including a 2015 Doris Duke Artist Award, a 2010 Guggenheim Fellowship, and the 2007 Alpert Award in Theater. Hopkins also works as a performer, composer, voice-over artist, and musician for many other artists. She resides in West Philadelphia, PA. cynthiahopkins.com.

Joanne Howard (*set design*) has been designing sets for Big Dance Theater since 1992. In addition to set design, Howard works in a variety of media, including sculpture, works on paper, ceramics, and video. She has received a Bessie Award for her collaboration with BDT for *Comme Toujours Here I Stand* and is a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship recipient for architecture/environmental structures. Howard has exhibited in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. A recent installation was included in *Call and Response*, an exhibition at Wave Hill, The Bronx (2017).

Mikéah Ernest Jennings (*performer*), a New York City-based artist, has been performing in the city and all around the world for many years. His works include: *MASTER* (The Foundry Theatre), *Drowning/Funnyhouse of a Negro* (Signature Theater, NY), *The Shipment* (Sydney Opera House, The Barbican, The Kitchen NY, La Maison Des Arts, DeSingel), *PULLMAN*, WA (Chelsea Theater, London) by Young Jean Lee, *The Box* (The Foundry Theatre), *Bellona, Destroyer of Cities* (ICA Boston), and *World of Wires* (La Maison des Arts, Paris) by Jay Scheib. His regional credits include *Platonov*, *Or The Disinherited* by Jay Scheib (La Jolla Playhouse), *I Promised Myself to Live Faster* (Actors Theater of Louisville, Humana Festival), and *The Legend of Georgia McBride* (The Arden Theater, PA). Jennings has taught in the Department of Music and Theater at MIT, and is currently a member of the faculty at the College of Performing Arts at the New School, NY.

Ilana Khanin (*stage manager*) is a New York-based stage manager and director. Recent stage management credits include *Miles for Mary* (The Mad Ones/Bushwick Starr), *Football Head* (La MaMa), *Some of the Things Inside* (Waterwell), *The Wolves* (Clubbed Thumb workshop), *Men on Boats* (Clubbed Thumb). She has also worked on productions at Samuel French, PTP/NYC, The Tank, New Victory, The Brick, Women's Project, Drama League, Governors Island, Baryshnikov Arts Center, Dixon Place, New York City Players, and BAM. Khanin earned her master's degree in performance

studies, and her bachelor's degree in drama from NYU. www.ilanakhanin.com.

Andrew Lulling (*audio engineer*) has had the opportunity to work closely with many dynamic and vibrant musicians and artists, and has mixed sound for past productions such as Robert Wilson's *Zinnias*, *The Life of Clementine Hunter*, Robert Whittman's *Passport*, and Pig Iron's *Pay Up* and *The Elements of Oz* from the Builders Association, among others. Lulling is also currently production manager and audio engineer for the Peter Sellars and Reggie Grey show *FLEXN*, produced by the Park Avenue Armory. When not touring, Lulling is the house engineer at BRIC Arts Media, in Brooklyn.

Jeff Larson (*video designer*). 17c marks Larson's fifth collaboration with Big Dance Theater, having previously designed video for *Alan Smithee Directed this Play*, *Man in a Case*, *Supernatural Wife*, and the Bessie Award-winning *Comme Toujours Here I Stand*. He is also co-curator of the Obie Award-winning performance series *CATCH* (catchseries.org). Larson has taught in the Department of Drama and the Department of Design for Stage and Film at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, and has been a visiting professor at Bennington College. He is currently resident designer and production manager at Hamilton College.

Joe Levasseur (*lighting design*) has collaborated with dance and performance artists including Jennifer Monson, John Jasperse, Sarah Michelson, Neil Greenberg, David Dorfman, Donna Uchizono, RoseAnne Spradlin, John Kelly, Ishmael Houston-Jones, and Meredith Monk. His work has been seen throughout the United States, Europe, and South America, and has received two Bessie Awards. In 2009 his *Drop Clock* installation was featured in the lobby of Dance Theater Workshop (New York Live Arts). In 2010 he showed a collection of original paintings at Performance Space 122, and in 2013 he was commissioned to paint an original mural for AUNTS. Ongoing projects include lighting work for Brian Brooks, Jodi Melnick, and Palissimo. www.joelevasseur.com.

Andreea Mincic (*associate set designer*) returns to Big Dance Theater after being the associate set designer for *The Man in the Case*. Recent work: *3Fifths* with James Scruggs (costumes), *Primitive Tissue* with Catharine Dill (set and costumes), *Dead Time Of Plenty* (set and costumes) with Mallory Catlett, *Elements of Oz* (costumes) with the Builders Association, *I'm Bleeding All Over the Place* (set) with Brooke O'Hara, *Long Yarn* (set and costumes) with Banana Bag and Bodice, *Vine of The Dead* (costumes) with Jim Findlay, and *The Return* (puppetry) with Tom Lee. Other collaborators in NYC include Half Straddle, 31Down, Radiohole, Hoi Polloi, and Kyle Decamp.

Jorge Morales (*video engineer*) is a Puerto Rican sound designer, actor, and composer currently based in New York City. Drawing inspiration from both classical theater and experimental techniques, his work sits at the intersection of formal experimentation and artistic relevance. He has designed and composed for plays such as *The Burma Project* (directed by Kate Whoriskey) and *Artaud Artaud* (Theatre for a New City), and his work has been featured in places such as Signature Theatre and NYTW. Apart from sound design, he has also acted in various projects, including *Bohemian Lights*, (HERE Arts Center), *Macbeth* (Park Avenue Armory, Kenneth Branagh), *Othello* (No Stone Productions), and *Reinar después de morir* (Repertorio Español). He is also the founding co-artistic director of What Will the Neighbors Say?, an international theater company committed to provoking questions through the presentation of untold stories. For more information about the company and its programming, please visit wwtns.org.

Eben Ofer (*associate sound designer*) is a theater artist focusing on the embodied relationship between longing, the body, and technology. Originally from Portland (OR) and now based in New York City, he works as a director, composer, and sound designer for new plays and performance pieces. His directing and design work with Royal Osiris Karaoke Ensemble has toured nationally and been seen at the Public

Theater, the Bushwick Starr, Abrons Arts Center, and JACK in New York City. Ofer's original physical theater with Tugboat Collective performed at various NYC venues (2012–15), including HERE Arts Center and The Brick. He is a candidate for a master's degree in theater directing at Carnegie Mellon University.

Kourtney Rutherford (*performer*) has worked with Big Dance Theater since 1997, appearing in company productions including *Alan Smithee Directed This Play*, *Ich Kurbisgeist*, *Comme Toujours Here I Stand*, *Shunkin*, and *Antigone*. She has also worked with cutting-edge ensembles and theater artists including Radiohole, Half Straddle, Witness Relocation, Sibyl Kempson, Eliza Bent, and Normandy Sherwood. She has created original work with the Operating Theater, which she co-founded with Jason Schuler. Her interpretation of the rhetorical gesture "Scorn" was recently published in *A New Practical Guide to Rhetorical Gesture and Action* by National Theater of the United States of America, available on 53rd State Press. Rutherford received her BFA in acting from the Experimental Theater Wing at NYU, and has a master's degree in education from City College/CUNY. An avid supporter of arts-in-education programs, Rutherford has taught acting, dance, and theater throughout the New York City public school system. Love to and gratitude for her family, especially to her husband, Mathieu.

Credits

17c is produced by Big Dance Theater and co-commissioned by FringeArts (Philadelphia), Carolina Performing Arts/UNC Chapel Hill, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Old Vic/London, The Yard (Chilmark, MA), Diane and Adam E. Max, Virginia and Timothy Millhiser, the Starry Night Fund, Helen and Peter Haje, and the Heimbinder Family Foundation.

17c is also supported by the Howard Gilman Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. *17c* was created with residency support from the MacDowell Colony and the AIRspace program at Abrons Arts Center. *17c* is funded, in part, by the Big Dance Theater Creation Circle, individual contributors committed to the development and support of the company's newest works. Big Dance Theater is supported by the Doris Duke Performing Artist Awards program, the Emma A. Sheaffer Charitable Trust, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation New York Theater Program, the W Trust, and by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation through USArtists International in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts.

Special thanks to Aaron Mattocks, producer and generative performer in the original cast of *17c*; Anne Delaney and the Big Dance Theater board for their leadership; Chris Giarmon for helping us sing; and David R. White, Ben Pryor, Jay Wegman, and Craig T. Peterson, for providing homes for each stage of this process. Thanks to Brian Teare, Amber Reed, and Ted Zeiter for inspiration. Thanks to Molly Hickok for everything.

Big Dance Theater

Annie-B Parson, *artistic director*
Molly Hickok, *co-founder*
Sara Pereira da Silva, *executive director*
Sara Procopio, *finance and development manager*
Estelle Woodward Arnal, *development consultant*

Jason Collins, *associate producer*
Artspool, *administration management*

www.bigdancetheater.org
@BigDanceTheater (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)