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Press Contact: Sam Mattingly

SMC

(917) 331-9375

[sammattingly@optonline.net](mailto:sammattingly@optonline.net)

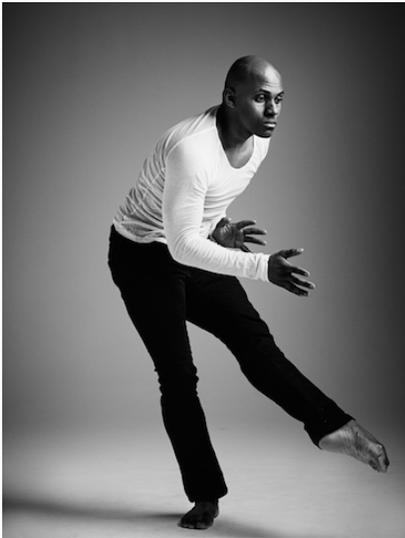
**HARLEM SCHOOL OF THE ARTS SUMMER DANCE INTENSIVE  
OFFERS RIGOROUS TRAINING AND  
STAR STUDDED ROSTER OF GUEST INSTRUCTORS**

*Commitment to excellence in dance continues under new  
leadership*



Harlem, New York – January 30, 2020... Registration for the Harlem School of the Arts (HSA) popular Summer Dance Intensive, has begun. Considered one of the best programs of its kind in the country, the Intensive is a four-week, ballet-based, multidisciplinary experience, designed for students with at least three years of consistent training (three years of ballet is highly recommended). The first in-person auditions will be held on February 8<sup>th</sup> (2:30pm – 4:00), immediately following the information session for parents and students (1:30pm – 2:00pm), all of which take place at the organization’s New York City facilities, located at 645 St. Nicholas Avenue.

This year, the Summer Dance Intensive will fall under the auspices of Leyland Simmons, the newly appointed Director of Dance at HSA, a post recently vacated by Aubrey Lynch, who was promoted to Chief Education & Creative Programs Officer. Mr. Simmons, an accomplished and highly respected dancer/choreographer and educator with a stellar reputation and impeccable credentials, will



assume full responsibilities for the administration, coordination and expansion of all Dance Department initiatives including the Summer Dance Intensive, with its impressive roster of guest artists and instructors.

The intensive offers a rounded curriculum that includes instructions in ballet, pointe, contemporary, jazz, Hip-Hop, and Afro-Fusion. This year one additional element has been incorporated to celebrate the new partnership with the Radio City Rockettes – weekly precision technique classes that will be led by a Rockette.

Dylan Van Putten, who attended last year's intensive found the experience to be *"...an amazing opportunity!"*, and for PREP student Sophia Greenaway, the best thing about the program was

*"...having a group of beautiful brown dancers and choreographers teaching us not only to be better dancers, but better people."*

One of the hallmarks of the Summer Intensive experience are the weekly artist workshops featuring some of the most celebrated superstars of dance, another is the impressive roster of dance luminaries who will be instructing students during the four-week intensive. Among the returning guest artists this year are: **Sarita Allen** (Principal with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Pilates Evolution); **Desmond Richardson** (Principal with American Ballet Theater, Tony Award nominee for *Fosse*, co-founder and co-director of Complexions Contemporary Ballet); **Frank Gatson** (choreographer for Beyoncé, Rihanna, Usher, Michael Jackson, and En Vogue); **Ashley Nicole Mayeux** (formerly with Complexions Contemporary Ballet, now with Alonzo King's LINES Ballet); **George W.N. Sanders** (currently a member of Ballet Memphis); **Ingrid Silva** (currently with Dance Theatre of Harlem); and **Kelly Marsh IV** (formerly with Complexions Contemporary Ballet).

Every Friday, as part of the curriculum, original works created specifically for the students, will be rehearsed before a specially invited guest audience. On July 31, the Summer Dance Intensive will culminate with student participation in the annual, HSA Summer Blaze performance.

Following his predecessor's vision, Mr. Simmons plans to continue to enhance what Mr. Lynch has developed at HSA. *"As the new director of dance, I would like to promote more cross pollination of programs involving HSA dance with the theater, music and the visual arts departments. I am looking forward to pushing artistic boundaries by presenting impactful, inventive and avant-garde choreographic works,"* said Leyland Simmons.



HSA has become known as a dance education destination and is one of five **ABT** officially certified schools in the world, offering **the American Ballet Theatre (ABT) National Training Curriculum**.

The organization offers a competitive, high level dance program that provides pre-professional training and performance opportunities for students serious about dance as a career path, as well as those interested in experiencing the transformative power of dance, regardless of their skill level or prior training.

*“We are so pleased, and consider ourselves fortunate to have Aubrey Lynch and Leyland Simmons, two powerhouse artistic creatives, who bring a wealth of experience, knowledge and energy to the organization, as members of our staff. At HSA, we pride ourselves on being able to attract individuals who have helped to make the organization a unique cultural hub,”* said Eric Pryor, president of HSA.

On February 8, the first auditions for the 2020 HSA Summer Dance Intensive will be held at the Harlem School of the Arts, located at 645 St. Nicholas Avenue, NYC 10030. For more information on the registration, in-person audition process, as well as instructions on photo and video submissions to the HSA Summer Dance Intensive 2020, visit [www.hsanyc.org](http://www.hsanyc.org).

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### **About Harlem School of the Arts at The Herb Alpert Center**

New York City’s premier community arts institution, the Harlem School of the Arts at the Herb Alpert Center stands uniquely apart as the sole provider of arts education in four disciplines: music, dance, theatre, and art & design, all within our award-winning 37,000 square foot facility. The School’s reputation for artistic rigor and excellence attracts students of diverse socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds from the five New York City boroughs as well as Westchester County and the tristate area, which includes Connecticut and New Jersey. HSA’s alumni and faculty are counted among the most talented leaders in the arts.

For over 50-years HSA has enriched the lives of tens of thousands of people through world-class training in the arts. HSA offers its students the freedom to find and develop the artist and citizen within themselves in an environment that teaches discipline, stimulates creativity, builds self-confidence, and adds a dimension of beauty to their lives, empowering them to become the creative thinkers and innovative leaders of tomorrow. To learn more about the Harlem School of the Arts, please visit [www.HSAAnyc.org](http://www.HSAAnyc.org).