

# Passion, Power and Spirit: DCDC's 'Fantastic Forwards' Trailblazing World Premieres

*Dayton Contemporary Dance Company  
Explores the Human Journey in Powerful  
New Program 'Fantastic Forwards'*

DAYTON, OH, UNITED STATES, April 16, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Dayton Contemporary Dance Company](https://www.einpresswire.com/Dayton-Contemporary-Dance-Company) (DCDC), one of the nation's leading contemporary dance companies, will transform the Victoria Theatre stage this April with their groundbreaking new program, "[Fantastic Forwards](#)."



"Fantastic Forwards" is brimming with the innovative spirit that has made DCDC a leader in contemporary dance for over five decades. "Fantastic Forwards" features the pioneering work of three dance-makers, each addressing the timely themes of mental health, resilience, survival and community. Their works testify to the dazzling horizons that lie ahead as they harness the dynamic energy of Hip-Hop to explore how we navigate life's complexities.

“

As we close our main-stage programming for the 24-25 season, I am extremely excited to present three world premieres that showcase the artistry, energy and passion of the DCDC artists.”

*Debbie Blunden-Diggs, Chief  
Executive and Artistic Director*

## Artistic Vision

With "Fantastic Forwards," DCDC reveals that Hip-Hop is a sophisticated world language capable of expressing our deepest human struggles, complex emotions and greatest triumphs. This production represents DCDC's continued commitment to pushing artistic boundaries while honoring its roots. Audiences will thrill at the full dynamism of

contemporary dance as DCDC artists transform the Victoria Theatre into a vision of what dance can be.

Audiences have consistently described DCDC performances as experiences that touch the soul, elicit tears and transform beyond words. More than showcases of electrifying athleticism, DCDC performances set the stage for meaningful conversations and create lifelong converts. "Fantastic

Forwards" continues this tradition, where energy is described as "through the roof," dancer movements become a "masterclass" and you feel "like a Sunday morning and a Saturday night all in one."

#### World Premieres and Choreographic Highlights

Three acclaimed choreographers push the boundaries of movement, seamlessly fusing the rhythmic precision of Hip-Hop footwork with the fluid expressiveness of contemporary dance and the technical brilliance of classical ballet.



DCDC Dancer Artist Aaron Frisby in an emotional moment mid-performance. Photographer Scott Robbins

Audiences will see the world premiere of Ray Mercer's electrifying "Mental," which brings the unseen battle of mental health to the stage. The powerful opening solo embodies the struggle of a Black man wrestling with his own emotions—his thoughts surrounded by voices that haunt, push and pull. Mercer's aptly named piece sheds light on the weight of mental health battles, especially in spaces where vulnerability is rarely given room to breathe.

The godfather of Hip-Hop, Rennie Harris, offers up the soul-stirring "Soon," which pulses with the spirit of house, gospel and the undeniable groove of Philadelphia's GQ style. "Soon" is a heartfelt exploration of community and the transformative power of spirit. Harris says, "At its core, 'Soon' is a reflection of my own personal journey—a testament to my upbringing in a poverty-stricken neighborhood of North Philadelphia. Growing up in an environment where challenges were abundant, I found strength in the collective spirit of my community."

Completing this extraordinary trio is the world premiere of Joshua L. Ishmon's gripping "Pressed," which dives into the raw reality of mental health struggles, the weight of societal expectations and the pressure to be something—or to be seen as something. Through moments of roaring intensity, release and relentless fight, dancers embody the turmoil, resilience, breaking and rebuilding of the human spirit.

Together, these works create a mesmerizing journey that speaks to the universal human experience of finding wholeness and joy in a fragmented world—a true testament to the dazzling artistic horizons that lie ahead for contemporary dance.

#### Legacy and Impact

Rooted in DCDC's 56-year legacy of artistic excellence and cultural significance, "Fantastic Forwards" explores the full range of the human spirit through movement, sight, sound and soul.

Coming fresh from their stunning collaboration with Dayton Opera, DCDC continues to demonstrate their versatility and artistic range in this trailblazing program that remains true to the company's founding mission of creating opportunities for dancers of color and celebrating the African American experience.

"As we close our main-stage programming for the 24-25 season, I am extremely excited to present three world premieres that showcase the artistry, energy and passion of the DCDC artists," said Debbie Blunden-Diggs, chief executive and artistic director. Whether you're a seasoned dance lover or new to the infectious thrill of DCDC, "Fantastic Forwards" promises to be an unparalleled event that will move, inspire and transform.

WHEN: Saturday, April 26, at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, April 27, at 4 p.m.

WHERE: Victoria Theatre, 138 N. Main St., Dayton, OH 45402

[TICKETS](https://www.daytonlive.org/events/fantastic-forwards): Available at [DaytonLive.org/events/fantastic-forwards](https://www.daytonlive.org/events/fantastic-forwards) or by calling 937-228-3630

INFORMATION: Visit [dcdc.org](https://www.dcdc.org)

SOCIAL MEDIA: Facebook/Instagram @daytoncontemporarydancecompany

HASHTAGS: #FantasticForwards #DCDCmoves #DaytonArts #ContemporaryDance

### About DCDC

Founded in 1968 by visionary and MacArthur Fellow Jeraldyn Blunden, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company has grown from creating performance opportunities for African American dancers to becoming the 10th largest modern contemporary dance company in the nation. DCDC tours nationally and internationally to great acclaim. The company has been presented by the American Dance Festival, Jacob's Pillow, BAM Next Wave Festival, The Joyce Theatre, Kennedy Center, ADF Seoul, ADF Moscow and the Lyon (France) Biennale de la Danse. With the knowledge that dance is for everyone, DCDC is committed to arts-integrated education and community engagement. DCDC remains rooted in the African American experience and is dedicated to the presentation of exceptional art and artists on the global stage.

Kevin Ward

Dayton Contemporary Dance Company

+1 937-228-3232

[email us here](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/803579342>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.