

Legendary Los Angeles Dance Icon Carmen de Lavallade Returns Home to Celebrate her 85th Birthday with “As I Remember It” at The Wallis

Friday, October 28 at 8pm



(Beverly Hills, CA October 13) For almost seven decades, Carmen de Lavallade has led an unparalleled career in dance, theater, film and television that began in her hometown of Los Angeles. Now, Ms. de Lavallade returns to celebrate her 85th birthday onstage at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts with *As I Remember It*, an intimate portrait of the legendary artist told through dance, film, music and her own personal writings. This one-night-only performance will take place on Friday, October 28 at 8pm.

From Broadway, to the Hollywood studios, to the Metropolitan Opera, Ms. De Lavallade has performed on the world’s greatest stages and with such legendary artists as Josephine Baker, Duke Ellington, Agnes de Mille, and her husband of almost 60 years, the late Geoffrey Holder. *As I Remember It*, written in collaboration with Talvin Wilks and director Joe Grifasi, is a solo performance told with poignant movement and illustrative storytelling that weaves a moving personal memoir about her venerable life on stage.

“It is such an honor to welcome Carmen de Lavallade to The Wallis’ stage for, what will be, an unforgettable evening that not only acknowledges her brilliant artistry, but also celebrates her return to her hometown,” said Paul Crewes, The Wallis’ Artistic Director.

Single tickets for *As I Remember It: Celebrating Carmen de Lavallade’s 85th Birthday* are now available for \$50 – \$75. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit TheWallis.org, call 310.746.4000, or stop by in person at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts Ticket Services located at 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Ticket prices subject to change.

About As I Remember It

With a script co-written by Ms. de Lavallade and Talvin Wilks and direction by veteran actor Joe Grifasi, *As I Remember It* is a personal, often witty, autobiographical narrative accompanied by film and music. It premiered at Jacobs Pillow in 2014 and subsequently performed in New York City and Washington, D.C. The production features incidental music by Jane Ira Bloom that accompanies sound bites from the dancer’s past. Maya Ciarrocchi provides video design that projects still and moving picture images on the set’s fluid wall, enhanced by James F. Ingalls’s lighting design.

About Carmen de Lavallade

Born in Los Angeles of Creole parents, Carmen de Lavallade began dancing with the Lester Horton Dance Theater in 1949. While in Los Angeles, Lena Horne introduced the then 17-year old de Lavallade to the filmmakers at 20th Century Fox where she appeared in four movies, including *Carmen Jones* (1954) with Dorothy Dandridge and *Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959) with Harry Belafonte. During the filming of *Carmen Jones*, she met Herbert Ross who asked her to appear as a dancer in the Broadway production of *House of Flowers* where she met her husband and collaborator, Geoffrey Holder. Her dance career includes having ballets created for her by Holder, Lester Horton, Alvin Ailey, Glen Tetley, John Butler and Agnes de Mille.

Ms. de Lavallade succeeded her cousin Janet Collins as the principal dancer with the Metropolitan Opera and was a guest artist with the American Ballet Theater. She has choreographed for the Dance Theatre of Harlem, Philadanco, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and the productions of *Porgy and Bess* and *Die Meistersinger* at the Metropolitan Opera.

Ms. De Lavallade also has had an extensive acting career performing in numerous off-Broadway productions including *Death of a Salesman* and *Othello*. She taught movement for actors at Yale, in addition to being a member of the Yale Repertory Company and the American Repertory Theatre at Harvard.

She and Holder were the subjects of the film *Carmen & Geoffrey* (2005) that chronicled their sixty-year partnership and artistic legacy. Her most recent work includes *651 ARTS' FLY: Fine First Ladies of Dance* (2009), *Step-Mother* by Ruby Dee (2009), *Post Black* by Regina Taylor (2011) and the Broadway production of *A Streetcar Named Desire* (2012).

Lauded by numerous institutions, Ms. De Lavallade received the *Dance Magazine* Award in 1964, an honorary doctorate of Fine Arts from the Julliard School in 2007, the Duke Ellington Fellowship Award, and the Dance USA Award in 2010. Now, at the age of 85, Carmen de Lavallade is an American icon in the truest sense of the word—inspiring generations of artists and audiences.

For more information about The Wallis' 2016/17 season, please visit <http://bit.ly/2aEsZ6l>.

For more information about The Wallis, please visit: TheWallis.org.

For downloadable photos, please visit TheWallis.org/Press.

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TICKET INFORMATION:

- What:** *As I Remember It: Celebrating Carmen de Lavallade's 85th Birthday*
Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts
Bram Goldsmith Theater
9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd, Beverly Hills, CA, 90210
- When:** Friday, October 28, 2016 at 8pm
- Tickets:** Single tickets: \$50 - \$75 (prices subject to change)



Online – TheWallis.org

By Phone – 310.746.4000

Box Office – Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts Ticket Service
9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd, Beverly Hills, CA, 90210

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