



SMU'S Meadows School of the Arts

**To Perform Martha Graham's *Appalachian Spring* on May 11, 2016,
Featuring World Premiere of New Edition of Aaron Copland's Score for Full Orchestra**

Meadows Symphony Orchestra and the Meadows Dance Ensemble will be the first to perform the original Graham choreography accompanied by a full orchestra

DALLAS (SMU) April 6, 2016 – On May 11, 2016, dancers from the Meadows School of the Arts at Southern Methodist University will be the first to perform Martha Graham's iconic choreography for *Appalachian Spring* with a new version of Aaron Copland's score for full orchestra, completed in collaboration with the Martha Graham Dance Company and the Aaron Copland Fund for Music. The Meadows Symphony Orchestra and the Meadows Dance Ensemble will debut this new version of the music at the Winspear Opera House at the AT&T Performing Arts Center in Dallas.

When *Appalachian Spring* first premiered in 1944, Graham danced the lead role to music written by Copland, originally created for a 13-piece chamber orchestra to accommodate the acoustic limitations and size of the orchestra pit of the Coolidge Auditorium at the Library of Congress, where the ballet was first performed. In the years following, Copland created multiple versions of his most celebrated piece, which won him the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 1945. In the same year, Copland created an orchestral suite that was a condensed version of the original ballet score, with one large section of music and a few smaller ones omitted. Until now, a fully orchestrated score to match Graham's original choreography has not existed. The Meadows Symphony Orchestra, led by conductor Paul Phillips, will be the first orchestra to perform the new material and will also act as "test drivers" for the score, helping to inform any corrections required before the music is published.

"We are tremendously proud to play a role in the evolution of one of the most important works of American art," said Samuel Holland, dean of the SMU Meadows School of the Arts. "Being

part of this creative process and then performing it for the first time is an incredible opportunity for students at the Meadows School.”

The Copland Fund commissioned David Newman to orchestrate the missing sections of music. Newman has worked in collaboration with Philip Rothman, program advisor to the Aaron Copland Fund for Music, and Aaron Sherber, music director of the Martha Graham Dance Company, to painstakingly create this new score, ensuring that it is faithful to Copland’s original intent. Boosey & Hawkes, publisher of the previous versions of the score, will create a newly engraved edition of the version for full orchestra.

“We are so pleased to bring this new version of Copland’s classic work to life, with the assistance of the Meadows School,” said Sherber. “*Appalachian Spring* is one of the most beloved pieces of American music, and I think it will bring new meaning to Graham’s iconic choreography to see it performed with the full orchestral sound that most audiences are familiar with.”

Guided by leading artists in dance, music and theatre, students from the Meadows School will be involved in all aspects of the production of the ballet: from the performance itself to rebuilding the original Isamu Noguchi-designed sets with guidance from the Martha Graham Dance Company, as well as backstage production and lighting design. Joyce Herring, former principal dancer for the Martha Graham Dance Company and the associate artistic director of RIOULT Dance NY, was at the Meadows School for a three-week residency in January and February to stage the ballet with students. Their preparation has continued under Myra Woodruff, professor of dance at the Meadows School and a former Martha Graham Dance Company member who performed in *Appalachian Spring*. Steve Woods, professor of design and theatre at the Meadows School and lighting designer to the José Limón Dance Company, will be creating the lighting design for the piece.

Appalachian Spring will be performed as part of the Meadows School’s 23rd annual gala benefit concert at the Winspear Opera House in Dallas on May 11, 2016, honoring Dallas philanthropist and civic leader Donna Wilhelm. Following the premiere, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and the Baltimore School of the Arts’ Dance Ensemble will perform the ballet to the new edition of the score.

ABOUT APPALACHIAN SPRING

Appalachian Spring debuted on Oct. 30, 1944, and enjoyed instant success. Set in rural Pennsylvania during the 19th century, the ballet tells the story of newlyweds building their first home and ruminating on their future life. The story evokes a simpler time and place that appealed to American audiences who were still negotiating their role in the Second World War. Rooted in Americana, the ballet has continued to resonate with audiences since its first performance.

In 1987, Martha Graham wrote: “Of all my ballets, (*Appalachian Spring*) is the one I cherish the most. Aaron Copland wrote the music for me and first called it ‘Ballet for Martha.’ I choreographed it and danced it with my then-husband Erick Hawkins.”

The Meadows School performance will feature eight dancers from the Meadows Dance Ensemble and the Meadows Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Phillips.

ABOUT MEADOWS AT THE WINSPEAR

Meadows at the Winspear takes place at 8 p.m. Wednesday, May 11, 2016 at the Winspear Opera House, 2403 Flora Street in downtown Dallas. In addition to *Appalachian Spring*, the program will include the premiere of a newly envisioned choreography of Stravinsky’s *Firebird* (1945), created by Claudia Lavista and Victor Manuel Ruiz, noted artistic directors of the acclaimed Delfos Danza Contemporanea in Mazatlán, Mexico. Proceeds from the event provide scholarships for the Meadows Scholars Program, aimed at recruiting the brightest and most talented students to SMU and Dallas. Tickets are \$25 for adults, \$20 for seniors, and \$17 for students, faculty and staff, with a \$10 discount available for subscribers. For non-subscriber tickets or more information, call the AT&T Performing Arts Center box office at 214-880-0202.

ABOUT THE MEADOWS SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

The Meadows School of the Arts, formally established at SMU in 1969 and named in honor of benefactor Algur H. Meadows, is one of the foremost arts education institutions in the United States. The Meadows School offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in advertising, art, art history, arts management and arts entrepreneurship, communication studies, creative computation, dance, film and media arts, journalism, music, and theatre. The goal of the

Meadows School of the Arts, as a comprehensive educational institution, is to prepare students to meet the demands of professional careers. The Meadows School is a leader in developing innovative outreach and community engagement programs, challenging its students to make a difference locally and globally by developing connections between art, entrepreneurship, and change.

The Meadows School of the Arts is also a convener for the arts in North Texas, serving as a catalyst for new collaborations and providing critical industry research. For more information, visit www.smu.edu/meadows.

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