

## **Batsheva Dance Company Returns to U.S.**

**Bringing Chicago Premiere of Ohad Naharin's *Last Work***

***FREE moderated conversation with Naharin following Friday night performance***



*Shamel Pitts, Batsheva Dance Company member 2009-2016; Photo credit Gadi Dagon*

"[*Last Work*] is breathtaking for the extraordinary dancing by the Batsheva dancers, and the way Mr. Naharin can evoke states of pleasure, pain, madness and a kind of animality — a sheer state of being in the body — through his movement."  
(Roslyn Sulcas, *The New York Times*)

CHICAGO – **The Harris Theater for Music and Dance** is pleased to present the Chicago premiere of *Last Work* performed by one of the foremost contemporary dance companies in the world, **Batsheva Dance Company** on **January 27 & 28 at 7:30 PM**. Rapier-like one moment, slow and methodical the next, the otherworldly performers of Batsheva Dance Company exemplify the pioneering genius of **Artistic Director and Choreographer Ohad Naharin**. Batsheva dancers

work in the innovative movement language **Gaga**, created by Naharin, which is informed by a heightened knowledge and self-awareness of the body. In *Last Work*, Naharin offers an open-ended meditation on the humanism inherent in the body's motion, veering explosively between the political and the excruciatingly personal.

### **Exclusive Moderated Conversation with Ohad Naharin Following January 27 Performance**

Immediately following the performance on Friday, January 27, guests are invited to enjoy a moderated conversation between Ohad Naharin and Chicago dance critic Matt de la Peña.

Prior to the conversation, Venetia Stifler, Executive and Artistic Director of the Ruth Page Center for the Arts and The 2017 Ruth Page Award Committee, will announce Batsheva as a recipient of this year's Ruth Page Award along with Chicago Film Archives.

**Watch the trailer for *Mr. Gaga* – a documentary about the life and work of Ohad Naharin – [HERE](#).**

### **Gaga Workshop in Chicago**

Batsheva will be participating in a Gaga workshop for pre-professional dancers on **Saturday, January 28 at 11:00 AM at the Ruth Page Center for the Arts**. The workshop will be led by Batsheva Dance Company member **Bret Easterling**. Easterling was born in the US and studied at the Juilliard School where he graduated with the Hector Zaraspe Prize in 2010. Bret joined Batsheva Ensemble in 2010 and Batsheva Dance Company in 2012.

Gaga offers a new way to reach a deeper knowledge and understanding of one's self via the body and its movement. Gaga encourages, teaches and cultivates multi-dimensional movement, efficiency and texture of movement, the use of explosive power, the connection between pleasure and effort, quickness, clarity of intention, stamina. It enables recognition of one's own movement habits and helps to acquire new ones.

Essentially, Gaga increases one's understanding of the body's weaknesses and strengths, as well as its response to them. Through Gaga, one works to break down physical barriers in order to reach a greater comprehension and control of instinctive movements. Ultimately, Gaga empowers the experiences of pleasure, stillness, positivism, and happiness.

All single tickets are available through the Harris Theater Box Office at 205 East Randolph Drive, 312.334.7777, and online at [HarrisTheaterChicago.org](http://HarrisTheaterChicago.org).

**••• All programs, prices, and dates are subject to change •••**

### **Sponsorship**

This engagement was made possible through the generous support of Prince Charitable Trusts, Lead Sponsor, and Jack & Sandra Guthman, Presenting Sponsors (January 27 performance).

Additional support has been provided by New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, with additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

This performance is presented in partnership with Ravinia Festival.

The Northern Trust Company is the Harris Theater’s 2016–2017 season sponsor. United Airlines is the official airline of the Harris Theater. The Theater gratefully acknowledges the Irving Harris Foundation for its leadership support of the Presenting Fund.

### **About Harris Theater for Music and Dance**

The Harris Theater is Chicago’s primary residence for music and dance, connecting diverse audiences with outstanding artists from across the city, the nation, and the world. The Theater’s activities fall under three central strategies: support for local music and dance companies, community engagement and educational programs, and presentation of national and international artists. The Harris Theater’s original group of 12 resident companies has grown to include 35 diverse organizations. Through these partnerships, the Theater has earned national recognition as a distinctive model for collaboration, performance, and artistic advancement.

Opened on November 8, 2003, the Harris Theater for Music and Dance was the first multi-use performing arts venue to be built in the Chicago downtown area since 1929. Today the Theater continues to host the most diverse offerings of any venue in Chicago, featuring the city’s world-renowned music and dance institutions and the Harris Theater Presents series of acclaimed national and international artists and ensembles.

*Imagine: The Campaign for Harris Theater*, is a \$38.8M comprehensive fundraising effort supporting the Theater’s multifaceted mission. The campaign ensures the continued growth and artistic development of the Harris Theater over the next 10 years.

The *Imagine* campaign is led by four transformational gifts: from The Irving Harris Foundation, Joan W. Harris; Alexandra and John Nichols; Chauncey and Marion D. McCormick Family Foundation, Abby McCormick O’Neil and D. Carroll Joynes; Caryn and King Harris, The Harris Family Foundation. Additional leadership gifts supporting programmatic and capital projects have been generously funded by Jay Franke and David Herro, The Crown Family, Jack and Sandra Guthman, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Neisser Family Foundation, The Northern Trust Company, Zell Family Foundation, Laura and Ricardo Rosenkranz, Christine and Glenn Kelly, Jim and Kay Mabie, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and Marilyn and David J. Vitale.

The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust and Elizabeth Morse Genius Charitable Trust are the lead underwriters of fundraising for *Imagine: The Campaign for Harris Theater*.

The Harris Theater maintains a commitment to engaging Chicago residents of all ages and communities. Programs like the popular *Eat to the Beat* and *Exelon Family Series* advance access to, and understanding of, the performing arts. The Theater partners with health and human service agencies, K-12 schools, and community arts organizations, providing more than 8,800 underwritten performance tickets through the *Access Tickets Program* since 2009. The Theater also connects gifted young artists and students to presented artists through master classes, artist talks, and other enrichment activities.

To learn more about the Harris Theater, please visit [HarrisTheaterChicago.org](http://HarrisTheaterChicago.org). Call the Box Office at 312.334.7777 to request a brochure or additional information.

The Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Chicago’s state-of-the art 1,525-seat performance venue, can also be found on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

