



EMILY COATES, DEREK LUCCI, AND CHARLES BURNHAM  
IN TELL ME WHERE IT COMES FROM. PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS RADALL



## UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

Music in the Galleries: Hierax Quartet (saxophone quartet)  
Sunday, March 8, 1:30pm. Free

Music in the Galleries: Chadwick Thomas (clarinet) and Yujin Lee (piano)  
Sunday, May 7, 1:30pm. Free with admission

Sunday Serenades: *America 250* with the Hartford Symphony Orchestra  
Sunday, May 17, 2pm. \$10-\$45

Arazzo Music Festival Season Finale  
Saturday, June 27, 7pm. Free, registration required

ABOVE: PHOTO OF SCHOOL OF AMERICAN BALLET REHEARSING *TRANSCENDENCE* WITH GEORGE BALANCHINE STANDING IN THE WING, DECEMBER 1934. PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION, RG9\_1\_F375, THE WADSWORTH ARCHIVES.

FRONT COVER: EMILY COATES AND DEREK LUCCI IN *TELL ME WHERE IT COMES FROM*. PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS RANDALL.

AUSTIN  
ARTS  
CENTER  
AT TRINITY COLLEGE



THE WADSWORTH

# PERFORMANCE

## TELL ME WHERE IT COMES FROM TRACING EARLY BALANCHINE ARCHIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2026  
7:30pm



THE WADSWORTH

# TELL ME WHERE IT COMES FROM

## TRACING EARLY BALANCHINE ARCHIVES

Thursday, February 26, 2026

7:30pm, Avery Theater, The Wadsworth

“If you tell me where this light went, I will tell you where it comes from.”

*The final words spoken in Adagio Lamentoso (1981), one of George Balanchine's last ballets.\**

Conceived, choreographed, and written by Emily Coates

Directed by Ain Gordon

Performance material developed by Emily Coates, Ain Gordon, Derek Lucci,  
and Charles Burnham

Original music composed by Charles Burnham

Musical composition exercises by George Balanchine

Additional music: *The Unanswered Question* (1908) by Charles Ives; *Gaspard de*

*la Nuit / II. Le Gibet* (1908) by Maurice Ravel

Performers: Emily Coates and Derek Lucci

Special cameo: Henry Seth

Musicians: Charles Burnham and Melvin Chen

Lighting designer: Krista Smith

Costume designers: Harriet Jung and Reid Bartelme

Production Stage Manager: Ed Fitzgerald

Translations by Alice Stone Nakhimovsky and Alexander Nakhimovsky

(1936 letter); Sophia Schwaner and Constantine Muravnik (1930s music  
theory lessons)

Text in Russian read by Alexander Nakhimovsky

Music transcription by Luke Haaksma

Musicology by Stephanie Venturino

Sound design by Adam Lenz and Sophia Schwaner

Project Manager: Natalie King

Technical Director: Michael Lenaghan

Lead Electrician: Christopher Bell

Audio Technician: Jamie Denman

Follow spot operator: Erik Bowen

Wardrobe Assistant: Cecelia Chapman

*\*Quoted by Anna Kisselgoff in her New York Times review of the ballet, as relayed by the choreographer in an interview. (In the only surviving film, the words are not audible.) Jacques D'Amboise believes Balanchine encountered this Sufi parable through Hafez—D'Amboise himself loved to quote Hafez—although Rumi's teacher Shaykh Senai told the same tale centuries prior. The one difference is that the little boy who utters these words in the Balanchine ballet was, in the earlier story, a little girl.*



## ABOUT THE MATERIALS

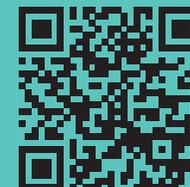
Action/gesture quotations from the following Balanchine ballets: *Serenade*, *Orpheus*, *Stravinsky Violin Concerto*, *Episodes*, *La Sonnambula*, *Ivesiana*. Full quotation of the male quartet's choreography in *The Unanswered Question*.

Additional movement sources: Still photographs by George Platt Lynes in 1950s NYCB publicity brochures (from the private collection of Gary Haller, Henry Prentiss Becton Professor Emeritus of Engineering and Applied Science, Yale University). 1934-35 photographs of Balanchine ballets *Errante*, *Transcendence*, *Reminiscence*, *Alma Mater*, *Serenade*. Museum of Modern Art Photographs: Ballet (New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, Lincoln Center). Printed postcards of Balanchine and Vera Zorina (Vera Zorina Papers, Houghton Library, Harvard University).

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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

To learn more about the artists involved in tonight's performance of *Tell Me Where It Comes From*, please use the QR code to the right or visit: [thewadsworth.org/tmwicf](http://thewadsworth.org/tmwicf)



ABOVE: EMILY COATES AND DEREK LUCCI IN *TELL ME WHERE IT COMES FROM*. PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRIS RADALL.

Spurred by George Balanchine's brief yet pivotal 1933 touchdown in Hartford, Connecticut, dancer, writer, and choreographer Emily Coates gathered artifacts of his lingering presence in archives throughout the region. Drawing on her background as a former member of New York City Ballet, Coates creates an unexpected portrait of Balanchine's choreographic legacy, working in collaboration with Ain Gordon (director), Derek Lucci (performer, cocreator), Charles Burnham (violinist, composer), Melvin Chen (pianist), Krista Smith (lighting design), and Harriet Jung and Reid Bartelme (costume design) to collage far-flung remains: unanswered letters, lost ballets, old photographs, music exercises, early muses, and more. Filled with hidden movements and quieted voices, *Tell Me Where It Comes From* meditates on the spark that propels art into existence.

With gratitude to the following individuals for their assistance in the archives: Adam Lenz, Amy Kilkenny, Chloe Collins (The Wadsworth); Matthew Wittman, Karantha Lowe (Houghton Library, Harvard University); Melissa Barton (Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscripts Library, Yale University); Suzanne Lovejoy, Mark Bailey (Irving S. Gilmore Music Library at Yale); Norton Owen, Patsy Gay (Jacob's Pillow Archive), Ailina Fisk, Apriah Williams ((New York City Ballet Archives and Production Warehouse); Linda Murray, Tiffany Patrick, Jade Jiang, Erik Stolarski, and Jenai Cutcher (Jerome Robbins Dance Division, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center). Additional thanks to Elizabeth Epsen for rehearsal support, and to the many alumni of NYCB interviewed as part of the research for the project.

*Tell Me Where It Comes From is commissioned by Works & Process. The iterative development has included a Works & Process LaunchPAD residency at The Church (2025) in Sag Harbor, home to George Balanchine's grave. The project continued to be supported with a Works & Process LaunchPAD residency at the Catskill Mountain Foundation in Hunter, New York where Jacques d'Amboise lived for seven decades. Additional developmental support was provided by the Quick Center for the Arts at Fairfield University, and The Wadsworth. Supported by the New England Foundation for the Arts Dance Fund. Tell Me Where It Comes From was created in part during a residency at the Pillow Lab at Jacob's Pillow. With additional support from the O'Donnell-Green Music and Dance Foundation.*

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