

Dance companies are finding their footing on streaming services

By [Anying Guo](#)

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Most of the performances we've seen the past year have existed between the four corners of a laptop or a television screen. Live entertainment has been essentially nonexistent, arts organizations have taken pay cuts, venues are strapped for cash and some underfunded troupes may never recover. Yet somehow, despite the continued strain and strife, many dance companies have successfully adapted to the evolving digital stage — reimagining Nutcracker seasons, digitizing never-before-seen archival videos and launching their own streaming services.

These digital offerings are just a smattering of what's available online for dance lovers over the next few weeks. Though mostly free, some streaming services require a subscription, but they all aim to re-create the magic of a dance performance across a digital stage.

Ailey All Access: Alvin Ailey's rich, colorful programming is available for streaming, broken down by playlists separating each repertory year and excerpts from select works. A 2015 recording of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater's "Revelations," "Chroma," "Grace" and "Takademe" gives audiences a sampling of the company's invigorating and cerebral style. The company's performances of "Night Creature" and "Blues Suite" are the latest works available to stream.

American Ballet Theatre: ABT's 2020-2021 virtual season features works from such choreographers as Hope Boykin, Gabe Stone Shayer and Sonya Tayeh. The company's 80-year history is represented and matched by its extensive streaming collection of past performances and talks with company members. Current streaming options include "Visceral Harmonies," a collaboration between ABT's Studio Company and the Collective Conservatory, and weekly premieres of works from the 2021 ABT Incubator.

Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive: The dance hub known for its yearly Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival has an interactive site that incorporates dance videos from the 1930s to now, with multimedia essays and a podcast. Giving the work that additional context has made the site an extensive digital resource, with photos, programming and exhibits. Its most recent playlist is "Indigenous Dance of the Americas," from the 2019 festival that honored Indigenous work and people.

Joyce's Stream the Stage: The Joyce Theater Foundation's Stream the Stage landing page features links to performances and other platforms from notable dance companies and choreographers. The American Dance Festival, Ballet Hispanico and 92Y Harkness Dance Center are just three of the 46 companies on the site.

Juilliard Live: The performing arts conservatory just introduced a streaming platform that offers digital performances of music, dance and drama. Student recitals have already been streaming on Juilliard's website, but Juilliard Live also includes live streams and recorded performances from all departments and divisions. The "Choreographers and Composers" programs A and B feature work by student choreographers and dancers.

Marquee TV: This performing arts streaming service, dubbed the "Netflix of the arts," made its debut in February 2020, just before the pandemic forced shutdowns around the world. In addition to opera and theater, Marquee TV's classical and contemporary ballet (from "Coppelia" to Akram Khan's "Giselle") and dance documentaries are available on-demand. The Washington Ballet's "Clara's Christmas Eve Dream" and "Something Human" are among the streaming service's vast offerings, and the company will have two digital premieres in June.

Mark Morris Dance Group: The modern dance troupe had to move its 40th anniversary online, but over the past year, it has launched video performances and an archival series called "Dance On! Video Vault." Its 40th-anniversary season continues this spring with "L'Allegro Week," April 19-25, honoring one of Morris's most recognizable works, and "Live From Brooklyn," a series of live-streamed shows, including new work by Morris, on May 6 and 7.

Merce Cunningham: The Merce Cunningham website has a staggering amount of digital content, from films of such Cunningham works as "Summerspace" and "Beach Birds" to his writings about technique and choreographic process. Viewers are invited to read about how Cunningham's legacy has been preserved through his digitized work, which includes 180 dances, drawings and writings.

New York City Ballet: On April 8, choreographer Kyle Abraham premiered his third creation for NYCB, “When We Fell.” The sparse but lush black-and-white work, filmed in 16mm at Lincoln Center, was made during a three-week pandemic-compliant residency at Kaatsbaan Cultural Park, and is available online through April 22. Past performances are featured on the company’s [YouTube channel](#), including last year’s New Works Festival. The spring digital season continues May 5, with filmmaker Sofia Coppola directing NYCB’s first virtual gala and featuring five works, including a world premiere by resident choreographer Justin Peck.

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