

## Topic Page: [Morris, Mark \(1956 - \)](#)

Summary Article: **Morris, Mark**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

1956–, American dancer and choreographer, b. Seattle, Wash. After training in Balkan folk dance, flamenco, and ballet, he went on to dance for Eliot Feld, Laura Dean, and Lar Lubovitch. His own company, the Mark Morris Dance Group, debuted in New York in 1980; from 1988 to 1991 it was the resident company the Théâtre de la Monnaie, Brussels. In 1990 he and Mikhail Baryshnikov established the White Oak Dance Project, a group formed to choreograph and perform new dance. In 2001 his company moved into permanent studios in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Since the 1980s Morris's dances have attracted great interest for their craftsmanship, ingenuity, musicality, and iconoclastic choreography as well as for their sometimes eclectic accompanying live music; his solo performance of *O Rangasayee*, for example, was danced to an Indian raga. He won particular acclaim for *The Hard Nut* (1991), a campily ebullient version of *The Nutcracker* set in the 1960s. Generally less ironic and more serious in tone, his many other works include *L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, ed Il Moderato* (1988); *Dido and Aeneas* (1989); *The Office* (1995); *Greek to Me* (2000), a dance version of the Virgil Thomson–Gertrude Stein opera *Four Saints in Three Acts* (2001); a new version of the ballet *Sylvia* (2004); a joyous vaudevillesque take on Purcell's *King Arthur* (2006); a new ballet to Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* (2008); *Socrates* (2010), a modern dance piece with sung and spoken text; a dance interpretation of Handel's *Acis and Galatea* (2014); and *Layla and Majnun* (2017), based on an Arabic tale. Morris has used Lou Harrison's music for eight dances since 1987; *Lou 100: In Honor of the Divine Mr. Harrison* (2017) combines five of them, including *Numerator* (2017), for six male dancers, and concludes with the dark and dramatic *Grand Duo* (1993). Morris retired as a dancer in 2006.

See biography by J. Acocella (1993, repr. 2004);

J. Escoffier; M. Lore, ed., *Mark Marris's l'Allegro, Il Penseroso, ed Il Moderato: A Celebration* (2001);

Grimm, T. , dir., *Dance in America: Mark Morris with the Mark Morris Dance Group* (video, 1986).

### **APA**

Chicago

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MLA

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Morris, Mark. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Retrieved from [https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/morris\\_mark\\_1956](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/morris_mark_1956)

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## APA

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## Chicago

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## Harvard

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## MLA

"Morris, Mark." *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, Paul Lagasse, and Columbia University, Columbia University Press, 8th edition, 2018. *Credo Reference*, [https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/morris\\_mark\\_1956](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/morris_mark_1956). Accessed 16 Oct. 2019.