

GENERAL SESSION

Friday, Jan. 5, 1:30–3 p.m., Potomac Ballroom A/B

Misty Copeland

PRINCIPAL DANCER | NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR | PHILANTHROPIST

Misty Copeland is a Principal Dancer with American Ballet Theatre, the first Black woman to be promoted to the position in the company's 75-year history in 2015. She has performed some of the most iconic classical ballet roles, including Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake*; Juliet in *Romeo & Juliet*; *Giselle*; *Manon*; *Coppelia*; Kitri in *Don Quixote*; and *Firebird*, to name a few.

Misty has been featured in several publications, including the cover of Time Magazine for the Time 100, as well as the covers of ESSENCE, Self, ELLE South Africa, Oxygen and Women's Health. She has also appeared on CBS' 60 Minutes, CBS Sunday Morning, ABC's Good Morning America, NBC's The Today Show and *Little Big Shots*, celebrating extraordinary young people.

She made her first awards season guest performances in 2019 with Taylor Swift at the American Music Awards and at the 2020 Grammy Awards alongside Camilla Cabella, Common, Ben Platt, and dancers from the Debbie Allen Dance Academy, as well as the televised Prince Grammy Tribute performing with award-winning recording artist H.E.R. Misty made her Broadway debut in *On The Town* in 2015 and her major motion picture debut in Disney's *The Nutcracker and the Four Realms* in 2018. She is also featured in an episode of MasterClass, the online series.

Misty started her production company, Life In Motion Productions, focused on bringing representative stories of artists past, present, and future, and normalizing the arts experience. Her first independently produced project, *Flower*, premiered at the Tribeca Festival in 2023 and is a silent arts activism film using dance to help raise awareness about intergenerational equity.

Misty is an avid philanthropist and is an ambassador of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, of which she is also an alum, and MindLeaps, an arts education program based in Rwanda that helps young people get off the streets and into an academic setting to help enhance their lives.

In 2022, Misty launched The Misty Copeland Foundation, with its first signature program BE BOLD, which aims to bring greater diversity, equity and inclusion to dance, especially ballet.

Misty is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Life In Motion*, *Ballerina Body*, *Black Ballerinas*, and a picture book titled *Bunheads*. She is also author of the award-winning children's picture book, *Firebird*. Misty's newest book, *The Wind At My Back*, in tribute to her late mentor and friend, pioneering ballerina Raven Wilkinson, published November 2022.

In 2021, Misty was the recipient of the Spingarn Medal, the NAACP's highest honor and in 2023, she was awarded Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from New York University.

