Mr. Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Mr. John Alleyne. As a dancer, choreographer and Artistic Director of Ballet British Columbia, he gives new meaning to the words of Paul Strand: "The only great issue is the necessity for the artist to find his way in the world." John Alleyne has found his way as an artist of the first order, and our lives are the richer for it.

Born in Barbados, John Alleyne trained as a dancer with the National Ballet School in Toronto. Upon graduation, he joined the Stuttgart Ballet Company, where his bold performances made an immediate and indelible impression on both audiences and critics. However, John Alleyne's dynamic energy impelled him to look to choreography as a further means of expression. While still in his twenties, he created works that heralded the arrival of a unique vision, one that he continued to expand as first soloist and choreographer-in-residence with the National Ballet of Canada. There, he earned the admiration of audiences with such works as Interrogating Slam, for which he received the 1992 Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding New CForeography. His mesmerizing early ballets led to several commissions of Ballet British Columbia. In 1992, he was appointed its Artistic Director. It was a perfect marriage between an innovative dance company and an artist possessing an enormous storehouse of imagination. Since then, as the driving creative force behind Ballet British Columbia, he has enlarged the company's contemporary ballet repertoire while challenging the conventions of the ballet form. In the past ten years, he has created many new works, each one stretching classical ballet in surprising and daring directions. His full-length ballets like The Faerie Queen and Orpheus have touched audiences in Canada, the United States and Mexico. He has also created ballets for many international dance companies, including the Dance Theatre of Harlem, the New York City Ballet, and Les Ballet de Monte Carlo. His most recent work Tristan and Isolde premiered in Toronto last month and drew approving notice in The Globe and Mail.

John Alleyne once said, "If we are really fortunate, we learn to cultivate our soul and our spirit." Through his many compelling creations, he has encouraged us to do just that. Mr. Chancellor, on behalf of the Senate of this University, and in recognition of his exemplary achievements, I ask that you now confer upon John Alleyne the degree Doctor of Fine Arts. honoris causa.