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Tuesday, May 3, 2016

Brooklyn for Dance 2016 - Performer Bios

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Àse Dance Theatre Collective is a professional, neo-folkloric performance ensemble that specializes in Dance Theater from the African Diaspora. Adia Tamar Whitaker, has performed contemporary vernacular movement, modern and Afro-Haitian dance in the U.S. and abroad for 16 years. Adia completed a BA in Dance at San Francisco State University (2000), the Professional Division U.S. Independent Studies Program at The Ailey School (2001), was Choreoquest Resident Artist @ Restoration Dance Theater (2004), a Ford Foundation Special Initiative for Africa Grant Recipient (2004), an Urban Bush Women Apprentice (2005) and a Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography @ FSU Creative Entry Point Choreographic Fellow (2006). She is a former Artist-In-Residence of the counterPULSE Performing Diaspora (2009/2010), a recipient of the Theater Bay Area CA\$H Grant and the Zellerbach Family Foundation Grant (2009). In 2011, Whitaker along with her other cast members received an Isadora Duncan Award for her performance in a choreopoem she wrote, directed, choreographed and costumed called "Ampey!" www.asedance.com

Choreographer: Adia Tamar Whitaker

Vocalists: Tendayi Kuumba, Adia Tamar Whitaker

Dancers: Brian Polite, Brittany Grier, Efeya Sampson, Erin Holmes, Joy Bell, Rachel Russell, Rashad Wilson

Flamenco Performance



Sol "La Argentinita," is a Buenos Aires-born flamenco dancer who over the past decade has established herself as one of the top flamenco dancers/choreographers in New York City. As a scholarship recipient of the Jerome Foundation's Travel and Study Grant, the Cristina Heren Foundation scholarship and the Jacob's Pillow Cultural traditions program, Sol has studied with many of the great dancers and teachers of flamenco. Since her move to New York, Sol has appeared at illustrious venues such as Lincoln Center Out-Of-Doors, Town Hall, Symphony Space, and The Joyce Theater. Sol has toured internationally with Soledad Barrios and Noche Flamenca for 6 years, sharing the stage with figures such as Juan Ogalla, Alejandro Granados, and Alfonso Loza. She has also participated in Zeferelli's production of La Traviata at the Metropolitan Opera. More recently, she has been featured in the pre-production of Tony Award-winning Christopher Gatelli's In Your

Arms (Powerhouse Theater), Zorro! The Musical (Alliance Theater, GA), The Latin Quarter Show at the Revel Hotel in Atlantic City, Choreographer and Solo Dancer for Portland Opera's production of Carmen (Keller Auditorium) and is currently touring the US as a Solo Dancer and Singer for the world renown Gala of the Royal Horses. www.flamencoyol.com

Raphael Brunn, Flamenco Guitarist and Composer, was born December 19th, 1973 in Hackensack New Jersey to a well-known family of jugglers, dancers and trapeze artists. An American kid with lots of rhythm, Raphael started playing bass guitar at the age of ten. At fourteen, Raphael moved to Europe to join his father, a world renowned juggler and acrobat who had been using live Flamenco music in his performances since seeing Antonio Ruiz and Carmen Amaya dance in the 1950's. From a young age, Raphael was exposed to some of Spain's finest Flamenco artists including El Manzanita, El Recortao, Pepe Marquez and many more.

His public debut playing Flamenco guitar was in the opening festivities of the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, Spain. Since then, Raphael has performed with many of the artists who initially inspired his dedication to the Flamenco tradition. He worked with El Farruquito and El Torombo in the Flamenco production of Incognito, in Frankfurt, Germany. Now based in New York City, Raphael performs with various Flamenco artists and is currently working on his second CD. www.raphaelbrunn.weebly.com



Gallim Dance, one of New York's leading contemporary dance companies, creates and performs the work of Artistic Director Andrea Miller. Since 2007, Gallim has presented Miller's artistic vision through its performances, collaborations, and Brooklyn studio projects. With each new work, Gallim dives deeper into singular explorations of universal struggles such as love, spirituality, and the tensions between the individual and collective experience.

Gallim performs for 20,000 audience members annually at premier venues including The Joyce Theater, Lincoln Center, BAM, The Kennedy Center, Works & Process at the Guggenheim, New York City Center, and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. International venues include Théâtre National de Chaillot (France) and the Grand Théâtre de la Ville de Luxembourg. Gallim has been recognized by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, The Harkness Foundation for Dance, Princess Grace Foundation-USA, The Shubert Foundation, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, and NY

State Council on the Arts for the strength of Miller's artistic work and the organization. It has received awards from the NEA, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, and the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President for its community programming. www.gallimdance.com



Austin Tyson (Dancer, Gallim Dance) is originally from Portland, Oregon where he studied with the Jefferson Dancers and Northwest Dance Project. Austin continued his education at New York University – Tisch School of the Arts and the Salzberg Experimental Academy of Dance. During his time at NYU, Austin had the pleasure of performing works by Aszure Barton, Séan Curran, and Kate Weare. Whilst at NYU Austin also became a certified yoga instructor through the Mind Body Dancer® 200 Teacher Training with TaraMarie Perri. After University, Austin continued on to perform with MADboots Dance Co. and Company XIV, before becoming a member of Gallim Dance in 2013.



Georgia Usborne (Dancer) completed her professional training at Central School of Ballet, touring with their graduate company Ballet Central. After graduating in 2010 with a first class BA (hons), she joined Bern Ballet under the direction of Cathy Marston, where she danced for three years simultaneously completing an MA in contemporary dance. Whilst in Bern Georgia worked with Andrea Miller for the first time, as well as creating with and dancing existing repertory from choreographers including Orjan Andersson, Alexander Ekman, Andonis Foniadakis, Johan Inger and Noa Zuk. In 2013 Georgia worked freelance with Cathy Marston and David Hughes Dance before moving to Brooklyn in April 2014 to join Gallim Dance.



Matthew Perez (Dancer, Gallim Dance) is a native of the Bronx, New York. He graduated from North Carolina School of the Arts as a high school student in 2009. Matthew later went on to receive a BFA from SUNY Purchase (2013), where he performed works by Pam Tanowitz, Lar Lubovitch, Twyla Tharp, Nicolo Fonte, and John Heginbotham. Matthew has also attended the Movement Invention Project (2011) and Springboard Danse Montreal (2011 & 2012).



Paul Vickers (Dancer, Gallim Dance) is originally from outside of Chicago, Illinois, where he trained with Forum Dance Theatre. He received his B.A. in Dance and minor in Business Administration from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles and was awarded with the Outstanding Student Performer Award by the American College Dance Festival Association & Dance Magazine in 2012. Paul has worked with LEVYdance, MADBOOTS DANCE, Sidra Bell, and Korhan Basaran and currently dances with BARE Dance Company and ChrisMastersDance, in addition to Gallim Dance. www.prsvickers.com



It's Showtime NYC aims to celebrate and promote New York City street culture by providing performance and professional development opportunities to street and subway dancers as a legal alternative to dancing in subway cars. It's Showtime NYC is a joint program of Dancing in the Streets and the Mark Morris Dance Group. www.itsshowtime.nyc

Choreographer: Kester "FLEXX" Estephane

Dancers: Anthony "LAIDEN" John, Jerry "JAY" Joseph, Kester "FLEXX" Estephane,



Kester "FLEXX" Estephane, It's Showtime NYC choreographer and dancer, Kester Estephane also known as Flexx, is a Bronx-based, Caribbean-American urban freestyle dancer. Flexx began dancing at the age of 15 at Enterprise High School for Business & Technology. There under the guidance and teaching skills of Chloe McMillan he learned Ballroom, African-American and traditional Jazz, Latin dance and Professional Performance. During this time, Flexx became very interested in urban/Hip-Hop dance styles, which he pursued after high school. Flexx also began teaching Hip-Hop to children ages 7-12 at Friends of Crown Heights. In 2011 Flexx went on to create and lead the dance crew called Stylz Enuff and further share his passion for to the art of dance with his team members. Now he and members of Stylz Enuff have joined It's Showtime NYC, a joint program of Dancing in the Streets and Mark Morris Dance Group. Since joining It's Showtime NYC, Flexx has choreographed two works for public performance and he is the Performance Coordinator for It's Showtime NYC's public performances in NYC parks. Flexx is also part of Mark

Morris Dance Group's teachers assistant program, in which he assists the Breakdance Fundamentals classes and guest teaches in MMDG's community education programs.



Purelements: an Evolution in Dance ("PE") is a 501(c) (3) performing arts organization founded in 2006, by Kevin A. Joseph and Lakai Worrell. The mission of PE is to use multiple facets of the performing arts as educational tools to evolve and transform the individuals and communities it serves, and to present dynamic performances that are socially relevant and impactful. PE's mission unfolds through an art-in-education program, a performing arts program and its professional and pre-professional dance companies.

Through our programs, we use the arts as a vehicle to support personal development, expose children in underserved communities to careers in the performing arts, support the aspiring artists is serves with developing and refining their talents, and to educate its program participants and audiences on social issues affecting their communities. Through its dance companies, PE delivers high-quality and provocative performances that fuse a variety of dance styles with voice, spoken word and Musical Theater. The Village Voice has described the company's work as "...a riveting fusion of ballet, hip-hop, and African movement." Headquartered in Brooklyn New York, PE operates with a staff of four full-time and three part-time employees, and contracts up to 30 teaching artists to support its programs. www.purelements.org



Imani Nowlin Jenkins

Imani Nowlin Jenkins (Dancer, Purelements) is a 14 year old student that has been training with the Purelements Family since age 9. She is a member of the Purelements Junior Company, which is a cohort of 11 students which perform as representatives for the Organization throughout the Tri-State area. She is training to become a professional dancer and recently auditioned to attend Laguardia HS for the coming and Deeply Rooted Summer Intensive in Chicago, Illinois. She was accepted to both institutions!



Lakai Worrell* (Purelements) A New York native from the borough of Brooklyn, Lakai began his dance career as a hip-hop artist, straight from the streets of East New York. His distinct style of dance is a reflection of his innate aptitude for movement and a continued exploration in Modern, Jazz, African, Hip hop and Ballet disciplines. Because of this versatility in movement and over twenty years of experience via the Performing Arts, Mr. Worrell has had the opportunity to work with a wide variety of artist, ranging from dance and film to music, and theatre. (Savion Glover, Abdel Salaam, Phyllicia Rashaad, Max Roach, Crystal Waters, Lauryn Hill, Olatunje Babatunje, Cassandra Wilson, Avery Brooks, Michael K. Williams, Ornette Coleman, Ossie Davis, Justin Emeka, The Classical Theater of Harlem, The Shakespeare Theater, Yale Repertory)

Mr. Worrell's choreography credits include: "MSND" and "Romeo and Juliet": Classical Theater of Harlem, "Maafa": A healing Journey, "KING LEAR": Yale Repertory Theater, "DANCE AFRICA", and more. Presently, He is Co-Executive Artistic Director of Purelements: An Evolution in Dance, sits on the Advisory Committee for DanceNYC, is featured in the film PS DANCE by Film maker Nel Shelby and is a 2015 recipient of the Torch Bearers for Black Theater award.

Yao Ababio, Percussion*

*Only featured during pre-reception.