

Sunday, December 9, 2018

## QCC Kwanzaa Celebration

Company: QCC Dance Program  
Venue: Queensborough Performing Arts Center  
Location: Bayside, NY

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Queensborough Community College's Dance Program presents a Kwanzaa celebration of dance and culture December 9th, 2018! The performance features QCC dance students performing choreography by Kevin McEwen with performances by guest artists Bautinga Arts, Kofago Dance Ensemble, the Francis Lewis Nu Gamma Psi Step Squad and the Gloria Eve School of the Performing Arts.

Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan-African holiday which celebrates family, community and culture. Celebrated from December 26 through January 1, its origins are in the first harvest celebrations of Africa, from which it takes its name. The name Kwanzaa is derived from the phrase "matunda ya kwanza" which means "first fruits" in Swahili, a Pan-African language most widely spoken language of the African continent.

A native of Brooklyn New York, Kevin's work is focused within traditional West African dance techniques. His choreographic work highlights topics of social justice, cultural appropriation and ancestral memory, using dance as a creative form of expression. As a professor in traditional African dance ethnography, Kevin has presented his research at several conferences, including the Season of Dance in Barbados and the African Theater Associations Annual International Conference in Nigeria. Kevin's tireless dedication to supporting young people created a foundation for him to provide mentorship to four young boys from the Southside of Chicago in the groundbreaking documentary, "Walk All Night: A Drum Beat Journey," which documents the sojourn of these young men back to Senegal, West Africa to study the musical and cultural traditions of the Gewel (Griot) caste of musicians.

Mr. McEwen is a graduate of New York University's Steinhardt School of Education, where he obtained a master's degree in Dance Education, with a focus on teaching in higher education. This helps in his work that he does at the collegiate level. He is also the founder and Artistic Director of the Kofago Dance Ensemble, whose works exists at the nexus of African dance traditions and the Black experience in America. "Our work is focused on healing and ritual through the performing arts." Kevin is currently the West African dance instructor at the Gloria Eve School of the Arts, and a Professor of African Dance at Queensborough Community College.

The mission of the Queensborough Community College dance program, which is housed in the Department of Health Education, and Dance, is to provide rigorous training in dance to prepare students for transfer into BA and BFA programs in both dance and dance education as well as professional training programs in dance. The program prepares dancers for lifelong careers in dance or dance related fields and fosters an appreciation of dance that stems from multiple cultural heritages. The program advocates and promotes dance as a performing art and as an avenue to achieve a physically active and healthy lifestyle.

QCC Dance Program  
222-05 56th Avenue  
Bayside, NY, 11364  
7186316322

Schedule  
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