



**Black Dance Stories and 651 ARTS
Partner to Co-Present
New Season of Black Dance Stories Episodes
Beginning January 21st**

**Season Will Celebrate Black History Month with Special Programming and
Featured Guests Throughout the Season Include
Bill T. Jones, Darrell Grand Moultrie, Dr. Gaynell Sherrod,
Dr. Brenda Dixon Gottschild, and Coco Killingsworth**

(Brooklyn, NY/ January 19, 2021) – **Black Dance Stories** and **651 ARTS**, Brooklyn's premier institution for the African Diasporic performing arts, today announced that they will partner to co-present the next iteration of the popular Black Dance Story series for the Spring 2021 season. The new partnership reflects Black Dance Stories' commitment to support, uphold, highlight, and celebrate Black creatives and will mark the first time 651 is presenting an online series as part of its suite of programming.

Under the partnership, Black Dance Stories, in association with 651 ARTS, will launch a new season of episodes featuring groundbreaking choreographers, dancers, arts leaders, and educators who use their work to raise societal issues and strengthen community through dance. The new season kicks off on Thursday, January 21, 2021, with **Paloma McGregor** and **Yusha-Marie Sorzano**. And on Thursday, January 28, 2021, Black Dance Stories welcomes dance legend **Bill T. Jones** and **Darrell Grand Moultrie**. In February, the series will honor Black History Month with a month's lineup of dance educators, including **Sharron Miller**, **Torya Beard**, **Dr. Brenda Dixon Gottschild**, **Coco Killingsworth**, and more. These special episodes feature three guests conversing with host Charmaine Warren (artists and show dates below) instead of the usual two guest format. The series streams live on [YouTube](#) Thursdays at 6 pm EST.

Conceived and co-created by performer, producer, and dance writer Charmaine Warren, the weekly discussion series showcases and initiates conversations that explore history and social issues and highlight the African Diaspora's humanity in the mysterious and celebrated dance world.

"We are thrilled to welcome 651 ARTS to the Black Dance Stories family through this partnership that will lead to the continued creation of exciting BDS content and a deeper engagement with our artists and audiences. To develop such a unique partnership is a major step for Black Dance Stories," said **Charmaine Warren**, Founder and Co-Creator of Black Dance Stories. "Last year was proof of the need for a galvanizing place for our Black dance community, and we began to meet that need in these seven short months by providing a platform for Black artists and audiences to come together through our weekly story sharing series. Now we are taking things to the next level with 651 ARTS, whose work to deepen the awareness of art across the African Diaspora is in sync with Black Dance Stories' goals and makes them a perfect partner. We will work together to support, uphold, highlight and celebrate Black creatives."

"Black Dance Stories has been doing incredible work and we are thrilled to work with them on co-presenting the series, allowing us to further expand our offerings through this collaboration. There is such a natural synergy between our two organizations as the core of 651's mission has always been the commitment to telling the stories of artists across the Diaspora. At a time when there is a definitive need for more Black storytelling, it is important for Black arts leaders to come together to further amplify the voices of our artists and our legacies," said **Monica L. Williams**, 651's Chief Curator and Director of Programs. "As the fight for racial justice and equity continues, it is now more important than ever for artists in our communities to have the support and resources to tell those stories and this partnership is a major step in that direction."

Black Dance Stories will debut its website—www.blackdancestories.org, on January 21, 2021. The website provides access to new content and previous episodes. Visitors will learn about Black Dance Stories initiatives and team, browse information on the community of dance artists featured on the program, and receive details on upcoming programs and events. The site also contains integrated social media buttons for Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, and allows visitors to sign up for the Black Dance Stories newsletter.

Black Dance Stories Upcoming Live Episodes

- Paloma McGregor & Yusha-Marie Sorzano – Jan 21, 2021
- Bill T. Jones & Darrell Grand Moultrie – Jan 28, 2021
- Sharron Miller, Princess Mhoon & Sandra Burton – Feb 4, 2021
- Torya Beard, Vincent Thomas & Deidre Dawkins – Feb 11, 2021
- Dr. Gaynell Sherrod, Dr. Brenda Dixon Gottschild & Dwana Smallwood – Feb 18, 2021
- Earl Mosley, Dr. Halifu Osumare & Coco Killingsworth – Feb 25, 2021

About Black Dance Stories (BDS)

Black Dance Stories (BDS) is a community working together to support, uphold, highlight, and celebrate Black creatives. They are committed to providing a platform to amplify Black creatives' voices and stimulate conversations around timely issues across the African Diaspora. Through its free, public weekly story sharing series and a variety of education and networking programs, Black Dance Stories fosters community, solidarity, cultural exchange and highlights the work and humanity of Black artists. It launched in June 2021 in response to Black dance artists' need to talk about life during COVID-19 and support the Black Lives Matter movement. The series is

consistent with Black artists' tradition of finding a way to amplify their voices during turbulent times. When civil, moral, and social freedoms are challenged and stifled, Black artists find ways to use their talents as activism. Founder and co-creator Charmaine Warren reminds weekly viewers: "Black dance artists have not been quiet since. Black dance artists have been doing the work. Black dance artists continue to make work. To stay involved, we will hold weekly impromptu discussions and tell stories—Black Dance Stories. This is one action—we will stay involved."

Black Dance Stories has featured pioneering dance and movement artists including Kyle Abraham, Oluwadamilare "Dare" Ayorinde, Camille A. Brown, Ayodele Casel, nora chipaumire, Lorenzo "Rennie" Harris, Raja Feather Kelly, Bebe Miller, Kyle Marshall, Maria Bauman Morales, Okwui Okpokwasili, David Roussève, Abdel R. Salaam, Jason Samuels Smith, Marjani Forté-Saunders, Jawole Willo Jo Zollar, and more. The producing team consists of Black creatives in the arts, including Founder and Co-Creator Charmaine Warren, Co-Creator Kimani Fowlin, Graphic Designer Tony Turner, Publicist Cynthia Tate, Web Designer Gabe Dekoladenu, Director of Digital Media Makeda Smith, Video Producer Kaitlyn Chandler, and Director of Finance and Development Renee Redding-Jones. Antonio Burkett (International Interpreting) and Shannon Morrison (Morr Interpreting) have worked together to provide ASL interpreting services for Black Dance Stories.

About 651 ARTS

Founded in Brooklyn, NY in 1988, the mission of 651 ARTS is to deepen awareness of and appreciation of contemporary performing arts and culture of the African Diaspora, and to provide professional and creative opportunities for artists of African descent.

651's signature programs have featured pioneering Black choreographers from around the world including Germaine Acogny, Nora Chipaumire, Carmen de Lavallade, Diane McIntyre, Bebe Miller, Abdel R. Salaam and Jawole Willo Jo Zollar. As part of its commitment to the furtherance of conversations and celebration of Diaspora music, the institution has presented dialogues and performances by Somi, Hugh Masekela, and Grammy-winning artist Betty Carter, to name a few. Theatrical and text-based works by Anna Deavere Smith, Sekou Sundiata, Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Ntozake Shange, Okwui Okpokwasili and Maria Bauman are representative of the hundreds of artists and productions featuring solo creations, collaborations, emerging artists, and works-in-development all produced by 651's visionary leadership in the field of Black performance.

651 ARTS' programs are made possible by gifts from generous individuals and grants from the Bay and Paul Foundations, Con Edison, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ford Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, Lambent Foundation, the LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust, Mertz Gilmore Foundation, the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, New York Community Trust, the Emma Sheaffer Charitable Trust, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, including Majority Leader Laurie A. Cumbo, and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature

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