



**Live @651ARTS Presents
Black Dance Stories LIVE**

**Curated by Charmaine Warren
With Rena Butler & Reggie Wilson and
Tiffany Rea-Fisher & Jamar Roberts**

**Two Evenings of Performances and Discussions
Live at the James & Martha Duffy Performance Space,
Mark Morris Dance Center**

April 1 & 2, 2022 at 7:30 pm

(Brooklyn, NY-March 3, 2022)—651 ARTS will present the first in-person gathering for Black Dance Stories as part of its new series LIVE @651ARTS in a two-day presentation on April 1 & 2 at 7:30 pm. Curated by **Charmaine Warren**, the program will take place at Mark Morris Dance Center (Brooklyn, NY) for both in-person and online audiences. Black Dance Stories will feature **Rena Butler, Reggie Wilson, Tiffany Rea-Fisher, and Jamar Roberts**. The artists will present solo work, engage in movement together, and take part in a lively discussion. The combination of discussion and dance will speak to these movement-based artists' experimental and investigatory practices.

Conceived and co-created by Charmaine Warren in June 2020, **Black Dance Stories** showcases and initiates discussions with Black creatives. Alive and ever-vibrant from the everyday and iconic, the conversations explore social, historical, and personal issues and highlight the African Diaspora's humanity in the mysterious and celebrated dance world. Since its launch, Black Dance Stories has produced more than 45 episodes featuring over 80 of the most decorated Black dancers, choreographers, movement artists, and others who use their work to raise societal issues and strengthen their community.

In February 2022, Black Dance Stories began a long-term collaborative partnership with Amistad Research Center the nation's oldest, largest, and most comprehensive independent archive of America's ethnic and racial history. Under the partnership, Black Dance Stories programming will be preserved and made readily available to the public through Amistad's digital projects virtual archive. The new collaboration and live presentation of Black Dance Stories reflects its continuing growth as a cultural presence.

LIVE @651ARTS is a performance series premiering virtual, digital or print presentations LIVE for the first time. Inspired from 651 ARTS legacy programming such as Salon 651 and Live &

Outspoken, LIVE @651ARTS invites audiences to join us as we cross-over from virtual to live gathering, from process to presentation, from idea to reality.

LIVE @651ARTS Presents Black Dance Stories

Curated by Charmaine Warren

Featuring Rena Butler, Reggie Wilson, Tiffany Rea-Fisher, and Jamar Roberts.

April 1 - 2, 2022

James and Martha Duffy Performance Space at Mark Morris Dance Center
(3 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn, NY)

Tickets for Black Dance Stories are \$25 and go on sale Friday, March 4th.

For more information on Black Dance Stories and to purchase tickets, please

visit: <https://www.651arts.org/event/black-dance-stories-live/>

About the Artists

Rena Butler has performed with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, A.I.M. by Kyle Abraham, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company, David Dorfman Dance, Manuel Vignoulle/M-Motions, Kevin Wynn Collection, and Pasos Con Sabor Salsa Dance Company. Originally from Chicago, IL, she is a recipient of the 2019 Princess Grace Foundation Award for Choreography. She has created works for various companies and institutions, including Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, BalletX, Whim W'him, Boston Dance Theater, TedXChicago Virtual Salon 3.0: Design Your Life, The Juilliard School, Gibney Company, for famed ballerina Michaela DePrince, and more. Butler has served as an adjunct professor for New York University Tisch School of the Arts for Dance and currently serves on the Artistic Advisory Council for Dancewave NYC. Butler is presently Gibney Company's inaugural Choreographic Associate, dancing for the company and creating original works, and is the featured cover story for *Dance Magazine's* November 2021 issue.

Tiffany Rea-Fisher (Executive Artistic Director, EMERGE125, formerly Elisa Monte Dance) subscribes to the servant leadership model and uses disruption through inclusion as a way to influence her company's culture. In 2018 Tiffany was awarded a citation from the City of New York for her cultural contributions. She has extensive experience in choreographing and curating concert dance. As a choreographer, Tiffany has had the pleasure of creating numerous pieces for the company as well as being commissioned by Dance Theater of Harlem, Dallas Black Dance Theater, NYC Department of Transportation, Utah Repertory Theater, The National Gallery of Art in DC, and having her work performed for the Duke and Duchess of Luxembourg. Her works have been seen on many stages, including the Joyce Theater, the Apollo Theater, Joe's Pub, Aaron Davis Hall, and New York Live Arts.

Rea-Fisher is the Co-Founder of Inception to Exhibition— a non-profit that supplies low-cost, high-quality space to artists from various disciplines —and the Director of the Lake Placid School of Dance in Lake Placid, NY. She was the first Dance Curator at The Tank where she now sits on their Board of Trustees and curates the Bryant Park Dance Summer Series. Her professional affiliations include being the Vice President of the Stonewall Community Development Corporation, an Advisory Board member of Dance/NYC, COHI member of the International Association of Blacks in Dance, and a proud member of Women of Color of the Arts.

Jamar Roberts graduated from the New World School of the Arts. He trained at the Dance Empire of Miami, where he continues to teach, and as a fellowship student at The Ailey School. Roberts was a member of Ailey II and Complexions Contemporary Ballet. *Dance Magazine* featured Jamar as one of “25 to Watch” in 2007 and on the cover in 2013. He performed at The White House in 2010 and as a guest star on *So You Think You Can Dance*, *Dancing with the Stars*, and *The Ellen Degeneres Show*. In 2015 he made his Ailey II choreographic debut with his work *Gemeos*, set to the music of Afrobeat star Fela Kuti. His first work for the Company, *Members Don't Get Weary*, premiered during the 2017 New York City Center season. Roberts is a Bessie Award winner and has guest-starred with London's Royal Ballet.

Reggie Wilson founded his company, Reggie Wilson/Fist & Heel Performance Group, in 1989. Wilson draws from the cultures of Africans in the Americas and combines them with post-modern elements and his movement style to create what he often calls "post-African/Neo-HooDoo Modern dances." His work has been presented nationally and internationally at venues such as Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York Live Arts, and Summerstage (NYC), Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival (Lee, MA), Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (San Francisco), UCLA Live, and Redcat (Los Angeles), VSA NM (New Mexico), Myrna Loy (Helena, MT), The Flynn (Burlington, VT), Contemporary Arts Center (New Orleans), Dance Umbrella (Austin, TX), Linkfest and Festival e'Nkundleni (Zimbabwe), Dance Factory (South Africa), Danças na Cidade (Portugal), Festival Kaay Fecc (Senegal), The Politics of Ecstasy, and Tanzkongress 2013 (Germany).

Wilson is a graduate of New York University, Tisch School of the Arts (1988, Larry Rhodes, Chair). He studied composition and was mentored by Phyllis Lamhut; Performed and toured with Ohad Naharin before forming Fist and Heel. Wilson has lectured, taught, and conducted workshops and community projects nationally and has traveled extensively: to the Mississippi Delta to research secular and religious aspects of life there; to Trinidad and Tobago to research the Spiritual Baptists and the Shangoists; and also to Southern, Central, West, and East Africa to work with dance/performance groups as well as diverse religious communities. He has served as visiting faculty at several universities, including Yale, Princeton, and Wesleyan. He is a Bessie Award winner and a 2002 John Simon Guggenheim Fellow. He has been an artist advisor for the National Dance Project and Board Member of the Dance Theater Workshop. His critically acclaimed work *CITIZEN*, premiered in 2016 (FringeArts – World; BAM NextWave). In 2019, he curated *Grounds That Shout! (and others merely shaking)*, a series of performances in Philadelphia's historic sacred spaces. His newest work is titled *POWER*.

About Black Dance Stories

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 story-sharing programming 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. In February 2022, Black Dance Stories began a long-term collaborative partnership with Amistad Research Center to preserve its digital programming and make it available to the public through Amistad's digital projects virtual archive.

The Black Dance Stories series launched in June 2020 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, Jamar Roberts, Tiffany Rae Fisher, Joan Myers Brown, Mikki Shepard, Reggie Wilson, Bill T. Jones, Rena Butler, Robert Battle, Angie Pittman, and more. The producing team consists of Black creatives in the arts, including BDS Founder and Co-Creator Charmaine Warren and Co-Creator Kimani Fowlin, Tony Turner (Graphic Designer), Cynthia Tate (Publicist), Gabe Dekoladenu (Web Designer), Makeda Smith (Digital Media), Travone Geovonie (Live Stream Manager), and Renee Redding-Jones (Finance and Development). Antonio Burkett (International Interpreting) and Shannon Morrison (Morr Interpreting) have worked together to provide ASL interpreting services for Black Dance Stories.

Find us at blackdancestories.org and on socials @blackdancestories

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.

Credits

Black Dance Stories Live is supported in part by The Harkness Foundation for Dance.

651 ARTS' programs are made possible by gifts from generous individuals and grants from Bay and Paul Foundations, The Baisley Powell Elebash Fund, The Black Seed, Con Edison, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ford Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, Lambent Foundation, Mertz Gilmore Foundation, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, New York Community Trust, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, Emma Sheafer Charitable Trust, Wallace Foundation, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, including Majority Leader Laurie A. Cumbo, the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature

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