



For more information contact:
Fatima Kafele, Kafele PR
917.723.1494/fkafele@gmail.com
@651ARTS

651 ARTS Announces New Programming for Fall 2013

Brooklyn-based organization celebrates its 25th season of presenting work of contemporary artists of the African Diaspora

Brooklyn, NY/September 12, 2013---651 ARTS, a presenting organization dedicated to the work of contemporary artists from the African Diaspora, announces its Fall 2013 season. The exhilarating line-up includes the New York premiere of South African choreographer **Gregory Maqoma/Vuyani Dance Theatre's Exit/Exist**; the Brooklyn premiere of the poignant **Mr. TOL. E. RAnce** by Bessie-nominated choreographer **Camille A. Brown**; a revival of the seminal **The Circle Unbroken is a Hard Bop** by the late poet **Sekou Sundiata** and a remount of the audience favorite **Brooklyn '63**, a theatrical performance featuring members of the community who lived and worked through the civil rights era in Brooklyn.

The Fall season will take place in various spaces around Brooklyn, including Kumble Theater and the Brooklyn Historical Society in downtown Brooklyn; the Billie Holiday Theater in Bedford-Stuyvesant; and the Congregation Beth Elohim Ballroom in Park Slope. Tickets for performances are \$10-\$25 and can be purchased by visiting www.651ARTS.org. For more information about 651 ARTS, contact 718.636.4181. For media inquiries, contact Fatima Kafele at fkafele@gmail.com or 917.723.1494.

"651 ARTS is in its 25th year of working with emerging artists, supporting established artists, bringing the work of contemporary African artists to New York City, presenting engaging humanities events and telling the Brooklyn story," Executive Director Shay Wafer said. "Celebrating 25 years is a major milestone for any organization and I have faith in our next leg of the journey. My dream is for 651 ARTS to be here—and to continue to present arts and artists of the African Diaspora—for *twenty-five more years.*"

more

651 Arts Fall 2013 Season

Brooklyn '63

REMOUNT

Ping Chong + Company

Tuesday, September 17 at 7:30 p.m.

Congregation Beth Elohim Ballroom/274 Garfield Place, Brooklyn

Tickets: \$20

Thursday, September 19 at 7:30 p.m.

Billie Holiday Theatre at Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration/1368 Fulton Street, Brooklyn

Tickets: \$20

Friday, September 20 at 7:30 p.m.

Brooklyn Historical Society/128 Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn

Tickets: \$20

In partnership with Ping Chong + Company and presented as part of the BEATBrooklyn festival, *Brooklyn '63* is a theatrical performance that provides a lens into a time when the fabric of the Brooklyn community was being shaped by the radical social changes occurring throughout the nation. Ping Chong + Company used its community inspired, interview-based Undesirable Elements process to excavate a forgotten history of community and social activism that crossed racial, religious and ethnic lines to bring about change to an increasingly diverse community, one striving to overcome decades of injustice and neglect.

An audience favorite, *Brooklyn '63* premiered as part of 651 ARTS' Spring season in May 2013 at Kumble Theater. The work is created and directed by Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks and features Brooklyn residents Elinor Barr, Lourdes Lebron, Clyde Deloris Herring, Patrick Dougher, Sam Pinn and Stan Kinard. The illustrious group will share their experiences and perspectives from the early labor movement, the Ocean Hill-Brownsville teachers strike, the Downstate Medical Center protests led by Brooklyn CORE and a host of events and reminiscences that took place in Brownsville, Ft. Greene, Sheepshead Bay, Coney Island, Williamsburg, Bushwick and many places in between.

more

The Circle Unbroken is a Hard Bop

REVIVAL

Written by Sekou Sundiata

Directed by Kamilah Forbes

Friday, September 27 at 7:30 p.m.

Kumble Theater for the Performing Arts at LIU Brooklyn/1 University Plaza, Brooklyn

Tickets: \$10

The late poet Sekou Sundiata's seminal work *The Circle Unbroken is a Hard Bop* (1992) will be re-imagined and directed by Kamilah Forbes and featuring Carvens Lissant, Traci Tolmaire and Craig MuMs Grant with choreography from Adia Whitaker. This multilayered performance work, which propelled Sundiata into the world of theater and received three Audelco awards and a Bessie award, tells the story of three African-American artists—an expatriate dancer, a poet, and a musician—who come of age during the political and cultural movements of the late 1960's and '70s.

Sekou Sundiata was internationally known as a poet who wrote for print, performance, music and theater, as an educator and as an artist-activist. He was a Sundance Institute Screenwriting Fellow, a Columbia University Revson Fellow, a Master Artist-in-Residence at the Atlantic Center for the Arts (Florida), the first Writer-in-Residence at the New School University and the recipient of a Lambent Fellowship in the Arts. Sundiata was a professor at Eugene Lang College in New York City. *The Circle Unbroken is a Hard Bop* is being presented as a part of *Blink Your Eyes: Sekou Sundiata Revisited*, a New York City-wide retrospective produced by MAPP International.

more

Exit/Exist

NEW YORK PREMIERE

Gregory Maqoma

Vuyani Dance Theatre

Friday, November 1 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, November 2 at 7:30 p.m.

Kumble Theater for the Performing Arts at LIU Brooklyn/1 University Plaza, Brooklyn

Tickets: \$25 General Admission/ \$20 Students/Seniors

South African renowned dancer, choreographer and director Gregory Maqoma reinvestigates tradition to understand the complexities of our contemporary world in *Exit/Exist* (2011). As inspiration for this piece, Maqoma looks to his ancestral past: Chief Maqoma, a 19th century warrior who fought to maintain Xhosa cultural traditions of the Eastern Cape in the face of colonial dispossession. Maqoma embodies this forgotten history in a transformational and poignant solo performance that fuses storytelling with his own unparalleled contemporary dance vocabulary and spirited live music from the vocal ensemble Complete and world-fusion guitarist Giuliano Modarelli. Through his signature integration of traditional and contemporary dance, Maqoma invites audiences to reflect on who we are, where we come from, and how all of these facets, past and present, inform our personal and collective identities today. The Johannesburg Star said of the work, "What distinguishes Maqoma... is his intelligently provocative exploration of kinetic African identity where the rural impinges on the urban, where the hallowed intersects with the popular."

Gregory Vuyani Maqoma, started his dance training in 1990 at Moving into Dance. While studying under the direction of Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker at Performing Arts Research and Training School (PARTS) in Belgium in 1999, Maqoma founded Vuyani Dance Theatre (VDT). Vuyani Dance Theatre is marked by a fusion of African contemporary urban styles, music and culture with those produced by contemporary European counterparts. The *Exit/Exist* North American tour is produced by MAPP International.

more

Mr. TOL. E. RAnCE

BROOKLYN PREMIERE

Camille A. Brown and Dancers

Friday, December 6 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 7 at 7:30 p.m.

Kumble Theater for the Performing Arts at LIU Brooklyn/1 University Plaza, Brooklyn

Tickets: \$20 General Admission; \$15 Students/Seniors

Inspired by Mel Watkins' book, "On The Real Side" and Spike Lee's controversial movie, "Bamboozled," Mr. TOL. E. RAnCE, (2013) choreographed by Camille A. Brown, celebrates the humor and perseverance of the black performer and examines stereotypical roles dominating current popular Black culture. Through comedy, live original music, animation, theater and poignantly retrospective dance vocabulary, the evening length work speaks to the issue of tolerance—how much Black performers had to tolerate—and addresses forms of modern day minstrelsy we tolerate today, traveling a psychic arc from Bert Williams to Dave Chappelle. World Dance Reviews described the work as "a complex mix of images, associations, and references, all emotionally and culturally charged."

Camille A. Brown is a prolific choreographer who has achieved multiple accolades and awards for her daring works. Informed by her music background as a clarinetist, she creates choreography that utilizes musical composition as storytelling – investigating the silent space within the measure, and filling it with mesmerizing movement.

more

Special Humanities Events

“History, Memory and the Creative Process”

A Conversation with Bill T. Jones and Gregory Maqoma

Tuesday, October 29 at 7 p.m.

National Black Theatre/2031 Fifth Avenue at 125th Street, New York, NY

Tickets: \$10 (Suggested donation)

651 ARTS and Dr. Barbara Ann Teer's National Black Theatre present a dynamic conversation entitled “History, Memory and the Creative Process” with legendary dancer and choreographer Bill T. Jones and internationally renowned choreographer Gregory Vuyani Maqoma (*Exit/Exist*). The special event will focus on the creative process of making a dance work based in biographical and historical narrative. National Black Theatre’s CEO, Sade Lythcott will moderate.

From Double Consciousness to Post-Black

A Long Table Conversation on Black Identity

Sunday, September 22 at 2 p.m.

The Actors Fund Art Center/160 Schermerhorn Street, Brooklyn, NY

Tickets: Free. RSVP: <https://doubleconsciousness.eventbrite.com>

Examining Sekou Sundiata’s work through the lens of his identity as a black male in New York during the civil rights era, this Long Table conversation (a form developed by artist Lois Weaver to encourage informal and democratic engagement with complex and serious ideas) asks participants to consider the evolution of notions of black identity and the impact these terms and definitions have on how “blackness” is realized in art and daily life. *From Double Consciousness to Post-Black: A Long Table Conversation on Black Identity* is being presented as a part of *Blink Your Eyes: Sekou Sundiata Revisited*, a New York City-wide retrospective produced by MAPP International. Panelists include Bryonn Bain, Ronald K. Brown, Michaela Angela Davis, Bruce George, Ebony Golden and Homeboy Sandman.

more

About 651Arts

For 25 years, 651 ARTS has been committed to developing, producing and presenting performance and cultural programming from the African Diaspora, with a primary focus on contemporary performing arts. 651 ARTS serves the cultural life of New York City, with a particular focus on Brooklyn, one of America's most culturally diverse communities. For more information, please visit www.651ARTS.org.

#