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Contact: Joseph Hall
Programs Manager
P: 718-636-4181 x2234
press@651ARTS.org

651 ARTS Announces its 2015 Spring Season: Love in the Time of Brooklyn

Brooklyn, NY, January 15, 2015 - 651 ARTS continues the successful 26th season of the arts with programs from February to June. The season's theme, Love in the Time of Brooklyn, reinforces 651's commitment to serving our surrounding community and supporting Black Brooklyn-based artists, as well as artists abroad whose work connects with our community.

"Our spring season is an eclectic mix of artists from Brooklyn to Cuba who are working with new ideas and creating performances that are fresh and thoughtful. They represent emerging and established voices within the contemporary performing arts and aim to connect to audiences in Brooklyn," says Shay Wafer, 651 ARTS Executive Director.

To kick off the season, 651 ARTS brings back the popular *Live & Outspoken* series with Bessie award-winning choreographer **Camille A. Brown** in discussion with ethnomusicologist and anthropologist, **Dr. Kyra Gaunt**. Actor/Director **Delroy Lindo** moderates the lively conversation about art and process. Audiences can expect a short performance by Camille and an inside conversation about her acclaimed work.

Popular Cuban percussionist **YISSY** launches her US tour in Brooklyn before heading to Knoxville, DC, and Miami. YISSY is known for her fusion of original compositions with electronic beats that pairs traditional instrumentation with the compliments of a DJ. Traveling with YISSY is her five-piece band that includes Jorge Aragón (piano), Julio César González (bass), Julio Rigal (trumpet), and el Jigüe (DJ).

Director **Monica L. Williams** curates a theatrical evening of artist couples who are creating and performing work together. *Together/Far Apart* examines how three artist couples navigate work, love, and family commitments. Featured artists include **DJ Reborn/DJ Amir**, **Dominique Morrisseau/Jimmy Keys**, and **Rokafella/Kwikstep**.

The incomparable Jazz vocalist **Somi** returns from her international tour to present an evening of music inspired by her travels around the world. *JazzTimes* magazine describes her live performance as "the earthy gutsiness of Nina Simone blended with the vocal beauty of Dianne Reeves," while Billboard exclaims that she's "all elegance and awe...utterly captivating."

A Brooklyn staple, **Creative Outlet** celebrates 20 years with a retrospective featuring some of their most popular dance performances. Before each performance, current students of Creative Outlet will kick off the event with a short work of their own.

To end the season we support the beginnings of a new dance work entitled *The Geneva Project*. During a week in residence, as part of 651 ARTS' *Artist Development Initiative*, performer **Jennifer Newman** and director **Charlotte Brathwaite** continue to explore ancestral history and blood memory taking inspiration from a photograph by New Deal era photographer Marion Post Wolcott.

651 ARTS
651 Fulton Street
Brooklyn, NY 11217
Telephone:
718 636-4181
Fax:
718 636-4144
Email:
info@651ARTS.org

THEATER

DANCE

MUSIC

COMMUNITY

2015 Spring Season Line Up

Live & Outspoken: Camille A. Brown, Dr. Kyra Gaunt with moderator, Delroy Lindo

February 5, 2015 | 7PM

In association with Kumble Theater, LIU Brooklyn

\$20 general admission, \$15 students and seniors

BESSIE award-winning choreographer and two time Princess Grace Award recipient, Camille A. Brown, discusses art and process with ethnomusicologist and anthropologist, Dr. Kyra Gaunt. Moderator for the conversation is actor, director, and 651 ARTS board member, Delroy Lindo. Join us for an exploration of the art making process of two prolific artists and enjoy excerpts of Camille's latest work.

The *Live & Outspoken* series features live music, theatrical readings, dance and provocative interviews and conversation. Each event offers insights into the methods, lives, artistry and social concerns of some of the leading performance innovators, as well as some of the rising stars making their marks on contemporary performing arts.

YISSY

February 20, 2015 | 7:30PM

Irondale Center

\$20 general admission, \$15 students and seniors

Cuban percussionist YISSY is taking the Jazz world by storm. Her music fuses original compositions with electronic beats and pairs traditional instrumentation with the compliments of a stellar DJ. Her take on Jazz, R&B, Soul and Funk transports the listener from musical simplicity to complex, virtuous harmonies and rhythms, all while expressing a deep Cubanness. Among the main influences that define Yissy's music are Jazz greats Herbie Hancock, Roy Hargrove, and Jojo Mayer. Joining Yissy are Jorge Aragón (piano), Julio César González (bass), Julio Rigal (trumpet), and el Jigüe (DJ).

651 ARTS' presentation of YISSY is made possible through The Performing Americas Program, a partnership between the National Performance Network (NPN) and the Network of Cultural Promoters of Latin America and the Caribbean (La RED) and is designed to increase artistic exchange in the Western Hemisphere. The Performing Americas Program is supported by NPN with funding provided by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation. For further information, visit the NPN website at www.npnweb.org.

Together/Far Apart

Curated by Monica L. Williams

March 20, 2015 | 7:30PM

Irondale Center

\$20 general admission, \$15 students and seniors

Under the direction of curator and performance artist Monica L. Williams, *Together/Far Apart* features three couples who share their life journeys as artists through performance. Each artist couple works to maintain healthy family relationships all while making great art and balancing demanding lives. In their own genre, they explore the challenges of time, space, and distance as they relate to the hustle of work/love and loving each other. Featured artists include DJ Reborn/DJ Amir, Dominique Morrisseau/Jimmy Keys, and Rokafella/Kwikstep. Join the conversation on social media by using the hashtag #LoveHustle

Treat Yo' Self

April 11, 2015 | 8PM

New York Foundation for the Arts

\$40

Treat Yo' Self is a chic cocktail party for young professionals and arts patrons. Guests can indulge in massages, astrology readings, affirmations, and capture all the fun via a 651 ARTS photo booth. The evening features DJ Run P., desserts, champagne, and a special unplugged performance by award-winning pianist and composer, Kris Bowers.

Somi

April 24, 2015 | 7:30PM

Roulette

\$25 general admission, \$20 students and seniors

East African vocalist & songwriter Somi weaves jazz and African music into her socially-conscious and deeply poetic body of work that *The New York Times* hails as "both serious and seductive." Her new album "The Lagos Music Salon" (Sony Music/OKeh) is inspired by an 18-month sabbatical in Lagos, Nigeria. The album, which debuted at #1 on US Jazz Charts, features special guests Angelique Kidjo and Common. Somi is a TED Fellow, an Association of Performing Arts Presenters Fellow, and currently an Artist-in-Residence at both UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance and the Robert Rauschenburg Foundation. She is also the founder of non-profit organization New Africa Live. Currently, Somi is developing a jazz opera about the life and legacy of late South African singer and activist Miriam Makeba.

Creative Outlet

An Artist Grows in Brooklyn

May 15, 2015 | 7:30PM

May 16, 2015 | 7:30PM

May 17, 2015 | 3PM

Kumble Theater, LIU Brooklyn

\$20 general admission, \$15 students and seniors

Creative Outlet celebrates 20 years of artistic excellence with a retrospective of their most acclaimed work. Director and founder, Jamel Gaines, has spent a lifetime cultivating students into dynamic artists who perform on stages around the world. Joining the program is his family of artists who represent some of the most lauded dancers of this generation. The performance includes five dance works with music by Roberta Flack, an all male quartet, and movement inspired by the natural elements of Hurricane Katrina. Be among the first audience to see the world premiere of new work commissioned by 651 ARTS, *BitterSweet*.

Jennifer Newman & Charlotte Brathwaite

The Geneva Project – Part of 651's Artist Development Initiative

June 2015

An inter-disciplinary dance work exploring history and memory, *The Geneva Project* examines what is hidden and what is revealed, by sharing the story of one woman's ancestral past.

Searching the Farm Security Administration archives of the Library of Congress, dancer/choreographer Jennifer Harrison Newman discovered photographs of her great-aunt, Geneva Varner Clark, and her family on their farm in Depression-era South Carolina. Described as "negro", "mixed race" and "Indian", the photographs, taken by New Deal era photographer Marion Post Wolcott, invite inquiry into the politics of subjectivity and personhood by giving face to people marginalized by racial classifications.

Collaborators composer Justin Hicks, director Charlotte Brathwaite, and visual artist Abigail Deville combine imagery, language, and sound to produce a work that reflects on race, class, sex and representation in an ever-changing, uncertain, and distinctly American landscape.

The Geneva Project was created in part through *The Field's Emerging Artist Residency program*, supported by the *Lambent Foundation Fund of the Tides Foundation* and *Mabou Mines Resident Artist Program*. *The Geneva Project* is supported by the *National Performance Network Creation Fund*.

651 ARTS Annual Fundraiser

June 8, 2015 | 7PM

BAM Leperq

651 ARTS presents its second annual fundraiser with special performances and honorees. Save the date. More details to come.

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About 651 ARTS:

651 ARTS is 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.



This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.