



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

651 ARTS Announces 2022 Season

Liminal Spaces: Homebound

Programs and Initiatives Include:

Performing an Afro Future Panel Discussion

Malik Work's Solo Performance, "*Verses at Work*"

Towards a Generative Theater: Works-in-Progress

The Return of *The Woodshed Network*

**Residency Program for Women in Jazz Created and Led by Jazz NEA Master
and Music Legend
Dee Dee Bridgewater**

**The Launch of 651 ARTS' Home Warming Initiative
as the Institution Prepares the Move into its First-ever Permanent Home in
Downtown Brooklyn in Spring, 2023**

(Brooklyn, NY – September 15, 2022) – 651 ARTS, Brooklyn's premier institution for the African Diasporic performing arts, today announced details for its 2022 season - "**Liminal Spaces: Homebound**" - to include a mix of feature presentations, performances, and new programming. In addition to its Fall schedule, 651 also unveiled that it will launch the **Home Warming Initiative** as it prepares the move into the institution's first-ever rooted space at 10 Lafayette in Downtown Brooklyn in Spring, 2023. Marking a watershed moment in the institution's history, the new 12,500 sq ft., multipurpose facility at 10 Lafayette will deepen 651's programming and gather the multiple communities it serves in ways never before possible.

With the recent appointment of its new Executive Director, **Toya Lillard** and on the threshold of moving into its first permanent home, 651 ARTS' upcoming season signals a new era for the legacy organization as well as a major step in its continued growth and expansion. Since its inception in 1988, 651 ARTS has navigated both literal and figurative liminal spaces and is now - with the move - homebound. This "**Liminal Spaces: Homebound**" season offers an opportunity to think, individually and collectively, about "*how we will show up in the future that we imagine.*"

"For more than 34 years, 651 ARTS has answered the call to create programming that centers and values the performing arts and cultures of the African Diaspora. And until now, the institution has fulfilled its mission to deepen awareness of and appreciation for contemporary arts and culture of the African Diaspora without its own physical space. We wanted this season to reflect and encapsulate both where we have been and where we are landing, especially as we look forward to moving into our new home and celebrating 651's 35th Anniversary in 2023," said Lillard. "The word liminal is rooted in the Latin word limen, meaning 'threshold.' In its literal sense, a threshold is a doorway--or border between two places or stages. 651 ARTS has a history rooted in fueling the arts ecosystems within Brooklyn, while also presenting and producing work by emerging, established, and world-renowned artists from all over the United States, and the globe. For Black people world-wide, liminal spaces have historically offered the opportunity to imagine and create more sustainable futures where we may survive and thrive."

With that concept in mind, 651 ARTS' Fall programming will include unique collaborations with world class artists and arts leaders. The season will kick off on October 15th with ***Performing an Afro Future***, at **The Center for Fiction**. This panel discussion will explore the creative cartography involved in imagining Afro futures. The first performance of the season will occur November 18-20th at **The Center for Fiction** with **Malik Work's** award-winning ***Verses at Work***, a vibrant performance piece in which the dynamic actor/MC tells his own story of perseverance, love, music, and the struggle to survive as an artist in New York City.

Educational residencies include ***Towards a Generative Theater: Works-in-Progress*** by **The Black Seed Cohort** at **Weeksville Heritage Center** on December 2nd, and the fourth year of ***The Woodshed Network***, a mentorship and career accelerator residency program for emerging self-identifying women artists in Jazz . This **legacy project** of NEA Jazz Master and music legend **Dee Dee Bridgewater**, and artistic director and associate director **Tulani Bridgewater-Kowalski**, will take place in February of 2023. The application and submission process for the program will begin in October.

Launching officially this month, **651 ARTS' Home Warming Initiative** seeks to galvanize support around the organization's efforts to transform its new home into Downtown Brooklyn's premiere hub for Black artistic creation and to set a new stage for Black artistry. Home Warming draws inspiration from the community-centered practice of bringing food, gifts, and good cheer to a new home with the goal to infuse its new space with the passion, enthusiasm, and generosity of 651 ARTS supporters as it embarks on this new chapter.

FALL 2022 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

Performing an Afro Future

Date(s): October 15, 2022

Location: The Center for Fiction - 15 Lafayette Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11217

For its Season 2022 opener, 651 ARTS will present an in-depth conversation featuring a panel of renowned artists and theater-makers examining the creative cartography involved in imagining Afro futures. The discussion will invite the audience to consider the future of Black arts and the concepts of conceiving, defining and refining 'performing an afro-future.' The program will include: multi-award-winning musician **Martha Redbone**, singer-songwriter and educator **Nicholas Ryan Gant**, multimedia performance artist **MX OOPS**, and interdisciplinary artist **Alisha B, Wormsley**.

Verses at Work

Date: November 18-20, 2022

Location: The Center for Fiction - 15 Lafayette Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11217

Verses At Work is a personal narrative solo performance written and performed by New York City based hip hop artist, actor, and writer **Malik Work**. Throughout this immersive piece, Work masterfully weaves verse, spoken word, monologue, hip hop, and documentary to tell a true story about the birth of a music scene in the East Village. Hip hoppers and conventional jazz musicians will join forces on stage to recreate an unprecedented sound and scene bringing to life the turn of the millennium. Issues of love, race, money, class and struggle all intertwine for an experience that is true to the name of the band they formed - The Real Live Show.

2022 Education and Community Engagement Residencies

Towards a Generative Theater: Works-in-Progress

Date: December 2, 2022

Location: Weeksville Heritage Center - 158 Buffalo Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11213

As part of its Residency program, 651 ARTS will present **Towards a Generative Theater: Works-in-Progress** – an initiative made possible through the generous support of The Black Seed and building upon 651's rich theatrical history to create a dynamic home for contemporary multi-disciplinary Black generative theater artists. The institution will gather its resident artist cohort and Black Seed grant recipients to discuss their unique careers and art-making practices while defining generative theater and presentation within Black spaces. The artists are provided resources towards the creation of new works-in-progress to be presented by means of performance, presentation and conversation at Weeksville Heritage Center. The Black Seed Cohort artists - **Goldie Patrick**, **Eric Lockley** and **April Matthis** - will perform their own work through the exploration of text, movement, form, and content.

The Woodshed Network

Date(s): Begins February, 2023

The Woodshed Network (TWN), led by NEA Jazz Master and music legend **Dee Dee Bridgewater** and artistic director and associate director **Tulani Bridgewater-Kowalski**, will return in Spring, 2023 marking the program's fourth year. TWN program was conceived by Bridgewater as a mentorship and career accelerator program for emerging self-identifying women artists in Jazz through mentorship, knowledge-sharing, community interaction, professional development sessions and networking. Applications for the program will open in October.

About 651 ARTS

Since its founding in 1988, 651 ARTS has become a trusted convener of contemporary African Diasporic artistic expression, a champion and nurturer for emerging artists and their work and a vital cultural resource for its surrounding community. As it moves forward, part of 651 ARTS' mission is to preserve the legacy of Black culture in Brooklyn, celebrate the eclecticism of Black performance and to pioneer new visions of African Diaspora artists. This year – the transition year – is integral for the institution as it continues to lay the framework that will further help to reinforce 651 ARTS' role as a leader of African Diasporic culture while also establishing it an incubator for artistic innovation in the 21st century.

For additional information, please visit: www.651ARTS.org.

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