

THE BLACK IRIS PROJECT

a premier ballet collaborative that champions new Black-centric works and arts education

VOL. 1 ISSUE 1

JULY 27 & 28, 2016

New York Live Arts

ABOUT

Founded in 2016 by choreographer Jeremy McQueen, **THE BLACK IRIS PROJECT** is a ballet collaborative and education vehicle which creates new, relevant classical ballet works that celebrate diversity and Black history. Based in New York City, the project hosts a team of predominantly **BLACK** artists capable of delivering cross-discipline and wholly original works. Championing individuality, the collaborative harnesses the Black community's inherent creative spirit to encourage and inspire youth of color to pursue art, movement and music as an expressive outlet and a means for collective healing.

In its inaugural year, **THE BLACK IRIS PROJECT** has been awarded funding from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, New Music USA and CUNY Dance Initiative, with additional support from the Harlem School of the Arts, Nude Barre & Shea Moisture. The Black Iris Project has been featured in The New York Times, The Village Voice, Huffington Post, Blavity, A Plus, Jet Magazine, Dance Informa, Dance Magazine, NY1 and Broadway World.

**WHERE
BLACK LIVES
BECOME
WORKS OF ART.**



Photography by Matthew Murphy. Art Direction by Mondo Morales.
Face Makeup by Ruben Bermudez. Dancer Nardia Boodoo.

INSPIRATION

Three years ago when my mother was battling cancer, I took a trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art where I first fell in love with Georgia O'Keeffe's painting, *Black Iris III*. Sparked with inspiration from the painting, my mom's struggles and the strength of other Black women who helped raise me, started creating my first en pointe ballet. Despite trials and tribulation, "Black Iris" came to life at Joffrey Ballet in March 2013 and birthed new ideas about how we could take greater steps as a community to diversify the dialogue within classical ballet. Then a year ago a brand new classical score about Nelson Mandela's life (written by a Black composer) fell in my lap and I knew what I needed to do—create classical ballets that are rooted in Black culture, with Black artistic visionaries, performed by diverse dancers, **AND** take these ballets into minority communities, enabling the artists to give back and inspire.

THE BLACK IRIS PROJECT is all parts people, places and experiences, and follows a trajectory alongside a lifespan of joy, education, family, trials and disappointments. We invite you to join our journey.

—JEREMY MCQUEEN

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 The Black Iris Project



THE BLACK IRIS PROJECT

BLACK IRIS

CHOREOGRAPHY BY JEREMY McQUEEN
LIGHTING DESIGN BY ALAN C. EDWARDS
COSTUME DESIGN BY JERMAINE TERRY
COSTUMES CONSTRUCTED BY ERIC WINTERLING, INC.
TIGHTS GENEROUSLY PROVIDED BY NUDE BARRE
BALLET MISTRESS CHARLA GENN
MUSIC "PIANO TRIO NO. 2 IN C MINOR, OP. 66"
COMPOSED BY FELIX MENDELSSOHN
MUSIC PERFORMED BY YO-YO MA, ITZHAK PERLMAN & EMANUEL AX

Black Iris was commissioned by the Joffrey Academy of Dance,
Official School of The Joffrey Ballet and premiered on March 10, 2013 in Chicago, IL.

"The challenge of Black womanhood is a unique specificity. This piece [Black Iris] attempts to trace those challenges found in life, work, and even ballet, while also pulling from the specific strengths needed to "carry-on." I dedicate this work to Mary McQueen, Ann Tinsley, and Beverly Anderson, three Black women who exemplify the perseverance, determination, confidence, and faith that is distinctively Black and woman. To them I offer, Black Iris."

— J. McQUEEN

SOLOIST
KIMBERLY MARIE OLIVIER

ENSEMBLE
CHRISTOPHER BLOOM, JARED BRUNSON, KIARA FELDER, DANIELA FILIPPONE, TAYLOR
GORDON, WHITNEY HUELL, JOLINA JAVIER, DAPHNE M. LEE, LAWRENCE RINES,
GABRIELLE SALVATTO, GEORGE SANDERS, CHRISTINA SPIGNER

— INTERMISSION —

BROWN BABY

EXCERPTS

CHOREOGRAPHY BY JEREMY McQUEEN & LAUREN COX
LIGHTING DESIGN BY ALAN C. EDWARDS
VISUAL ART BY JON MOODY
TIGHTS GENEROUSLY PROVIDED BY NUDE BARRE
MUSIC COMPOSED BY AARON DIEHL
ORIGINAL "BROWN BABY" WRITTEN AND COMPOSED BY OSCAR BROWN JR.
GUESSWORKS MANAGEMENT ANDREW GUESS

RECORDED AT SEAR SOUNDS STUDIOS NYC, NY
AUDIO ENGINEER TODD WHITELOCK
ASSISTANT ENGINEER OWEN MULHOLLAND
MIXED & MASTERED BY TODD WHITELOCK, WHITELOCK AUDIO
PRODUCED BY AL PRYOR
PIANIST & MUSIC DIRECTOR AARON DIEHL
UPRIGHT ACOUSTIC DOUBLE BASS PAUL SIKIVIE
DRUMS PETE VAN NOSTRAND
SAXOPHONE & CLARINET PETE ANDERSON
TRUMPET PETE BRUCE HARRIS
TROMBONE COREY WILCOX
VOCALS BRIANNA THOMAS

Inspired by the life of model Beatrice Reynolds Cox and her loving family.
The new compositions for this ballet were made possible through the generous support of NewMusic USA.

BEATRICE REYNOLDS COX GABRIELLE SALVATTO
BEATRICE'S MOTHER KARA WALSH
BEATRICE'S FATHER CHARLES COOPER
BEATRICE'S STEPFATHER GEORGE SANDERS

ENSEMBLE

CHRISTOPHER BLOOM, JARED BRUNSON, PETER J. CHURSIN, KIARA FELDER,
DANIELA FILIPPONE, DARION FLORES, WHITNEY HUELL, JOLINA JAVIER, DAPHNE M. LEE,
LAWRENCE RINES, GEORGE SANDERS, CHRISTINA SPIGNER

— INTERMISSION —

MADIBA

WORLD PREMIERE JULY 27, 2016

CHOREOGRAPHY BY JEREMY McQUEEN
LIGHTING DESIGN BY ALAN C. EDWARDS
COSTUME DESIGN BY MONTANA LEVI BLANCO
COSTUMES CONSTRUCTED BY ERIC WINTERLING, INC.
TIGHTS GENEROUSLY PROVIDED BY NUDE BARRE
MUSIC "MADIBA"
COMPOSED BY CARMAN MOORE
SOLO CELLIST KHARI JOYNER
DIGITAL ORCHESTRA COMPOSED BY PREMIK TUBBS

MADIBA will be performed at The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in April 2017 as part of the
Kennedy Center's Ballet Across America series curated by Misty Copeland and Justin Peck.

The orchestral composition "MADIBA" was originally commissioned by the American Composer's Orchestra
and premiered at Carnegie Hall in February 2015.

"In loving memory of my MADIBA, James McQueen, who taught me how to dream big and never give up."

— J. McQUEEN

NELSON MANDELA DAVID ADRIAN FREELAND JR.
WINNIE MANDELA DAPHNE M. LEE
CHRISTO BRAND CHRISTOPHER BLOOM
NELSON MANDELA'S MOTHER WHITNEY HUELL
BLUE CRANES KIARA FELDER & CHRISTINA SPIGNER

BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS

JARED BRUNSON, CHARLES COOPER, KIARA FELDER, DARION FLORES, WHITNEY HUELL,
DAPHNE M. LEE, GABRIELLE SALVATTO, GEORGE SANDERS, CHRISTINA SPIGNER

SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY OFFICERS

CHRISTOPHER BLOOM, PETER J. CHURSIN, DANIELA FILIPPONE, JOLINA JAVIER

COLLABORATORS



JEREMY McQUEEN
Artistic Director &
Choreographer
THE BLACK IRIS PROJECT

Founder and Artistic Director of The Black Iris Project, Jeremy McQueen is an award-winning emerging

choreographer. A 2013 recipient of the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago's Choreographers of Color Award and two-time finalist of the Capezio Award for Choreographic Excellence, McQueen's work has appeared at Jacob's Pillow Dance's Inside/Out series (in 2012 & 2013), Dancers Responding to AIDS' Fire Island Dance Festival, the Young Choreographer's Festival, and more. McQueen has appeared in the Broadway National Tours of *Wicked* and *The Color Purple*, in addition to the Metropolitan Opera's productions of *Die Fledermaus*, *Aida*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, and *Don Giovanni*. McQueen currently teaches ballet for ABT and Ailey's educational outreach programs. A graduate of The Ailey School/Fordham University B.F.A. Program, he's trained as a scholarship recipient with American Ballet Theatre, San Francisco Ballet and Alonzo King's LINES Ballet.

JEREMYMCQUEEN.COM



LAUREN COX
Co-Choreographer
BROWN BABY

Lauren is a San Francisco born, New York-based philanthropist, dancer, instructor and choreographer.

As founder and director of Humans Collective, a dance, philanthropy & art company, Lauren has partnered with the New York dance community to help support the higher education of children from the Rock Orphanage in Hyderabad, India. Dance Spirit Magazine refers to Humans Collective as "Dance Philanthropy at its Finest". Lauren started her dance career at the age of 7, competing nationally as a Rhythmic Gymnast and since then has studied and performed in Hip-Hop, Street Jazz, Ballet, Jazz/Contemporary, Samba/Afro-Brazilian, Haitian Cultural Dances and Improvisation. She has appeared on *The View*, *Saturday Night Live*, *America's Got Talent* and performed with Pharrell, Alicia Keys, Joey Yung (Hong Kong) and many more. Her choreography has been showcased in venues around New York such as Ailey Citigroup Theater, Symphony Space, Broadway Dance Center, Joffrey Ballet School, Funkbox NYC and Broadway Underground at BB Kings in Times Square. With a strong family background, Lauren strives to be a positive influence to the world around her by bringing people together and to experience fully the gifts she has been blessed with.

HUMANSCOLLECTIVE.COM



AARON DIEHL
Composer
BROWN BABY

Pianist, Aaron Diehl, is one of the most sought after jazz virtuosos, consistently playing with what The New York Times describes as

"melodic precision, harmonic erudition, and elegant restraint." Diehl's meticulously thought-out performances, collaborations, and compositions are a leading force in today's generation of jazz contemporaries, spearheading a distinct union of traditional and fresh artistry. Diehl's new album on Mack Avenue Records, *Space, Time, Continuum*, emphasizes the artistic collaborations between generations. Establishing the jazz language as a continuum uniting artists, the album includes performances by NEA Jazz Master Benny Golson (tenor saxophone) and Duke Ellington Orchestra alumnus Joe Temperley (baritone saxophone), alongside Diehl's other established trio—Quincy Davis (drums) and David Wong (bass). The majority of the album consists of Diehl's original compositions. The title track, featuring vocalist Charenee Wade, was co-written by Cécile McLorin Salvant. Aaron Diehl is a graduate of the Juilliard School, where he studied with Kenny Barron, Eric Reed, and Oxana Yablonskaya. Residing in Harlem, he enjoys spending time in the sky when he isn't on tour or recording.

AARONDIEHL.COM



ALAN C. EDWARDS
Lighting Designer
THE BLACK IRIS PROJECT

Alan is based in New York and has had the pleasure of casting light on, and in some cases creating the environment for, the

following shows: Regional: *Stagger Lee* [world premiere], *The Mountaintop* (Dallas Theatre Center); *Fingersmith* [world premiere] (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Deathtrap*, *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (Berkshire Theatre Group); *The Piano Lesson*, *A Delicate Balance* (Yale Rep); *Acis & Galatea* (Madison Opera); *Carmen* (Tri-Cities Opera); *Suor Angelica & Curlew River* (Simpson Opera). Off & Off-Off Broadway: *Bones in the Basket* (Araca Project); *Son of a Gun* (Theatre Row); *The King's Whore* (Walkerspace); *Holding It Down* (Harlem Stage); *Illmatic* (Urban Stages); *Carnaval* (National Black Theatre); *The Tempest*, *Dutchman* (Classical Theatre of Harlem). He received his MFA in design from the Yale School of Drama in 2011 and had the wonderful opportunity to work as the associate to Jennifer Tipton on *The Testament of Mary* on Broadway in 2013.

ALANCEDWARDS.COM



MONTANA LEVI BLANCO
Costume Designer
MADIBA

Montana is a theatre designer from Albuquerque, New Mexico. His grandmother, a lampshade artisan,

inspired an early fascination with fabric, color, and beauty. Montana is a graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music (B.M. Oboe Performance), Oberlin College (B.A. History), Brown University (M.A. Public Humanities), and the Yale School of Drama (M.F.A. Design). Prior to attending Yale, he was the Robert L. Tobin Curatorial Fellow at the McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, Texas. Montana designed the world premiere of Branden Jacobs-Jenkins' *WAR*, *The Visit*, *The Winter's Tale*, Kate Tarker's *THUNDERBODIES*, and a number of shows at the Yale Cabaret. He is the inaugural recipient of the Fellowship for the Study of the Public History of Slavery (Brown), the Presidential Public Service Fellowship (Yale), and the Donald & Zorka Oenslager Scholarship for Stage Design.

MONTANALEVI.BLANCO.COM



CARMAN MOORE
Composer
MADIBA

Born in Lorain, Ohio and growing up in nearby Elyria, Carman Moore earned his Bachelor of Music Degree at Ohio

State University before moving to New York City, where he studied composition privately with Hall Overton and at the Juilliard School with Luciano Berio and Vincent Persichetti where he earned his Masters Degree with distinction. Moore then began composing for symphony and chamber ensembles while writing lyrics for pop songs, gradually adding opera, theatre, dance and film scores to his body of work. Carman Moore has received commissions from the New York Philharmonic, Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Well-known as a composer for dance, Carman Moore served from 1986-1995 as Master Composer and Co-director of the American Dance Festival's Young Choreographers and Composers Residency Program. Among his scores for dance are *Goddess of the Waters*, choreographed by Alvin Ailey for the Ballet Company of La Scala; *Memories for Anna Sokolow*; *Salon for Garth Fagan*; and *Lunar Transformations* for Cleo Parker Robinson, among others.

CARMANMOORE.COM



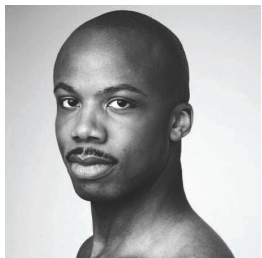
JON MOODY

Visual Artist
BROWN BABY

As an Artist and Athlete Moody uses his abilities to provoke thought while aiming to break the myth that one is either

an athlete or artist. Through artistic expression he bring awareness to social, economical and worldly issues. Jon Moody's goal is to inspire not only other athletes, but everyone to become global ambassadors for change.

IJONMOODY.COM



JERMAINE TERRY

Costume Designer
BLACK IRIS

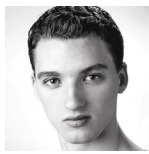
Jermaine Terry (Washington, DC) began his dance training in Kissimmee at James Dance Center. He

graduated cum laude with a B.F.A. in Dance Performance from the University of South Florida, where he received scholarships for excellence in performance and choreography. Mr. Terry was a scholarship student at The Ailey School and a member of Ailey II, and he has performed with Buglisi Dance Theatre, Arch Dance, Dance Iquail!, and Philadanco!. Mr. Terry joined Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 2010. Based out of NY for the past decade, Mr. Terry is an emerging costume and special occasions designer. He has designed and built costumes for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Ailey II, Philadanco!, Jessica Lang Dance, Dance Iquail!, Waheed Works and Eleone Dance Theater to name a few. His evening wear designs have been featured in The New York Times style section.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY **MATTHEW MURPHY**
ART DIRECTION BY **MONDO MORALES**
FACE MAKEUP BY **RUBEN BERMUDEZ**

PERFORMERS

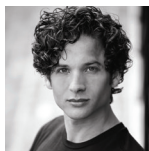


CHRISTOPHER BLOOM is from Middletown, VA where he started training at the Vostrikov Academy of Ballet at the age of 15. Christopher trained as a scholarship student at the Ballet and Contemporary Dance Programs in the School at Jacob's

Pillow under Anna-Marie Holmes and Milton Myers. Since graduating from the Ailey/Fordham B.F.A. Dance program in 2012, he has performed and toured with the Peridance Contemporary Dance Company and Parsons Dance performing masterworks by David Parsons, Igal Perry, and Ohad Naharin across several continents. Christopher joined Ballet Hispanico in 2013 and has since originated roles in works by Edgar Zendejas, Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, Gustavo Ramirez Sansano, and Eduardo Vilaro. **Mr. Bloom appears with The BIP courtesy of Ballet Hispanico.**



JARED BRUNSON was raised in St. Petersburg, Florida where he received various dance training from the age of four. After training with Suzanne Pomerantzef and Michael Sheridan, Jared began his career dancing with Florida Dance Theatre, BalletX, Pennsylvania Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theatre, among others. He is now in his third season with Ballet Memphis and has premiered in works by Nacho Duato, Mathew Neenan, and Trey McIntyre. **Mr. Brunson appears with The BIP courtesy of Ballet Memphis.**



PETER J. CHURSION was most recently seen on Broadway in the revival of *On The Town*. He was a recurring company dancer in the STARZ miniseries *Flesh & Bone*. His theater credits include: *The Music Man* - "Tommy Dijas" (TUTS), *West Side Story* (Broadway, Original Cast), *Nikolai and the Others* (Lincoln Center) and *Wicked* - "Chistry" (1st National Tour and Los Angeles Company). He worked with Complexions Contemporary Ballet and has had the opportunity to perform as a freelance dancer internationally. He has appeared in numerous television shows and film including *America's Got Talent*, *State of the Union* with Tracey Ullman, *Joan of Arcadia* and *Winter's Tale* starring Collin Farrell. He is honored to be a part of *The Black Iris Project*.

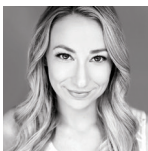


Born and raised in Jamaica, Queens, New York City, **CHARLES COOPER** began his dance training at the School of American Ballet and at Fiorello H. LaGuardia School of Music & Art and Performing Arts. He continued his training with the Manhattan Youth Ballet (MYB) at the Manhattan Movement & Arts Center (MMAC). With MYB, he performed Balanchine's "Man I Love" pas de deux from *Who Cares* and the principal pas de deux and the variation from *La Source*, as well as the grand pas de deux and the Cavalier variation from *Nutcracker*. Charles placed sixth at the Youth America Grand Prix for a group piece choreographed by David Parsons. He studied at the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School at American Ballet Theatre on full scholarship for the summer program, and trained for two years at the San Francisco Ballet School, also on full scholarship. As a professional with Ballet Memphis, Charles has danced the roles of Chinese and Lead Russian in Ballet Memphis' *Nutcracker*, in Reggie Wilson's *I Am A Man*, Steven McMahon's *Flyway* and Steven McMahons *Confluence* on Ballet Memphis' Tour to the Joyce in New York City and Peter Pan. He has also danced in the Gabrielle Lamb's 'Elopse', and Joshua Peugh's 'Sweet Boy Slide'. This will be Charles' 4th year with Ballet Memphis. **Mr. Cooper appears with The BIP courtesy of Ballet Memphis.**



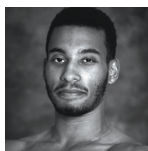
KIARA FELDER began training in Cary, North Carolina, at Cary Ballet Conservatory. She graduated from North Carolina School of the Arts, and finished training as a Professional Division student at Pacific Northwest Ballet School.

She joined Atlanta Ballet as an apprentice in 2012, and was promoted to Company Dancer in 2014. With Atlanta ballet she has performed in works by John McFall, Twyla Tharp, Christopher Wheeldon, Yuri Possokhov, and Helen Pickett. She has enjoyed performing in Ohad Naharin's *Secus*, and *Minus 16*, and Jean-Christophe Maillol's *Romé et Juliette*. Felder was featured in *Dance Magazine's* 25 to Watch list in January 2016. **Ms. Felder appears with The BIP courtesy of Atlanta Ballet.**



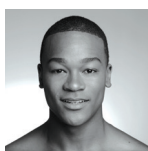
DANIELA FILIPPONE'S credits include: The Metropolitan Opera's *Khovanshchina*, Radio City Christmas Spectacular, The New York Spectacular, Under Armour Rule Yourself Commercial, and The Bad Boys of Dance International

Tour *Romeo and Juliet* (Juliet). Daniela is beyond excited to be joining *Phantom of the Opera National Tour* this August!



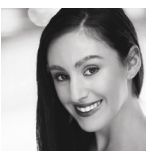
DARION FLORES was born and raised in Hartford, Connecticut. He began his training in both ballet and tap at the early age of 4. Flores studied classical ballet at the Hartt School under the direction of Miguel Campaneria before relocating to

attend The University of North Carolina School of the Arts in Winston-Salem, NC. Upon graduating, Darion joined the Ellison Ballet Professional Training Program in New York, NY in order to further his classical ballet training. Flores has been fortunate enough to study with teachers such as Susan Jaffe, Misha Tchoupakov, Edward Ellison and many more. Darion has also received full scholarships to Dance Theatre of Harlem, San Francisco Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and Boston Ballet summer intensives. Last summer he took part in the show *So You Think You Can Dance* as a season 12 top 20 finalist and now looks forward to another season with The Washington Ballet under the new direction of Julie Kent. **Mr. Flores appears with The BIP courtesy of Washington Ballet.**



DAVID ADRIAN FREELAND JR. began his dance training at LaVilla School of the Arts under the direction of Michelle Ottley-Fisher and Susan Jennings. He then attended Jacksonville Centre of the Arts where he received much of his training

under the direction of Kezia Rolle. Mr. Freeland has received full scholarships to summer intensives at the Nashville Ballet and The Juilliard School and attended the Conservatory of Dance at the State University of New York at Purchase College. Mr. Freeland was a member of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theaters world famous second company Ailey II for three seasons performing works by Alvin Ailey, Judith Jamison, Robert Battle, Troy Powell, Dwight Rhoden, and Jennifer Archibald. Since Ailey II Mr. Freeland has dance in the 2015-2016 season at The Metropolitan Opera House, and in August will be joining LA Dance Project for their 2016-2017 season.



TAYLOR GORDON is a professional dancer in NYC, where she has performed on some of the biggest stages of the dance world. Carving her own path as a freelancer, she works with a variety of companies & shows in effort to land as much stage

time as possible. Her extensive ballet background has led to work in classical, contemporary, commercial, modern, and musical theater genres. Taylor was recently on tour in Europe & Africa with TUI Arts & Entertainment. She spent 4 seasons with The Radio City Christmas Spectacular and has performed at Lincoln Center with The Metropolitan Opera Ballet, Off-Broadway and national tour of *Angelina Ballerina The Musical*, internationally with *Cirque Le Masque*, at *Jacob's Pillow*, and *Dance Theater Workshop*. She trained at Boston Ballet, The Rock School, and Ballet Academy East and dances with Exit 12 Dance Company, Ballet for Young Audiences, and Felice Lesser Dance Theater. She appeared on PBS *Great Performance at the Met Live in HD*, MTV's "Made," *The Today Show*, and has been featured in *Dance Magazine*, *Vanity Fair Online*, *The Huffington Post*, and *Dance Spirit*.



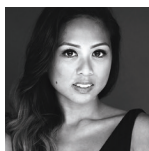
WHITNEY HUELL trained at the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities under the tutelage of Stanislav Issaev and Robert Barnett. She then attended Indiana University earning a B.S. in Ballet and Psychology before

joining Ballet West. In January 2011 she was featured as one of *Dance Magazine's* Top 25 to Watch and was also featured in the September 2012 issue of *Pointe Magazine*. Huell joined *Kansas City Ballet* in 2014 and has been featured as *Caterpillar* in *Alice (in Wonderland)*, 3rd Theme in *The Four Temperaments*, and *Snow Queen* in *Devon Carney's* new production of *The Nutcracker*. Whitney Huell trained at the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities under the tutelage of Stanislav Issaev and Robert Barnett. She then attended Indiana University earning a B.S. in Ballet and Psychology before joining Ballet West. In January 2011 she was featured as one of *Dance Magazine's* Top 25 to Watch and was also featured in the September 2012 issue of *Pointe Magazine*. Huell joined *Kansas City Ballet* in 2014 and has been featured as *Caterpillar* in *Alice (in Wonderland)*, 3rd Theme in *The Four Temperaments*, and *Snow Queen* in *Devon Carney's* new production of *The Nutcracker*. **Ms. Huell appears with The BIP courtesy of Kansas City Ballet.**



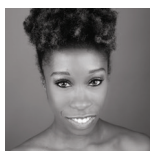


PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW MURPHY
ART DIRECTION BY MONDO MORALES
FACE MAKEUP BY RUBEN BERMUDEZ



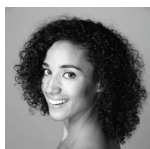
JOLINA JAVIER is originally from San Jose, California where she studied with the San Francisco Ballet. She furthered her training at SUNY Purchase College where she graduated Cum laude with a BFA in Dance and was also the recipient of

the Ballet Achievement Award. Jolina recently debuted on Broadway in *The Phantom of the Opera*. She has also been seen in New York at the Metropolitan Opera (*Nixon in China* choreographed by Mark Morris, televised by PBS), in the Radio City Christmas Spectacular, at Avery Fisher Hall in Peggy Hickey's *Cinderella* and the *Prince Who Slayed the Dragon*, and *love/Sick* a play written by John Cariani at Royal Family Productions. Regionally she has performed in *The King and I* (Dallas Summer Musicals & Lyric Opera Chicago), as *Nicoline/Little Dancer*, *A New Musical*, directed by Susan Stroman (Kennedy Center), as *Frenchy/Cabaret* (Cincinnati Playhouse, Repertory Theater of St. Louis), as *Connie/A Chorus Line* (Theater Under the Stars), and in *Carousel* (Virginia Opera), and *Aida* (Kansas City Starlight Theatre). She has also worked with Ballet Noir, The Chase Brock Experience, The Chamber Dance Project, Alpha Omega Theatrical Dance, and Lane & Co. Her Film/TV credits are Opening Film (*Ballerina*) on Beyoncé's *Mrs. Carter Tour*, *The Invisible Worm* (*Ballerina*) and Katherine Helen Fischer's dance film: *Infinite and Finite Games*.



DAPHNE LEE (Rahway, NJ) began her dance training at the Rahway Dance Theatre under the direction of Ms. Jay Skeete-Lee. She graduated with Honors from the Ailey/Fordham B.F.A. program in dance and is a recipient of the Denise Jefferson

Scholarship award. Ms. Lee received scholarships to Jacobs Pillow, School of American Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem and is a regional gold medal recipient in dance for the NAACP ACT-SO competition. Ms. Lee was also featured in the opening video for the *Mrs. Carter World Tour* for Beyoncé and was featured in a short film, "Life of An Actress" by director Paul Chau. Daphne performed works by Robert Battle, Benoit Swan-Pouffer, Amy Hall-Gardner and Alonzo King among others and was assistant choreographer to the musical "The Color Purple". She has danced at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland and was a cast member in the sixth season of *Dance212's* online reality series. She has even graced the pages of *Dance Magazine* and was featured cover for the April Edition of *Dance Mogul Magazine*. The NAACP National Act-so competition invited her to be a judge in 2015. She was a member of Ailey II, Oakland Ballet Company, Zest Collective and dance artist for UK artist Sydney Jo Jackson. She currently dances for Collage Dance Collective in Memphis, TN. **Ms. Lee appears with The BIP courtesy of Collage Dance Collective.**



Born in New York, New York, **KIMBERLY MARIE OLIVIER** (formerly Ms. Braylock) has been a Corps de Ballet member with San Francisco Ballet since 2010 after being named an apprentice in 2009. Olivier has trained at Studio Maestro, Ballet

Hispanico, San Francisco Ballet School and Trainee program, and with Charla Genn who continues to be her coach. Her soloist roles at San Francisco Ballet include Tomasson's *Nutcracker* (French, Spanish, Arabian), *Romeo & Juliet* (Harlots), and *Swan Lake* (Swan Maiden, Spanish Princess), Ashton's *Symphonic Variations*, Wheeldon's *Cinderella* (Spanish Princess), Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments* (2nd Theme), and Caniparoli's *Ibsen's House* (Ellida Wangel) and Lambarena (principal). Olivier performed Act II pas de deux from *Giselle* (Petipa) with partner Anthony Vincent Spaulding, an African-American soloist with San Francisco Ballet, at Bozeman, Montana's *Youth in Action Gala*, "Les Danses de l'Amour," (2012). Olivier's performance captured on film/video includes John Neumeier's *Little Mermaid* (2011), a Melanie Shang production *Pas de Deux* (2014), a VISA checkout commercial (2014), Calvin Walker's *Free Time* (2015) and *A Stroll in Paris* (which won *Dance Magazine's* Video of the Month in 2014), and Tomasson's *Romeo & Juliet* as part of the inaugural season of Lincoln Center at the Movies: *Great American Dance* (2015). Olivier model experience includes *Discount Dance Supply* (Holiday Cover 2012), an original for Ballet Zaida and the *Dancewear Project*. Olivier, with some experience, is an aspiring actress and choreographer. She joined *Black Iris Project* in 2016. **Ms. Olivier appears with The BIP courtesy of San Francisco Ballet.**



LAWRENCE RINES joined Boston Ballet II in 2009 and was promoted to Boston Ballet in 2011. Rines trained at The School of American Ballet and The Rock School for Dance Education.

Rines has participated in summer intensives at Ellison Ballet, The Kirov Academy of Ballet, Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet, and The Royal Ballet School. **Mr. Rines appears with The BIP courtesy of Boston Ballet.**



GABRIELLE SALVATTO, a Bronx native, is currently a Corps Artist with Ballet West. Previously she danced with the newly formed Dance Theatre of Harlem performing principal roles. She received her training on scholarship at the School of American

Ballet and the Dance Theatre of Harlem. Gabrielle is a graduate of LaGuardia High School of the Performing Arts and received her BFA from the Juilliard School. She is a featured dancer on the Starz mini-series *Flesh and Bone*. She has done freelance print and film work for NYCDance Project, *Flatt Magazine*, *The Victoria Secret Fashion Show*, *Google Fiber*, *Calvin Klein* and *Just Kids* from the Bronx. **Ms. Salvatto appears with The BIP courtesy of Ballet West.**



Arizona native, **CHRISTINA SPIGNER**, is in her fourth season with the Miami City Ballet (MCB). After training with Ballet Arizona, Master Ballet Academy, and Pacific Northwest Ballet's summer intensive, Christina attended the

Miami City Ballet School on full scholarship at the age of 16. Christina's diverse repertory with MCB includes *Don Quixote*, Balanchine's *Swan Lake*, *Symphony in 3 Movements*, *Ballet Imperial*, *Concerto Barocco*, *Jerome Robbins' West Side Story Suite*, *Ratamansky's Symphonic Dances*, and *Liam Scarlet's Euphotic*. Christina was recently a featured artist with Peter London Global Dance Company in an original contemporary pas de deux. A previous nominee for the Princess Grace Award, and winner of New York City Dance Alliance and other competitions, Christina has been featured in numerous publications, including: *Dance Magazine*; *Dance Spirit*; *Dance Teacher*; and *The Miami Herald*. **Ms. Spigner appears with The BIP courtesy of Miami City Ballet.**



GEORGE SANDERS appears with The BIP courtesy of Ballet Memphis.



KARA WALSH began her dance training at The School of Performing Arts in New Milford, Connecticut, under the direction of Arlene Begleman and Robert Maiorano. She attended the Jillana School summer program in Taos, New

Mexico and shortly afterwards moved to New York City to attend the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Independent Study Program. Kara has studied with teachers Graciela Kozak, Elizabeth Parkinson, Maria Calegari, and Robert Maiorano. Professionally Kara was a member of Spectrum Dance Theater in Seattle, Washington. She also performed in the 5th Avenue Theatre's production of *Oklahoma* in Seattle, where she played the part of "Dream Laurey" in the dream ballet section with choreography by Donald Byrd. Recently she has worked with choreographers Francesca Harper, Mary Ann Lamb, Lisa Gajda and Abdur-Rahim Jackson on several projects She danced for Benoit-Swan Pouffer in a Tracey Rease Fashion Show for New York City Fashion Week, and danced in a Music video for Icelantic pop star Asgeir, choreographed by Celia Rowson Hall with dancers from New York City Ballet.

NELSON MANDELA



Nelson Mandela

ROLIHLAHLA MANDELA was born into the Madiba clan in Mvezo, Transkei, on 18 July 1918. His mother was Nonqaphi Nosekeni and his father, Nkosi Mphakanyiswa Gadla Mandela, was the main advisor to the Acting King of the Thembu people, Jongintaba Dalindyebo. He received the name "Nelson" on his first day in primary school from his teacher Miss Mdingane. When he was 12 his father died and he was raised by the Regent at the Great Place in Mqhekezweni. He was sent to the best schools available and began studying a BA at Fort Hare University. When he was expelled for joining a student protest, the Regent told him to return or get married. So he ran away to Johannesburg with his cousin Justice. His first job in 1941 was as a security guard on a gold mine and then as a legal clerk in the law firm Witkin, Edelman and Sidelsky. At the same time he completed his BA through Unisa. In 1943 he enrolled for an LLB at Wits University. He was a poor student and became more involved in politics from 1944 after he helped to start the ANC

Youth League. He married in the same year and needed money to support his family.

By mid-1952 when the university asked him to pay the 27 pounds he owed or leave, he already had three children. He only started studying again in 1962 in prison. He finally graduated with an LLB through Unisa 27 years later.

Later in 1952 he became the National Volunteer-in-Chief of the Defiance Campaign against apartheid laws. He and 19 others were later charged and sentenced to nine months, suspended for two years. In August he and Oliver Tambo started South Africa's first black law firm, Mandela & Tambo.

In those days one could practise as an attorney with a two-year diploma. Later that year he was banned for the first time—he had to ask the government for permission whenever he needed to leave Johannesburg. After the adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1955, 156 people were arrested and charged with treason. The trial lasted four-and-a-half years until 29

March 1961 by which time all were acquitted. The ANC and PAC were banned after the 21 March 1961 killing by police of 69 unarmed protesters in Sharpeville.

Mandela called on the government not to turn South Africa into a republic on 31 May 1961 but to discuss a non-racial constitution. He was ignored so he called for a strike on 29, 30 and 31 March.

In June 1961 he was asked to lead the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto weSizwe and it launched on 16 December that year. On 11 January 1962, Mandela secretly left South Africa to undergo military training and to get support from African countries for the armed struggle. He was arrested on 5 August and charged with leaving the country illegally and encouraging the strike. He was convicted and sentenced on 7 November 1962 to five years in prison.

On 11 July 1963, a secret hideout he once used was raided by police. On 9 October 1963 he joined 10 others on trial for sabotage in the Rivonia Trial. On 12 June 1964 he

and seven others were sentenced to life imprisonment. While he was in prison his mother and his eldest son died. He was not allowed to attend their funerals.

He spent 18 years on Robben Island, and while at Pollsmoor Prison in Cape Town in 1985 he had to go to hospital. When Justice Minister Kobie Coetsee visited him, he had an idea: to see if the government wanted to talk about one day meeting with the ANC.

In 1988 he was taken to hospital for tuberculosis. Three months later he was moved to Victor Verster Prison where he spent his last 14 months in prison. He was released on Sunday 11 February 1990, nine days after the unbanning of the ANC and the PAC.

Other political prisoners were freed and exiles returned. The ANC began talking to the government about South Africa's future. For this work he and President FW de Klerk won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993, and on 27 April 1994, Mandela voted in South Africa's first democratic elections.

On 10 May 1994, he was inaugurated as South Africa's first democratically elected President and stepped down after one term. In his retirement he worked on building schools and clinics, highlighting HIV, children and leadership. He died at his home in Johannesburg on 5 December 2013.

**NELSON MANDELA
FOUNDATION**
nelsonmandela.org

BEATRICE REYNOLDS COX



Beatrice Reynolds Cox

BEATRICE REYNOLDS COX, was born Beatrix Hacker in Munich, West Germany in November 1953. One of 5,000 post WWII babies called Mischlingskinder (mixed-race children) by Europeans and "Brown Babies" by Americans, she was among the few that knew both parents. Her African American father, Army Master Sergeant Eugene Reynolds moved her German

mother Elizabeth Hacker to his hometown of Flint, MI following their October 1955 marriage in Toledo, OH. Now ensconced in the US home of her American father, the future seemed bright for Beatrice and her German mother. However fate soon intervened and presented Beatrice with a series of challenges that resulted in a lifelong series of daunting highs and lows.

Tragically, only two weeks after the wedding, her father died in a Wyoming airplane crash while returning to his duty station in Hawaii. Her German speaking mother was left to live in an all black neighborhood with in-laws she scarcely knew and in a country of whose customs and culture she knew nothing. Her mother was also pregnant with Beatrice's sister at the time of the crash. Beatrice attended the all black Clark Elementary School before being confronted with the challenge of integrating the all white Pierce Elementary School in 1963. After graduating from Central High School in 1971, Beatrice took advantage of the country's new Affirmative Action laws and graduated with a degree in fashion merchandising and retailing from Western Michigan University in 1975.

She moved to San Francisco in 1976 to pursue a career in retail management. Then in 1977 she launched a lucrative long term modeling career working for well known agencies such as Wilhelmina (New York & Los Angeles), Look (San Francisco), Talent and KD Modele (Germany). Some of her credits include Saks 5th Avenue, Esprit, Jessica McClintock/Gunne Sak, Ultra Sheen and Ebony & Essence Magazines.

In 1978 she married her dentist husband whose assignment to the U S Army Dental Corps took her back to her birth country. They resided in Stuttgart, Germany where they pursued their promising careers and welcomed the arrival of daughter Lauren. Upon their return to northern California, Beatrice multitasked as Operating Manager of her husband's practice, earned a Bachelor's Degree in Anthropology while modeling worldwide,

parenting Lauren and her newly arrived brother Phillip while introducing both children to the modeling profession.

Beatrice earned her Master's Degree in Cultural Resource Management from Sonoma State University and is now a Registered Professional Archaeologist. Her thesis; Negotiating the System in Jim Crow America, the Archaeology of the Allensworth Hotel, could well serve as her personal anthem. Triumphant over adversity has become her hallmark as she continues to share her life lessons. She has focused on the public interpretation of archaeological sites, led the creation of interpretive materials of the Afro-Mestizo Juana Briones site in San Francisco's Presidio and volunteered as a resource specialist with various schools and philanthropic organizations.

A former member of The Links, Inc. Ms. Cox is a Project Manager for an environmental consulting firm in Northern California where she resides pursuing her interests in gardening, history, travel and supporting music and dance arts.

BROWN BABY IS INSPIRED BY THE LIFE OF MODEL BEATRICE REYNOLDS COX AND HER LOVING FAMILY.

BLACK IRIS

A POEM BY RYAN SINCLAIRE DAVIS

Chaos surrounds her
The pretty darky
In a wedge of vicious swans

Poor Child Woman She
Dancing a beautiful pain

Choreographed steps in graceful lines
Weaving between life
Fantasy
And real lies

Spinning on Blackness

Movement that pushes and pulls
Twist the energy
In and out of shape
Her dance
Her form
Her grace
Turns to whispers
And harsh glares

Yet...

Chosen was she
Dancing center
Solo Lonely Independent
His vision and her grace
A performance
Debut Ballet Spectacle
Certainly a show
The sight to see

Floods coming in
Spots of light
For actions
To the affirmative
Corrected acceptances
Retributive postulates
Her dance sings that story
Of coloring spaces
Where darky wades dangerous water
To spin and leap as graceful
As she

Making pretty points
Where none can be made

Ha! Preposterous thoughts
Black woman in control of her space
They mad

Thumbing backs and drops to the floor

He tries to loosely control
Shine lights on
Her beauty
His vision
Of breaking free
On and Off
Left and right
...The stage

As mystery and doubt crowd the scene
She lets down her hair

Long
Dark
And kinky hair

Skin of chocolates and islands
Centerstage
Dance his vision
Paintings to life
Life of paintings
She dances in the light

Beautiful scenes
And flights of life

—RYAN SINCLAIRE DAVIS

OUR MISSION

THE BLACK IRIS PROJECT'S mission is threefold: create original ballets and arts education curriculums that directly address and celebrate diversity; provide a performance platform for Black artists to collaborate and share their personal stories with their respective communities; and provide ballet training to the Black community as a means of developing structure, focus and discipline through teamwork.

OUR VISION

By harnessing the Black community's inherent creative spirit, **THE BLACK IRIS PROJECT** will encourage and inspire youth of color to pursue art, movement and music as an expressive outlet and means for collective healing, as well as educating audiences about how Black history relates to the modern black journey.

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THE BLACK IRIS PROJECT