

# THE BLACK IRIS PROJECT

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

VOL. 8 ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 8, 2023

BALBOA THEATRE

## ABOUT

Founded by choreographer Jeremy McQueen in 2016, The Black Iris Project (BIP) is a ballet collaborative and education vehicle which creates new, relevant classical and contemporary ballet works that celebrate diversity and Black history. Based in New York City, The BIP hosts a team of predominantly artists of color, and delivers cross-disciplinary and original works. Championing individuality, the collaborative harnesses the Black inherent creative spirit. The ballets that McQueen choreographs for BIP are rooted in Black history and community, bringing inadequately-represented stories to public attention through an art form that has only recently begun to expand meaningfully outside its privileged past. His works push the boundaries of the ballet world as they highlight the personal narratives of significant Black public figures as well as extraordinary individuals amongst the general public who navigate a world that is prejudiced and dangerous for them. BIP has performed for audiences around the country and has been featured in numerous publications and recently received a New York Emmy® Award for their groundbreaking film, *WILD: These walls can talk*.



WHERE  
BLACK  
LIVES  
BECOME  
WORKS  
OF ART

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Jeremy McQueen, The Black Iris Project, and the Balboa Theatre acknowledge that we are settlers on Kumeyaay land. Majority of central and eastern San Diego is Kumeyaay, while northern San Diego is Luiseño. We honor that Kumeyaay and First Nations' ways of being are not eradicated as colonial histories of genocide, commonly known as U.S. History, (mis)lead us to believe. This misconception informs (our) continued false notions of native erasure to thinking this is our land. When it never was. This land, ocean, sky, and all living beings are inseparable from the Kumeyaay people. The Kumeyaay land was stolen and severed twice. Before the United States conquered this land, it was colonized by Spanish Conquistadors and became known as Mexico. The present day U.S./Mexico Border splits Kumeyaay land, forcing a political border and two (new) nations on their land. These histories are interwoven into every aspect of our city and the land we occupy. It established and normalized hate, hierarchy, pain, inequity, division, separation, migration and displacement through systems of enslavement, imprisonment, and genocide. We are all energetically impacted by these histories. Profound restorative healing is needed. The next time we order a "California Burrito" we might take a moment to acknowledge how we continue to benefit from histories of Spanish & U.S. colonization.

Xtina Geri Jogoleff, Author & Healing Coach

[www.XtinaGeri.net](http://www.XtinaGeri.net)

IG: @Xtina.Geri



[blackirisproject.org](http://blackirisproject.org)



[/blackirisproject](https://www.facebook.com/blackirisproject)



[@blackirisproject](https://www.instagram.com/blackirisproject)

# OUR COMMUNITY

## SPONSORS



## PARTNERS



in addition to the Jackie Robinson Family YMCA, Hammond's Gourmet Ice Cream, Coop's West Texas Barbeque & WorldBeat Cultural Center

## CELEBRATE SAN DIEGO BLACK HISTORY & HERITAGE

Now at the San Diego History Center,  
Balboa Park.

NOMINATE A LOCAL HERO  
BLACK SAN DIEGO TIMELINE



SAN DIEGO  
HISTORY  
CENTER

SCAN ME!



# DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Welcome! I am so grateful that you have joined us! If you were expecting to see tutus and tiaras on our stage tonight — I'm sorry to disappoint you. Though we do have ballets in our repertoire that are performed en pointe, we have not brought any of those with us to San Diego. But we have continued to bring works that amplify voices and experiences not commonly shared, especially not through the medium of ballet. Some might even protest that our works are not ballet because of how we challenge convention and the ways in which we deconstruct ballet technique and terminology. Ballet should be more colorful than the euro-centric fairytales and fables we are accustomed to seeing performed. Our ballets are distinctly unique from other companies you may have experienced in the past. We take great pride in authentically putting Black lives first and pushing the medium of ballet even further into the 21st century. By expanding the genre through incorporating diverse dance styles and music, we produce cutting-edge works of art that reflect the world we live in. You will feel a rollercoaster of emotions during tonight's performances, and I hope the energy will propel you to be a conduit for growth in our society. Continue the conversation about our works and the topics our ballets address with your family and friends.

**The growth of our organization will not continue without financial support from viewers like you. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation, of any amount, to The Black Iris Project by visiting [blackirisproject.org/support](https://blackirisproject.org/support). Thank you in advance for your support and encouragement.**

Enjoy the show!  
Jeremy McQueen

Cover image by Matthew Murphy, in collaboration with Jeremy McQueen, Mondo Morales & Ruben Bermudez. Logo design by Daniel Velasco.



The flowers featured on the orchestra pit are placed in loving memory of my father, **James McQueen**, who would have celebrated his 70th birthday today. The floral arrangement in the lobby are in honor of my Black Iris'; **Mary McQueen**, **Ann Tinsley**, and **Beverly Anderson**, three Black women who exemplify the perseverance, determination, confidence, and faith that is distinctively Black and woman. Floral Designs by Arturo H. Ramirez [ahrflorals.com](https://ahrflorals.com)



The use of recording devices, of any kind, is strictly prohibited. We encourage you to document and share your experience at the Balboa Theatre today, but only before the performance, during intermission or after its conclusion. Feel free to tag @blackirisproject in your Instagram posts!



**Content Advisory: This performance contains strobe lights, haze, profanity and scenes depicting physical and sexual violence.**



We kindly ask that you silence or turn off all cell phones and electronic devices. Please refrain from texting or using your phone during the performance as it is distracting to the performers and fellow audience members.

## JEREMY MCQUEEN

Founding Artistic Director & Choreographer, The Black Iris Project

Jeremy McQueen is an award-winning choreographer, dedicated to story-telling rooted in experience and social engagement. His work aims to create spaces of comfort, solace, and connection through reflection — a sharing of observations of what is going on around him. Born and raised in San Diego, California, McQueen is a graduate of The Ailey School/ Fordham University, B.F.A. in dance program and has also trained in the schools of American Ballet Theatre, San Francisco Ballet, and Alonzo King's LINES Ballet. A performer turned choreographer, McQueen made his professional debut at the age of 15 performing in regional theater productions in his hometown, and later went on to perform in the Broadway national tours of *Wicked* and *The Color Purple*, in addition to the *Radio City Christmas Spectacular*, and numerous Metropolitan Opera productions. As a decorated director & choreographer, McQueen is a New York Emmy® Award-winning artist, 2020 recipient of the Soros Justice Fellowship from Open Society Foundations, 2019 recipient of the Bronx Council on the Arts' BRIO (Bronx Recognizes It's Own) Award for Excellence in Choreography, 2013 recipient of the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago's Choreographers of Color Award [Winning Works], and a two-time finalist of the Capezio Award for Choreographic Excellence.



PRE-PERFORMANCE MUSIC PROVIDED BY MIKI VALE

# WILD

DIRECTED & CHOREOGRAPHED BY **JEREMY MCQUEEN**  
ADDITIONAL CHOREOGRAPHY CREATED IN COLLABORATION  
WITH THE PERFORMING ARTISTS  
ASSOCIATE CHOREOGRAPHED BY **DERICK MCKOY, JR.**  
COSTUME DESIGN BY **JEREMY MCQUEEN**  
SCENIC DESIGN BY **JEREMY MCQUEEN**  
LIGHTING DESIGN BY **STEVIE O'BRIAN AGNEW**  
PROJECTION DESIGN BY **BRITTANY BLAND**  
PROJECTION EDITING BY **CARLOS JOHNS-DAVILA**  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY **ARIA FELICIANO**  
SOUND DESIGN BY **MAURICIO ESCAMILLA**  
SCREEN PRINTING BY **ERIC MICHAEL**

**WILLIAM ROBERSON**

**ALEXANDER GUZMAN FANA TEFAGIORGIS**

ALSO FEATURING  
**CLAUDE ALEXANDER III, JOSHUA P. BELL, MICHAEL BISHOP,  
KHALID DUNTON, DAVID ADRIAN FREELAND, JR., AARON FRISBY,  
ISAIAH K. HARVEY, PRINCE JON, MICHAEL MONTGOMERY,  
KHAYR MUHAMMAD, BRANDON RAGLAND, TAMIR RIOS,  
KEVIN R. TATE & CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR.**

"Juvie Talk" Interviews & Photographs by Richard Ross  
"Misunderstood" Journal entry written by D., through a program with  
The New York City Administration for Children's Services,  
Division of Youth & Family Justice  
Excerpt from "The Bluest Eye" by Toni Morrison  
Excerpt from "Bird Uncaged" by Marlon Peterson

MUSIC

## "CROWN ROYAL"

PERFORMED BY **PHIL. & DEMEANOR**  
WRITTEN BY PHILLIP JOHNSON RICHARDSON, MALCOLM FLEX & JUSTIN  
HARRINGTON PRODUCED BY MALCOLM FLEX

## "SHELTER"

WRITTEN & PERFORMED BY **morgxn**  
SOUND DESIGN BY MAURICIO ESCAMILLA  
PRODUCED BY SOLOMON DORSEY

## "WAVES"

WRITTEN, PERFORMED & PRODUCED BY **morgxn**

## "RUNNING TO RED"

WRITTEN & PERFORMED BY **morgxn**  
PRODUCED BY AARON C. HARMON

## "MATTER"

WRITTEN & PERFORMED BY **BRITTANY CAMPBELL**  
PRODUCED BY SAM HOFFMAN AND BRITTANY CAMPBELL

## "IDENTITY"

COMPOSED & PERFORMED BY **CHARI GLOGOVAC-SMITH**  
EMERY BARTER - GUITAR & BASS, TOMIKA REID - CELLO, NAYOUNG JUDY JUNG  
- PIANO, MATTHEW KA GIT WONG - SAXOPHONE, TONY GENNARO - DRUMS,  
PATRICK BARTER - AUXILIARY PERCUSSION, PRODUCED BY CHARI GLOGOVAC-SMITH  
AND EMERY BARTER

## "MORNING MOOD"

COMPOSED BY **EDVARD GRIEG**  
PERFORMED BY THE CZECH NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
"PIANO TRIO NO. 2 IN C MINOR OP. 66. MWV Q 33: II ANDANTE ESPRESSIVO"  
BY **FELIX MENDELSSOHN**, PERFORMED BY TRIO OPUS 8  
COURTESY OF NAXOS OF AMERICA, INC.

— INTERMISSION —

# LIFT EVERY VOICE & SING

SOLOIST **BRITTANY TAYLOR**  
ACCOMPANIST **DJ WINSTON**

"LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING"  
LYRICS BY **JAMES WELDON JOHNSON**  
MUSIC BY **J. ROSAMOND JOHNSON**  
ARRANGED BY **DJ WINSTON**

Often referred to as "The Black National Anthem," Lift Every Voice and Sing was a hymn written as a poem by NAACP leader James Weldon Johnson in 1900. His brother, John Rosamond Johnson (1873-1954), composed the music for the lyrics. At the turn of the 20th century, Johnson's lyrics eloquently captured the solemn yet hopeful appeal for the liberty of Black Americans. Set against the religious invocation of God and the promise of freedom, the song was later adopted by NAACP and prominently used as a rallying cry during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

Courtesy of The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

— PAUSE —

# A MOTHER'S RITE

DIRECTED & CHOREOGRAPHED BY **JEREMY MCQUEEN**  
LIBRETTO BY **ANGELICA CHERI**  
LIGHTING DESIGN BY **STEVIE O'BRIAN AGNEW**  
PORTRAITS BY **SOPHIA DAWSON**  
SCENIC DESIGN BY **JEREMY MCQUEEN**  
PROJECTION DESIGN BY **COLTON WILLIAMS**  
ADDITIONAL PROJECTION DESIGN BY **IEASHA RAMSAY**  
CHARACTER SPECIALIST: **STEPHANIE BERRY**  
NEWS REPORTER: **A.J. ROSS**  
'LETTER OF LOVE' VOICEOVER BY **KHYRI BREWER**

**FANA TEFAGIORGIS**

**WILLIAM ROBERSON**

MUSIC

## "THE RITE OF SPRING"

COMPOSED & ARRANGED BY **IGOR STRAVINSKY**  
PERFORMED BY **ANDERSON & ROE PIANO DUO**

A MOTHER'S RITE premiered in New York, New York on August 16, 2018 (presented by City Parks Foundation's Summerstage) and was co-commissioned through The Bronx Museum of the Arts' dance-led interdisciplinary collaborative commissioning program (BxMA Co-Lab) and 651 ARTS, with additional support provided by Vineyard Arts Project.

— POST-PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION —

Moderated by **Lea Nepomuceno**

Major support for WILD has been provided by Open Society Foundations and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. With additional support from; New Music USA, Dance NYC's Coronavirus Dance Relief Fund & The Dance Advancement Fund, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and the Bronx Council on the Arts, the Decentralization Program, a regrant program of the New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and administered by the Bronx Council on the Arts, CUNY Dance Initiative (CDI) and the Gerald W. Lynch Theater at John Jay College, Vineyard Arts Project and by the What is Vital project.

# PERFORMERS



## WILLIAM ROBERSON

WILD  
A MOTHER'S RITE

William Roberson, a native of Tennessee, graduated with a B.F.A in Dance from Howard

University in 2013. After graduating, he's been fortunate to work with Ronald K Brown, Hope Boykin, Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, Camille A Brown, and productions like "Porgy and Bess" at the Metropolitan opera. He's also featured in Billy Porter's "Children" Music video. William is thankful to be working with Jeremy and grateful to be sharing the stage again with Fana!

INSTAGRAM: @THEWCRC



## FANA TESFAGIORGIS

WILD  
A MOTHER'S RITE

Fana Tesfagiorgis is an Artist, Actor and Dancer from Madison, WI. She is graduate of Interlochen

Arts Academy, and the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program with a degree in Dance, and a minor in Journalism. Professionally, Fana has danced professionally with The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Evidence Dance Company, Earl Mosley's Diversity of Dance, and The Black Iris Project, among other companies. Since shifting into acting, Fana has studied at The Freeman Studio, The Kimball Studio, and Lesly Kahn Acting Studio. Recently, she appeared in the film, In the Heights, the 1st National Tour of My Fair Lady, the opening of "The 73rd Annual Tony Awards" and the short films, Booked, Date Nights, and Love on Speed.

FANAMINEA.COM



## ALEXANDER GUZMAN

Guard  
WILD

Recent credits: "I Hate Hamlet" (Scripps Ranch Theatre), "Sapience" (Moxie Theatre).

Favorite acting credits: "Native Gardens" (Old Globe Theatre), "Bachelorette" (Backyard Renaissance Theatre), "Homos, or everyone in America" (Diversionsary Theatre), "Around the World in 80 Days," "Awake and Sing" (New Village Arts), "The Normal Heart," "Lydia," (ion Theatre), "Move Over, Mr's Markham" (Scripps Ranch Theatre), "Seminar," "The Taming of the Shrew" (InnerMission Productions), "The Lion in Winter" (Moonlight Stage Productions), "ENRON" (Moxie Theatre).

INSTAGRAM: @ALEXGUZMAN\_



## MIKI VALE

DJ & Host  
THE BLACK IRIS PROJECT

Miki Vale is an international Hip Hop performing artist and cultural ambassador, Teaching Artist,

Old Globe-commissioned playwright and founder of SoulKiss Theater, an arts education organization for queer Black womxn. Her work serves to amplify community consciousness around relationships, wellness, and justice. Miki has performed and participated in panels at landmark venues and festivals in the US and internationally, from Hollywood and D.C. to Mumbai and Cairo. For her contributions to Hip Hop culture, Miki has earned a San Diego Hip Hop Honors Award, a Female Perspective Award, and the 2021 San Diego Music Award for Song of the Year for "Bad Wolves", a song condemning anti-Black racism. For her work within the LGBTQ community, Miki was awarded the 2017 Bayard Rustin Civil Rights Honor.

MIKIVALETHEMC.COM



## BRITTANY TAYLOR

Soloist  
LIFT EVERY VOICE...

Brittany Taylor is a San Diego native, singer - songwriter & performer. She has been singing since she was a

kid. She credits her sound to Gospel, R&B, Neo-Soul, Jazz & Funk influences. Brittany studied film and musical theatre at San Diego State University, and graduated with her Bachelors' of Science in 2012. Since then, she has been performing around San Diego at notable events and open mics, such as Soul Sunday, The North Park Music Festival, The Old Globe Juneteenth Celebration, and the San Diego Rise ILLA Awards. Brittany enjoys meeting so many other amazing creatives, here in her hometown, and has built a support system of musicians and singers that push her. Her debut single "Unfair" was released February 12,2022 and is available on all streaming platforms.

INSTAGRAM: @SINGITBRITT



# COLLABORATORS

FROM NOTHING, OUR DREAMS - WE GATHER TO SHIFT FOCUS WE DANCE TO CREATE ANEW NEW FORMS, NEW FACES

CREATIVE TRADITION INSPIRING

TEACHING BLACK WEAVING BLACK CREATIVE EXPRESSION WE BUILD ON DREAMS WE RE/THINKING FORWARD

DIRECTION TOWARD AUTHENTIC DEPICTION FROM PAST WE ARE BIRTHED INTO PRESENT WE MOVE THIS

OUR WORK, OUR ART. BY RYAN SINCLAIRE DAVIS



**STEVIE O'BRIAN AGNEW**  
Lighting Designer  
WILD & A MOTHER'S RITE  
AGNEWLIGHTINGDESIGN.COM



**BRITTANY BLAND**  
Projection Designer  
WILD  
BCBMEDIADESIGN.COM



**BRITTANY CAMPBELL**  
Singer/Songwriter  
WILD  
BRITTANYCAMPBELL.COM



**ANGELICA CHÉRI**  
Librettist  
A MOTHER'S RITE  
ANGELICACHERI.COM



**SOPHIA DAWSON**  
Visual Artist  
A MOTHER'S RITE  
SOPHIA-DAWSON.COM



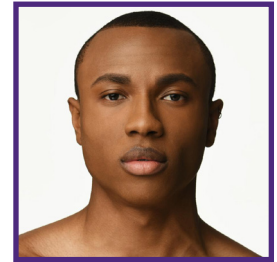
**MAURICIO ESCAMILLA**  
Composer & Sound Designer  
WILD  
MESCAMILLA.COM



**ARIA FELICIANO**  
Illustrator  
WILD  
ARIAFELICIANO.WIXSITE.COM/  
AFELICIANOART



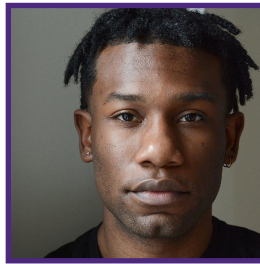
**CHARI GLOGOVAC-SMITH**  
Composer  
WILD  
CHARIGLOGOVACSMITH.COM



**DERICK MCKOY, JR.**  
Associate Choreographer  
WILD  
MCKOYDANCEPROJECT.ORG



**MORGXN**  
Singer/Songwriter  
WILD  
MORGXN.XYZ



**PHIL.**  
Singer/Songwriter  
WILD  
PHILSGOODMUSIC.COM



**RICHARD ROSS**  
Photographer  
WILD  
JUVENILE-IN-JUSTICE.COM

BODIES NOT NEW, BUT UNIQUE

COLLABORATION WE OFFER

# CALLOUS. CRUEL. CRIMINAL.

AN ESSAY BY LEA NEPOMUCENO



Photo by Richard Ross

*Callous. Cruel. Criminal.*

You've likely encountered the three C's before. Whether its passersby "head-to-toe glances" of homelessness on their way to work or unforgiving Reddit threads "canceling" celebrities, the criminalization of everyday people is inextricably linked to the cultural implications of America's prison industrial complex. Far too often, surveillance, policing, and imprisonment are seen as solutions to economic, social, and political problems. And San Diego is no exception.

While incarceration impacts all of San Diego County, some communities are more affected than others. Imprisonment has the greatest impact on communities of color. In Barrio Logan, City Heights, and Southeast San Diego, incarceration rates are roughly double the state average. Our failure to cultivate meaningful conversations and action plans with the communities impacted most, is our failure to empower all San Diegans. We must be unafraid to ask the difficult questions: *What polices marginalize formerly*

*incarcerated people? To what extent does race, culture, and money play a role? How can we dismantle this systemically unjust pipeline?*

To this day, I don't know the full answer; but I know that conversation empowers social consciousness. When I was 13 years old, I spent my summer at the University of San Diego interviewing formerly incarcerated people. But that wasn't my original intention.

Before joining the Social Fabric Initiative — a program for youth to design and implement community change projects — I was completely ignorant about the struggles of formerly incarcerated people. This changed after a short, comprehensive conversation with a formerly incarcerated woman. By asking about her deep-rooted connection to Filipino culture and adventures exploring Downtown San Diego, I got to know her for who she was beyond what she did. While astonished by her story of unrelenting courage, I was taken aback by the fact that a system meant for rehabilitation took courage to overcome. United by shared concerns over the juvenile and criminal justice system, I and six other young people founded the community organization, Youth for Juvenile Justice Reform.

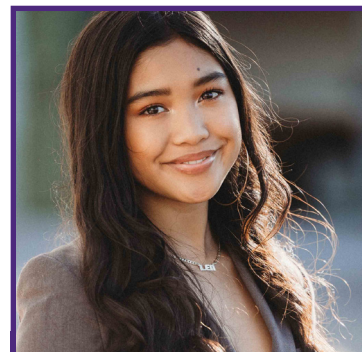
Undoubtedly, open conversation matters: the willingness of both parties to put aside titles, and instead see one another as human. A single conversation changed my world view, and ultimately the course of my life. Whether it's running a *Teen Vogue*-featured podcast interviewing gun violence prevention activists across the nation or serving on the San Diego Unified School District Board of

Education and chairing its Police Youth Advisory Committee, I initiate change one conversation at a time.

And you can, too.

The next time you head to work or school, kindly acknowledge the unsheltered individuals sharing the street with you. If you find yourself browsing the internet, don't add fuel to the already piping hot "cancel culture" train. Instead, share content that aligns with your values. Today, I'm 17 years old and hopeful.

Perhaps the next time you encounter the three C's — *Callous. Cruel. Criminal.* — you'll reconsider using them to describe another human being.



Growing up, **Lea Nepomuceno**

says her perspective on incarcerated people was skewed by the media. At 13, she co-founded Youth For Juvenile Justice Reform, an organization aimed at shattering stigma around formerly incarcerated youth. Today, Lea is 17 years old and was recently named one of *Teen Vogue's* 21 Under 21: The Revolutionary Youth You Need to Know. She resides in Mira Mesa.

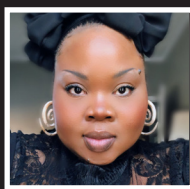
Pictured left: A 12-year-old juvenile in his windowless cell at Harrison County Juvenile Detention Center in Biloxi, Mississippi, operated by Mississippi Security Services, a private company.

For more information and to find out how you can get involved, visit [www.juvenile-in-justice.com](http://www.juvenile-in-justice.com).

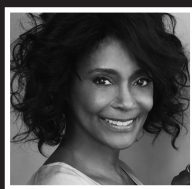
# THE BLACK PAGES



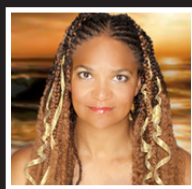
**Kenneth Anderson**  
Musician



**Jervae Anthony**  
Artist



**Margaret Avery**  
Actor



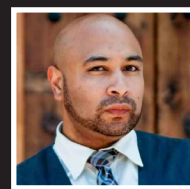
**Karen Elaine Bakunin**  
Musician



**Ernie Barnes**  
Painter



**Norman Baynard**  
Photographer



**Ryan Orion Beck**  
Dancer & Choreographer



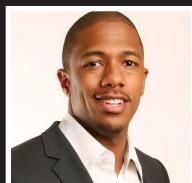
**Patrick Bradley**  
Musician



**Charl Brown**  
Actor



**Manuelita Brown**  
Sculptor



**Nick Cannon**  
Actor, Rapper & Television Host



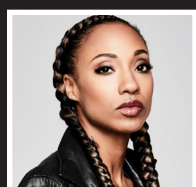
**RuPaul Charles**  
Entertainer & Producer



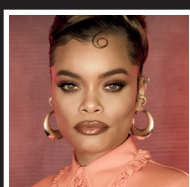
**C. Anthony Cole**  
Dancer



**Kaira Cooper**  
Singer & Actor



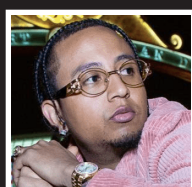
**Tiffany Daniels**  
Actor & Dancer



**Andra Day**  
Singer & Actor



**Ryoko Dowers**  
Dancer



**JoJoe Durruthy**  
FollowJoJoe  
Musician



**Albert Fennell**  
Painter



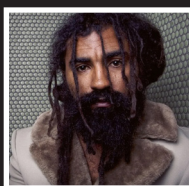
**Sandra Foster-King**  
Choreographer



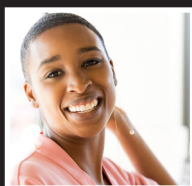
**Rhys Greene**  
Actor



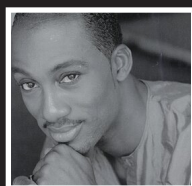
**Willie Green**  
Actor & Television Personality



**Gonjasufi**  
Musician



**Shacole Hamlett**  
Experimental Producer



**Xavier Hicks**  
Dancer



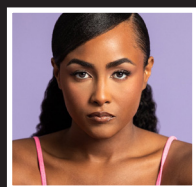
**Daniel Jackson**  
Musician



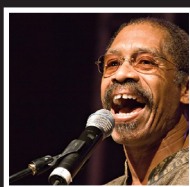
**Je'kob**  
Singer & Songwriter



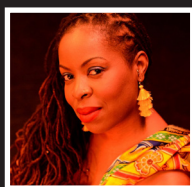
**Daniel Jones**  
Actor



**Kaleila Jordan**  
Dancer & Actor



**Lonnie Jordan**  
Singer & Songwriter



**Johnaye Kendrick**  
Singer



**Harold Land**  
Musician



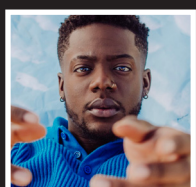
**Ananda Lewis**  
Television Personality & Host



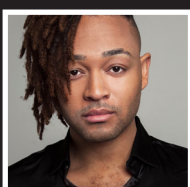
**Jimmy Liggins**  
Musician



**Daniel Marshall**  
Dancer & Choreographer



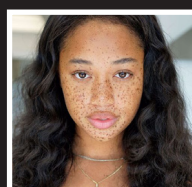
**Chauncey Matthews**  
Singer



**Jeremy McQueen**  
Dancer & Choreographer



**Brian Stokes Mitchell**  
Actor



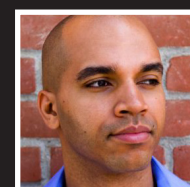
**Salem Mitchell**  
Model



**Vincent Hardy**  
Dancer & Choreographer



**DeMond B. Nason**  
Actor



**Kadir Nelson**  
Painter



# THE BLACK PAGES

Did you know that San Diego doesn't have a Hall of Fame that includes the significant contributions of visual and performing artists? You may know of Breitbard Hall of Fame in Petco Park that is dedicated to athletes or the San Diego Music Hall of Fame which only inducts a few artists each year — and to date, only four artists/groups honored are Black. How are future generations of San Diego-bred artists supposed to be inspired to see what is possible beyond this city if there is no archive to recognize an individual's previous contributions to the arts? San Diego has produced some incredible talents who have inspired me to become an artist; their impact should not go unnoticed. The Black Pages specifically honors Black artists and entertainers who are originally from or spent their formative years in San Diego, and whose voices have echoed far beyond "America's Finest City." The Black Pages is not an exclusive list, but a starting point- a small sampling of the Black excellence worldwide with deep roots in San Diego.

~Jeremy McQueen, Founding Artistic Director & Choreographer -- The Black Iris Project



**Lil Niqo**  
Musician



**Warren G. Nolan, Jr.**  
Actor



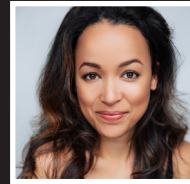
**Carleton Overstreet, Jr.**  
Musician



**Jason Paul**  
Singer



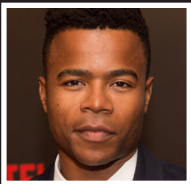
**Chondra Profit**  
Actor & Producer



**Olivia Puckett**  
Actor



**Monica Quinn (Quintanilla)**  
Actor



**Marque Richardson**  
Actor



**Charles Rucker**  
Photographer



**Giovonnie Samuels**  
Actor



**Deandre Simmons**  
Singer & Actor



**B.Slade**  
Singer & Songwriter



**Rob Stone**  
Rapper



**Kellie Sweet**  
Media Personality



**Keomi Tarver**  
Dancer & Choreographer



**Michael Velez**  
Dancer



**Paula West**  
Singer



**Dea Hurston**  
Playwright & Arts Activist



**Donald Robinson**  
Dance Educator & Choreographer



**Carl Weathers**  
Actor

HONORABLE MENTIONS



Not pictured: **Michael Jefferson** - Dancer  
**Mallori Johnson** - Actor

Pictured right: DaVon Doane, photo by Matthew Murphy

# BLACK ARTISTS MATTER

# JUSTICE FOR ERIC GARNER

# A MOTHER'S CRY

A LETTER FROM GWEN CARR – MOTHER OF ERIC GARNER



Pictured: Fana Tesfagiorgis, in *A Mother's Rite*, featuring portraits by visual artist Sophia Dawson of mothers who have lost children to police brutality or racial violence. *A Mother's Rite* is a fictional ballet inspired by the journeys of countless mothers. Photo by Amitava Sarkar.

Dear Attorney General Lynch:

You are my last hope; I pray you hear my cry.

My son Eric laid under my heartbeat for 9 months and I continued to nurture him until his last breath as an adult. For the past 2 years I have been searching for understanding as to why this tragedy found me and the answer has yet to become clear. Instead, I'm meeting Mother's whose tragedies are similar to my own. As the tears fall from my eyes, my body grows weak. But, I still find the strength to put my arms around these mothers. The look of despair in their eyes mirrors my own and their tears become my tears. Attorney General Lynch, they

look to me for hope, just as I am to you.

Visualize my cry for help after I read my son's autopsy report. It said that the cause of his death was a "homicide"—this means a **deliberate** and unlawful killing of a person by another." Imagine, my tears as I watched the video of my son's last moments breathing. Yes, the world heard my son say eleven times, "he can't breathe." But he also said, "this stops today."

### **Does it?**

Despite the recent political upset, I ask that your intervention as the Attorney General of the United States of America be the light of hope for our country by setting the precedent that these

injustices will not be tolerated and that those responsible must be held accountable. Please hear my cry, don't allow my son's words and our tears to be in vain.

I've been living in a nightmare and crying for over 2 years and I'm ready to awake to peace.

Respectfully,

Gwen Carr  
Mother of Eric Garner

Composed in November 2016

# 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

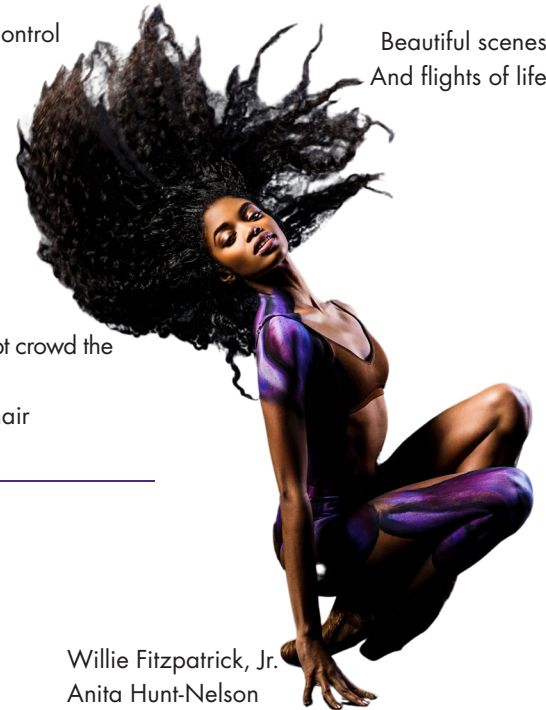
He tries to loosely control  
Shine lights on  
Her beauty  
His vision  
Of breaking free  
On and Off  
Left and right  
...The stage

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



## SPECIAL THANKS

Mary McQueen

Cliff Hunt

Lindsey Johnson

Alex Goleman [Foundation for Independent Artists](#)

Stevie O'Brian Agnew

Ann Tinsley

Carol Wallace, Abigail Buell, Cindy Bowers,  
Laura Briney, Pam Andrews, Katy Titus, Darla  
Bailey, Jonathan Geller, Zakiya Smith-Dore

[San Diego Theatres](#)

Lynn Shipley [Ballet Hispanico](#)

Karen McDonald [Debbie Allen Dance Academy](#)

Laura Zablit, Joyelle Cabato, Kim Heil &  
David Buess [The Old Globe](#)

Julie Coker & Kim Soto

Xtina Geri & Lina Kern

Daniel Wentworth, Judy Sharp & Maxine

Mahon [California Ballet](#)

Megan Thomas, Kamaal Martin, Ashley

Miller [Catalyst of San Diego & Imperial Counties](#)

Michael Rocha, Marcia Luttrell, Christine

Barbara [SD Union Tribune](#)

Kim Desmond

Miki Vale

Andrea Corral & Samantha Lilo [Sodexo Live!](#)

Stacey Srsic [San Diego Unified](#)

Andrea O'Hara & Alexandra Devers

Roland Lazarte [Aninag](#)

Tinicia Smith & Sheri Jones [Black San Diego](#)

Jamaela S. Johnson

Natasha Ridley

Carly Topazio [The Rosin Box Project](#)

Jeremiah Maloney [Mingei International Museum](#)

Carleton Overstreet, Jr.

Colton Williams

Chelsea Pyne [Program Co-Designer](#)

### SAN DIEGO SEED PLANTERS

Dea & Osborne Hurston

Dr. Charlie Johnson & Rebecca Gutierrez

Cindi Tinsley & Keith Hayward

John Stubbs & Denise Dabrowski

Judith Sharp

Bertie Springer

Eleanor Y. Charlton

### SEED PLANTERS

Charles and Deborah Adelman

Keith & Renata Ward

Willie Fitzpatrick, Jr.

Anita Hunt-Nelson

Gladys Carrion

Rebecca Coughenour

Christopher Davis

Richard Ross

Suzette Simon

Roma Kaundal

Taylor Gordon

Stephen Karakashian

### WILD RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Adam Culbreath & Christina Voight

Peter Sellars

Candice C. Jones

Kim Taylor-Thompson

Ana M. Bermúdez

Gladys Carrión

Hernán Carvente Martinez

Tim Roche

Courtney Ramirez

Xtina Geri

Porshe Taylor

Dylan Rodríguez

Marla Navarrete

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