

BRONX/DANCE MAGAZINE

Summer 2010

Abdel Salaam: The Nature Of His Dance

Issue 19



Letter from the Editor

Welcome to this issue of the Bronx Dance Magazine. I'm always surprised and delighted at how vibrant the Bronx Dance landscape is. One of the things I love most is digging into its rich past. This issue unearths yet another master who sprung from dance master Joan Miller's life at Lehman College. I'll never forget the description of Joan Miller driving a red truck (in the late 1960s) in search of male dancers. She found one by the name of Abdel Salaam who was fulfilling his Phys. Ed. requirement jogging around the reservoir. After finally giving in to his dance calling, (he'd said "no" to Ms. Miller three times), he became one of Lehman's first dance majors. After graduating he co-created Forces of Nature Dance Theatre which will soon be celebrating 30 years. I am so grateful that Mr. Salaam shares with us his Bronx beginnings.

I'm glad to say that we have revamped and streamlined our Bronx Dance directory. If you don't see a Bronx dance person or entity let us know and we will gladly include it in the next issue.


Thank you to Jane Gabriels (director of Pepatian) for introducing us to two wonderful writers who let us know about Pepatian's recent performance presented at Pregones theater. The action packed photos are by Marisol Diaz. Thank you to Charles Rice-González for turning a 29 page interview into an amazing chronicle of a dancer's life here in the Bronx.

The more I look back the more I understand what it means to be a dancer and dance maker in the Bronx. I can hear Dorothy now "Oh my, people come and go so quickly around here." But we all know there's no place like...

'Til the next issue!

Peace, Arthur

- Arthur Aviles, Editor-in-Chief



Credits:

Arthur Aviles
Editor-in-Chief, Director of the Bronx Dance Coalition
Cover Photo by Arthur Aviles

Charles Rice-Gonzalez
Editor Associate

Miguel Canessa
Online Editor, Magazine Designer

We appreciate feedback and/or additions to the magazine. If you would like to join the Volunteer staff; please contact us at 718-842-5223.
Visit on the web at www.BronxDanceCoalition.org

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Abdel Salam
The Nature of
His Dance

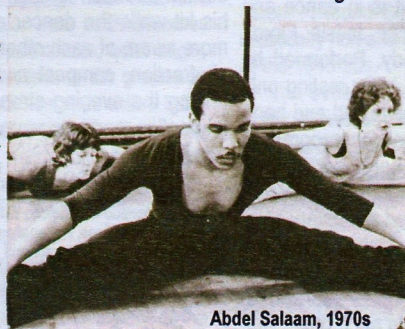
Interview by Arthur Aviles
Article by Arthur Aviles and
Charles Rice-González



Image from Forces of Nature Dance Theatre Spring 2010 Concert

Abdel Salaam is connected to one of the most fruitful branches of the multi-brid tree of Bronx Dance. The tree includes many luminaries that have been featured in the *Bronx Dance Magazine* including Chuck Davis, Joan Miller, Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, Eddie Torres, Merian Soto, Crazy Legs and others. The tree has given great comfort with its shade to a potent portion of the Bronx dance community. The branch from which Salaam springs also holds Mr. Davis and Ms. Miller and although that part of the tree has lost some leaves, Mr. Salaam generously shares his memories (an essential element in dance). Why the nature analogy? Well, why not when introducing you to Mr. Salaam, co-

founder (with Dyane Harvey) and artistic director of the company he founded in 1981 called Forces of Nature Dance Theatre. Here are some memories Mr. Salaam shared of how his dance life got started which essentially began in the Bronx in the late 1960s.



Abdel Salaam, 1970s

Abdel Salaam officially started studying at Lehman College in a B.F.A. program through SEEK (Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge, a higher education opportunity program found at each of the senior colleges of the City University) in 1968. His first teacher was the Jose Limon-based Joan Miller and he was one of Lehman Colleges first dance majors. "Joan met me running around the



Image from Forces of Nature Dance Theatre Spring 2010 Concert

track field. I was one of those quasi buffed athletic guys. She was looking for somebody to be in the dance club. This was in '69. At first, I said no, but she was persistent, following me around in her red truck, but she dogged me and after three times I finally said yes. I'd been at Lehman about a year."

In his first month, Joan Miller took the students to see 4 or 5 concerts including Dance Theater of Harlem, Rod Rogers Dance Company, Alvin Ailey Dance Company and New York City Ballet where he saw Eddie Villella dance. "I was impressed with his stature you know, a thick guy. I'm a thick guy. I could relate to that."

He has also studied with Ron Antonio, Louis Falco, Thelma Hill, James Truitt, took African dance with Chuck Davis and took class at Ailey with Miguel Godreau and John Parks. Salaam recalls, "Lehman had a pretty amazing faculty, I mean Lehman had a faculty at one point that was rivaling Juilliard's. It was just incredible and it was an amazing time period when Joan was just building a company. She even invited Alvin Ailey to mount his classic dance *Revelations* on her students." Abdel was one of them.

"Alvin came up and saw us doing *Revelations* and I did *Sinner Man* [a section of *Revelations*]."

When asked if it was in the Lovinger Theater he said "The Lovinger didn't exist at that time. It was in room 108. We had something called the little theater that was a part of the main student hall. It was a little tiny stage. It couldn't have been more than 25 feet by 20 feet something like that." They performed Ailey's classic in its entirety.

"Joan had gotten me into a couple of the Ailey company classes and they had put me into the company. Fiorella King was the ballet mistress at the time and she said to me, you don't have a lot of ballet right? But that's OK. You have a lot of modern dance. Even though you're a young dancer we can fix the ballet. Don't worry about that, she said, I love the way you dance. I had only been dancing for two and a half years but I was too scared to stay."

Chuck Davis put a ballet on the Ms. Miller's students in 1971 called *Manifestations*. "Back in the day Chuck was doing modern and contemporary," Salaam shared. "Chuck had an interesting vision where he was always commenting on the [African] Diaspora. He would do it with modern dancers and Caribbean dancers and West African dancers at that particular point of time, I think way ahead of his time in terms of fusing, attempting to fuse modern dance West African and Caribbean stuff. You know, like following Dunham and the whole Trinidadian construct." Mr. Davis was the first person he had ever seen who would take elements of continental West African dance and put it together with modern dance. "Eventually, Chuck morphed into West African all together." Mr. Salaam joined Chuck

(Continued on page 8)

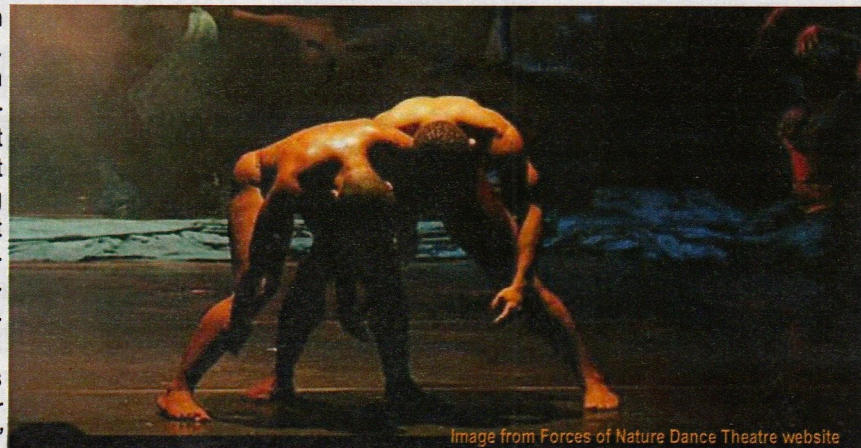


Image from Forces of Nature Dance Theatre website

Davis' dance company and performed with them for thirteen years, prior to that he'd been a principal dancer with Joan Miller's company from the early to mid 1970s.

"But Chuck put the Diaspora in me, you know what I mean? Chuck put this West African thing in me."

A large portion of this activity was happening in the late 1960s and early 1970s, concurrent with the Black power movement. Abdel joined many political student organizations including Lehman's Black student group Kubanbanya. He lived on Marcy Place right off Jerome Avenue. "I was first in a rooming house there where I paid \$22 a week, then I moved to Harlem, but returned to Marcy Place. I had this beautiful little one bedroom with a sunken living room."

Salaam started choreographing when he was a stu-

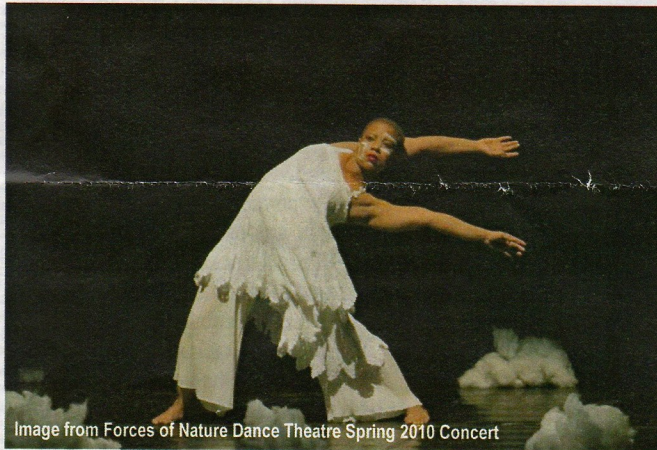


Image from Forces of Nature Dance Theatre Spring 2010 Concert

dent at Lehman. His first piece was called *Fear*. When asked if there was any particular reason why he would call a dance piece *Fear*, he responded, "Not really. I mean [I performed it in] a confined space. I remember I threw myself up against the wall and was going through this kind of amazing physiological emotional paranoia. I was trying to portray fear in general. The next piece I did was called *4th Stage of Self* which is about spiritual enlightenment." He took that piece to the Geneseo Dance Festival and also in attendance were choreographers Garth Fagan and Bella Lewitzky.

"The first big piece I ever did was for Bill Aguado who was the head of the Monroe Houses Community Center. Bill asked me to do this project and I did this thing called *Masks and Movement*." Abdel paused and thought for a moment. "That was probably in 1977. It was a whole bunch of kids who had never danced before. They were having fun and I was this athletic guy the boys could relate to. I had these

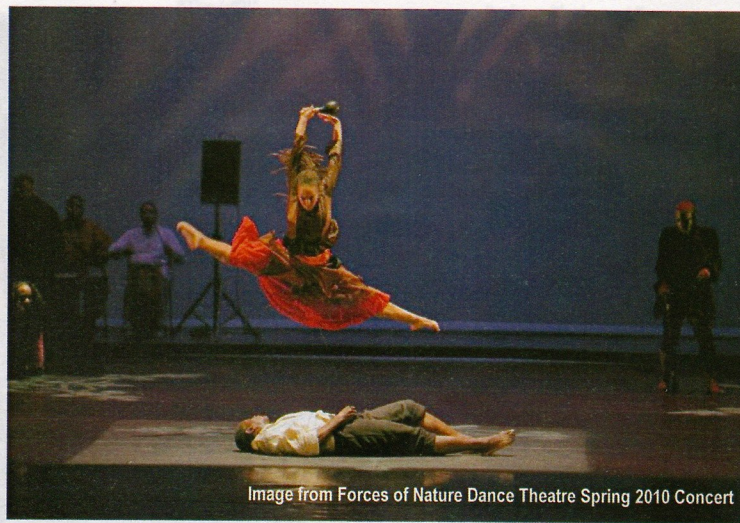


Image from Forces of Nature Dance Theatre Spring 2010 Concert

little boys flipping and flying all over the place and they kind of like the stuff that I gave them." He did a mixture of modern dance and African dance. They also created masks and he had them put on the masks and become creatures.

Mr. Salaam said, "Bill tells everybody in his anecdotes that the success of this program pushed him into prominence and they offered him the job as director of the Bronx Council on the Arts."

Abdel was into Egyptology at the time and interwove the mythological context of the scarab beetle also known as the dung beetle into the piece. In ancient Egypt the scarab was considered sacred, appeared in hieroglyphics and was translated as "to come into being," "to become" or "to transform." The scarab was linked to Khepri ("he who has come into being"), the god of the rising sun. The ancients believed that the dung beetle was only male in gender, and reproduced by depositing semen into a dung ball. The supposed self-creation of the beetle resembles that of Khepri, who creates himself out of nothing. Moreover, the dung ball rolled by a dung beetle resembles the sun. Salaam explains, "So I used the metaphor of the dung beetle pushing the sun across the sky coming out of the darkness of night, to create this kind of parallel that we were in the ghetto, surrounded by all kinds of craziness and garbage and all kinds of stuff worked against us as a people and yet we can find a way to find the light within ourselves even coming out of all that filth in that darkness. So, I did a kinda physiological metaphorical representation and I created dung beetle masks and built a big huge circular egg and the kids popped out of it like they were coming out of light like scarabs. Scarab masks on little boys and for some reason I had them make serpents. We were literally in an environment of shit you know what I mean. Remember at that time the Bronx was completely

falling apart and my position with the kids was you can find the best of who you are within an environment which is decomposing which is negative which is nasty. So, working with any community is to empower our young people and just our people in general. For me dance was also a form of prayer where I would use dance as a ways and means to talk about things that I wanted to come into being." Several years later, Salaam developed the piece and put it on a professional company.

He gathered all of his experiences to form Forces of Nature in 1981. "I was an environmental buff probably long before it was fashionable so I do things about nature, forces of nature, you know? How to stimulate people to live in har-

mony, to see nature and its relationship to animals in the animal kingdom, the ecosystem, and the planet. So, it was a theme for me and I was studying comparative African religion and mythology, you know, Joseph Campbell stuff and Joe Massey. Plus there was Chuck and my exposure to the Orisha traditions, and the Bronx and there was Santería, and I would go to a lot of bembes."

"If I look at my early choreography I think it's conceptually stronger than the language you know it took me a while to find a language that was really interesting that matched. I think that if I look at my work, my head was further evolved than my kinetic language."

"This was back in the early eighties. This was Forces of Nature, and we went back up in Soundview maybe 5 or 6 different sites and were always doing lecture demonstrations and performances in the schools. I probably hit every elementary, junior high and high school that you can think of in the South Bronx."

Abdel was asked what did he harvest from the Bronx?

"It started with Joan. I would say that my experiences in the

Bronx ignited my political consciousness and awareness. I was born in Harlem but you know for like at least the first half of my life at Lehman I lived in the Bronx and I studied in the Bronx and... Panther rallies, Nation of Islam black power conferences, the Young Lords, you name it and it was all in the Bronx. The Bronx was trying to be happy, but it wasn't as alive as City College and Manhattan is always the heightened sense of whatever but there was a lot of stuff happening in the Bronx."

"Chuck was at the Church of the Masters in the Bronx, handled by Bess Pruitt, then he went down to Masonic, then back up to the Bronx. I was with him in the Church of the

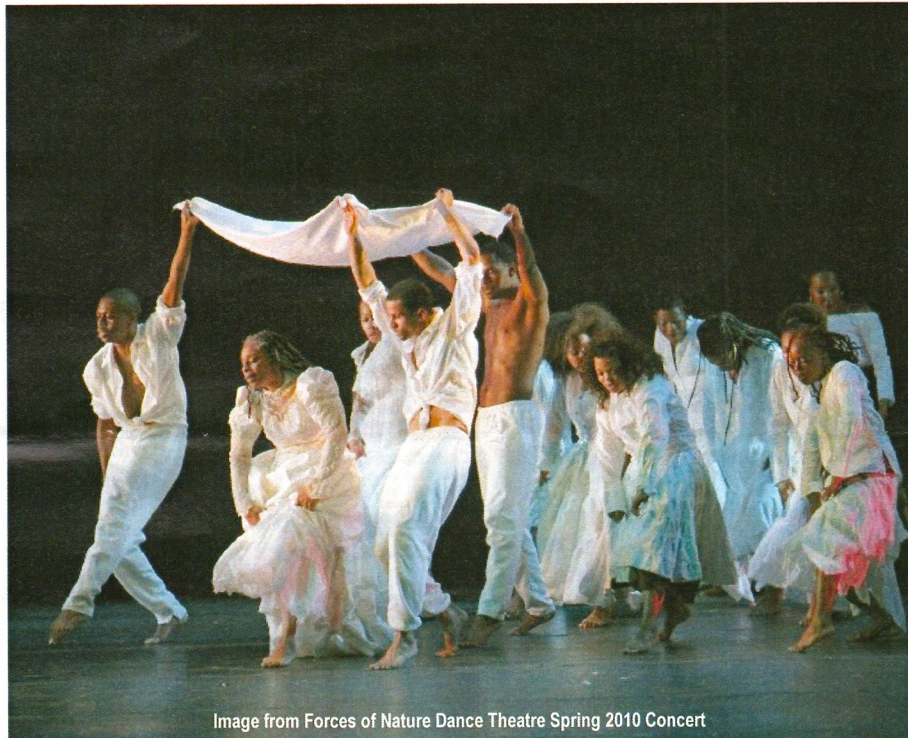


Image from Forces of Nature Dance Theatre Spring 2010 Concert

Masters near Bronx Community College, then back to Cathedral of Saint John the Divine. I was trying to go to the Bronx, I was trying to be in residence at Hostos and Bill [Agudo] was just saying, I probably couldn't do it. I needed 6 figures and stuff to get relocated. After possi-

bilities at Hostos and Pregones Theater fell through I moved to Harlem."

Forces of Nature was in residence at the Cathedral of St John the Devine for 24 years, then through Joan Miller they were in residence at Lehman for quick moment, but when she left that connection ended. Now, the company is based at Saint Martin's Episcopal Church in Harlem.

"During my era there was a very strong dance movement that was in the Bronx that is what kept us working there moving in and out of it you know? And staying connected."

He was asked, "Now, that was because you guys had each other, right? There was a connection between one and the next."

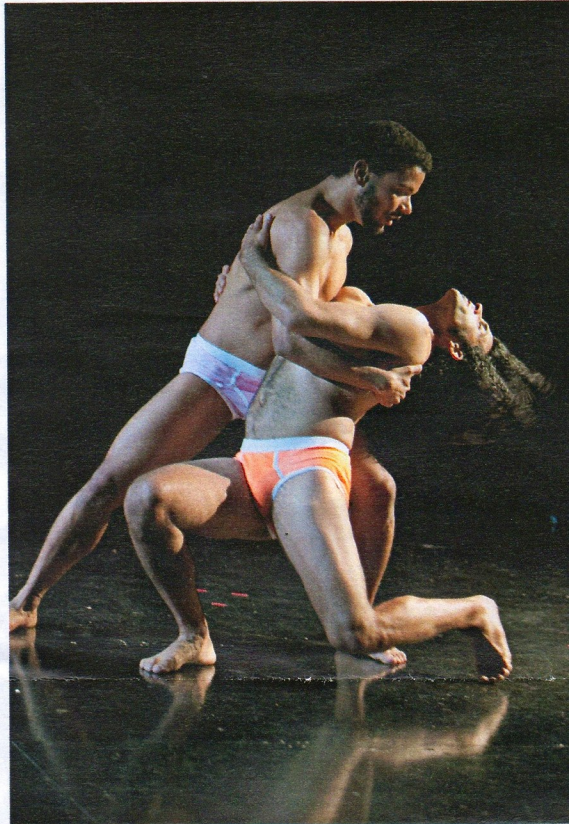
He responded, "We were all interconnected."

A LEG BREAKS IN THE BRONX

Pepatián Bronx Artist Spotlight 2010 at Pregones Theater

Written by Sheila Maldonado

Photos by Marisol Diaz



Saul Ulerio and Antonio Ramos

On a June evening, I got the chance to visit artists like cousins creating work across the way from me uptown in the Bronx. It was a night of Pepatián performance, which means mixing comes naturally, the experimental with the everyday, the emerging with the established, school with the street, theory with practice. The mix extended beyond the stage, family members taking in other ways to make dances, downtown art supporters negotiating unfamiliar streets to get to the theater uptown, Pregones, which has expanded in the past few years, a large, first-rate space making a place for Bronx art.

While Pepatián is an organization that supports many arts, it focused on choreographers this night, rooted as it is in dance and performance. In "Timing," emerging choreographer Jessie Flores explored instability and how it manifests in a body. Performed by Militeri Tucker, the dance repeated the image of a body resting only on the smallest part of the backside, arms and legs raised and bent, rising and precarious. It was great to see a young choreographer being a forum to work out the ideas and phrases in her head.

"Sirenas" by Areytos Performance Works was a trio of dancers like ocean waves that overlapped and rearranged with every spin. Presenting work based on Yoruba/Cuban and Dahomey/Haitian rhythms, the trio became duo became trio again, undulating in unison, taking its most intriguing shapes when the bodies intertwined, evoking symbiosis. They moved as a unit, slid within each other, tak-

ing to the floor, taking flight, never disconnecting. It was a fresher, complex, and exciting interpretation of African movement.

An improvisational solo of classic Yoruba arrangements, "vaci-gua" by Tina Louise Vasquez was a silent and fluid study of a dancer looking for rhythms within, ending with a mesmerizing stutter. Personal and exploratory, Vasquez's work is another example of the growth groups like Pepatián and Areytos encourage.

In "A hole in the fence," Colombian/Canadian artist Carmen Ruiz tackled the trials of border existence and immigration. She convulsed as the word "permit" spit from her mouth over and over like a faulty recording. She approached, sashayed, fell, ran from and stuck to a trap of a line, a single prop, a stretch of tape across a stage, seductive and deceptive as the American border.

The creative process was mirrored in "Simulacro" by Antonio Ramos and Saul Ulerio. Capturing dancers preparing in a studio, the piece featured the men working out all their vulnerabilities, dancing merengue naked, pouring milk over themselves in a bathtub, chatting and playing. Silliness revealed beauty as graceful out-stretched spins emerged from herky-jerky caricatures.

Both "A hole in the fence" and "Simulacro" challenged the Bronx audience's ideas. The pieces took risks before this new crowd that laughed as they tried to digest the seemingly awkward work before them. They were soon silenced as the dancers asserted themselves and their ideas, the quiet growing among the spectators as understanding did.



Sita Frederick's Areyto dancers

The relationship between musician and dancer was paired down, one to one, in "poli_sono + exabrupto" by Noemí Segarra with Polidesto (Abdiel López-Torres). In the first of two sets, the DJ at a soundboard manipulated electronics as the dancer's limbs curl and twist, both limber and robotic, dancer and DJ connected to sounds but not so much to each other. In the second, a drummer wailed on his kit while the dancer engaged in concentrated flailing, here both more aware of each other as instruments. It was gorgeous, simplified abstraction, compact and captivating, work by artists in full stride ending the evening strong at this site of development and support, interaction and exposure, a meeting place where there once was none.

Sheila Maldonado is a lifelong writer and native New Yorker. Her poems have been published in Callaloo, Meridians, Rattapallax, Live Mag!, and Stretching Panties, as well as online at The Acentos Review. Her articles and reviews have been published in The Village Voice, The San Francisco Chronicle, Paper, and Urban Latino.

PEPATIAN'S BRONX ARTIST SPOTLIGHT 2010
CHOREOGRAPHERS SHOWCASE
TEATRO PREGONES THEATER - JUNE 16, 2010

Written by Alicia Diaz

Photos by Marisol Diaz



Noemi Segarra

Pregones Theater, which is celebrating 30 years of theater making and has made important and committed cultural contributions to the Bronx community and to the greater Latino community of New York City, opened the doors this week to four nights devoted to dance. On Wednesday, June 16th, I had the pleasure of attending the 2010 Pepatian's Bronx Artist Spotlight Choreographers Showcase, curated by Jane Gabriels and presenting Latino choreographers Jessie Flores, Sita Frederick/Areytos Performance Works with guest artist Tina Louise Vasquez, Antonio Ramos, Carmen Ruiz, and Noemi Segarra in collaboration with Polidesto. A post-performance discussion with the artists was moderated by choreographer, director, media artist and educator Dean Moss.

As a dancer, choreographer, and teacher, I am interested in ideas and critical thinking. I have also participated myself in Pepatían's showcases. Sitting on the outside and writing about the works of these choreographers allows me to view dance from another perspective. I am excited by the prospect of being in the presence of fellow Latino artists and I want to engage in a dialogue with them. What follows is an unapologetically subjective response to the works presented.

What images are evoked by the term *Latino* choreographers? As a current dance professor at a college in the Midwest of the United States, I know that for mainstream audiences, the term can be

shrouded in mystery, curiosity, and stereotypes. All too often there is the assumption that the dance works must be, by definition, accompanied by Latin music, dressed in colorful costumes, and address light-hearted, "happy" themes. Going beyond clichés, the Pepatían showcase revealed a much more complex reality. The evening brought a rich choreographic range with pieces exploring diverse themes from the Yoruba deity Yemayá to pieces addressing political, and gender issues. Just as important, the dancers proved to be highly skilled and sophisticated, deeply engaged in physical and cultural investigations, rooted in artistic collaborations, and committed to grappling with socially relevant issues.

The evening began with *TIMING* a duet choreographed by Jessie Flores, dealing with the uncertainties and yet inevitability of personal growth. Performed by Flores and Milteri Tucker to music by Maxwell, the piece juxtaposes one dancer moving passionately through space and a haunting shadow figure, sitting on a stool in a doorway frame, performing minimalist, slow movements. Is she witnessing another? Is she observing herself? Is she in the past or the future? Is she waiting? For what? At the end of the piece, which takes place in silence, the two women seem fully connected through their energy, though not physically, and it seemed to me this would be the beginning of further exploration of images that evoked questions of time and how we perceive life experiences in past, present, and future time.

Sirenas, a trio choreographed by Sita Frederick in collaboration with Tina Vasquez, Maya Berry and Alethea Pace, draws movement qualities from the Afro-Cuban Orisha Yemayá, goddess of the seas, and the Dahomey rooted Haitian dance Yanvalu. In this piece, performed by Frederick, Berry and Pace, fluid arm movements, body isolations, and rhythmic patterns evoking images of water inspired by the Caribbean dance forms are in dialogue with contemporary dance vocabulary including floor work, inversions, and weight-sharing partnering performed exquisitely by the dancers. Frederick's ability to organically integrate different movement idioms is impressive. I felt in the presence of multi-lingual bodies embodying cultural histories where spirituality, tradition, and the Caribbean urban experience in New York City established a conversation and revealed an expressive capacity to address tradition and modernity simultaneously. The dancers were very much in tune with each other technically, and yet I longed for an even deeper connection that could create a greater sense of the community between the three women in order for me to be transported by the ritual essence of the piece and forget I was watching a dance in a theater.

In *A hole in the fence*, Carmen Ruiz uses movement and text to take the audience through a journey of what it might be like to cross and/or trespass borders with and without "a permit." This dance theater piece was inspired by the choreographer's own experience of traveling for the first time with a Canadian passport vs. her original Colombian passport. Ruiz begins the piece by transforming the space as she extends a long piece of tape from one side of the stage to the other. She names this tape, which is reminiscent of police tape barriers, "the line." The space is thus divided between above and below and between in-front and in-back. The physical existence of "the line" also creates a barrier between the audience and the performer—depending on which side of "the line" she is at any given point, Ruiz is more or less accessible to the audience, making us, in essence, a part of her piece. The set-up immediately brings forth issues of borders, immigration, and relations of power so pertinent in the current events taking place today in Arizona. It is also reminiscent of the construction of walls that divide communities such as those in the Mexico/U.S. border and Israel/Palestine. Ruiz's performance is theatrically engaging, allowing



Tina Louise Vasquez

movement and text to continually support each other, as she explores the difficulties of crossing borders and transitioning from one side of "the line" to the other. Using recognizable yet deconstructed Latin rhythms with her feet, clear body articulations initiated from the inside out, and raising questions about gender, Ruiz locates issues of trespassing in the body itself as it literally runs out of breath and struggles in the act of transition. Never finding a comfortable zone on either side of "the line" *A hole in the fence* challenges ideas of a so-called "melting pot" that claims to exist in a political vacuum.

Tina Louise Vasquez, a beautiful dancer with great dynamic range, presented *vaci-gua*, a structured improvisation inspired by the movement of the ocean. Vasquez begins facing upstage with soft, fluid movements during which her defined, muscular bare back becomes mesmerizing. As the piece progresses from this intimate, quiet beginning, she moves with sharp accents, and quick falls to the ground as she advances downstage in a diagonal. The dance ends with a trembling of the body that is at once vulnerable and defiant. During the post-performance discussion, Vasquez spoke, accurately I think, about the vulnerability of improvisation-as-performance and both the challenges and possibilities of surrendering to the "naked brain" as the piece forms and reveals itself in the present moment.

Antonio Ramos' *Simulacro*, a duet choreographed and performed in collaboration with Saul Ulerio, is also a dance theater piece that uses text, movement, nudity, and props to explore the vulnerability of the actual choreographic process, aspects of Puerto Rican and Dominican

cultures, and sexuality. Ramos' work is funny and serious at the same time. The initial manner of presentation is light-hearted but the content is full of layers and provocative questions. He approaches the audience with recognizable cultural references, such as the Puerto Rican popular drink Malta India, that make him endearing and once he is admitted "inside," if you will, he begins to break through traditionally accepted norms, and crosses "lines" to borrow Ruiz's image. Ramos has a great sense of timing, allowing the audience to laugh and yet present images just long enough to also think and ponder. His use of full nudity towards the beginning of the piece, for example, as the men dance and sing merengue with uninhibited body-shaking movements, was simultaneously funny, uncomfortable, courageous, and challenging. Why are they naked? Is it to incite shock? Is there a meaning behind it? Once the audience has had enough time to get over the excitement of seeing naked bodies in motion, questions of the vulnerability an artist experiences in the creative process—so similar to that of giving birth and related, in turn, to sexuality—begin to emerge. Another aspect of Ramos' work that keeps the performance fresh is his level of comfort being himself on stage. His theatricality is not put-on, it is not "acting." Rather his command of the events that take place on stage reminds me of the practice of *authentic movement* where a mover follows kinesthetic impulses as they arise and where the "naked brain" is allowed to manifest itself physically without editing. The sound score of the piece, designed by Ulerio, is a recording of the dancers rehearsing the piece. It is not played in-sync with the live performance, so it serves as a kind of echo of the live experience. This juxtaposition of past and present, reminiscent of Flores' exploration in the beginning of the evening, brings forth interesting questions about the relationships between what is no longer tangible, what is taking place in the present, and how they might shape the future.

The evening ended with the work of Noemí Segarra and Abdiel López-Torres. Their collaborations *poli_sono* + *exabrupto* are movement and sound improvisations which they described in the post-performance discussion as "the sound of movement and the movement of sound." Their work takes the audience through a variety of visual, kinetic, and auditory landscapes. *poli_sono*, costumed in a lavender short dress, began with calm twisting movements in dialogue with live electronic sound that built up to a series of turns like a windy storm from which the body returned in pleading gestures of reaching and contortion in an intimate and uncomfortable act of searching that ended seated cross-legged in a pose suggestive of meditation. *exabrupto* is a magnificent "despojo" with a build-up of fast pace drumming, turns, flailing arms and a slashing body dressed in black. Segarra's obvious comfort in the improvisation-as-performance form allows the audience to experience her movement kinesthetically, from moment to moment—it is visceral and organic, raw and sophisticated. Her "thinking body" opens the door of the imagination as it listens inward in order to act fully in the present and yet transport us all to an alternate time and place. I found Segarra and López-Torres' work reminiscent of the artistically rich and ground-breaking avant-garde culture of spontaneity of the 1940-50s.

The evening brought substantial rewards. Pepatián's Choreographers Showcase presented works dealing with personal and collective histories that point to a desire for dialogue and social accountability as the artists respond artistically to demands presented

Alicia Diaz is co-founder of Agua Dulce Dance Theater and an Assistant Professor of Dance at Hope College. www.nightpasture.org

by their own lives.

**REVIEW BRONX DANCE EVENTS OR BRONX DANCE COMPANY PERFORMANCES FOR THE BRONX DANCE MAGAZINE!
CONTACT US AT: BxDanceCoalition@gmail.com**

Julia joins Joyce: The Story of Two Pioneers

Writer by Artistic Director Deidrel

Photos by Arthur Aviles



Pam Patrick and Pat Hall join Miss Kirton for DFA's film presentation at BAAD!

Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance (BAAD!) presented on March 13, 2010 a world premiere screening of the documentary *JULIA AND JOYCE: THE STORY OF TWO PIONEERS* directed by Sonia Dumas, Trinidad & Tobago, 2009, 60M. The filmmaker and one of her subjects, Joyce Kirton, came from Trinidad to show their film, bringing their weather with them. Wild winds, torrential rains, and a blast of calm courtesy of their sunny, serene temperaments.

A window blew in on an actor's class at BAAD! just before our master class in Afro-Caribbean dance was to begin. Fortunately the community center across the street from BAAD, The Point, welcomed us! Joyce Kirton regaled us with stories and insights about the dances we learned, as demonstrated by Sonia Dumas and accompanied by 3 masterful drummers. Along with Joyce came her brother and his wife from Florida, her sister from Texas, and two dancers from Toronto, all coming to NYC to show their love and support for Joyce.



Miss Kirton poses with musicians and students for a photo after class

The Bronx's own Yvette Martinez, below 2nd from the right. (Co founder of the 29 year old all women Afro Caribbean Drum and Dance group RE-TUMBA) Paid tribute to Joyce by taking her class that afternoon. 2nd from the right. Arthur Aviles (seen in red dress below) and Charles Rice-Gonzalez (left second

row) hosted this event with admirable aplomb. Despite the disastrous loss of a window at BAAD!, the rains threatening to tear the

house of BAAD! down, they served supper, and wine, replaced the window, put candles in all the windows by the time of the screening, and pulled in a crowd!

The New York Times printed a story on the same day as the screening and class on Trinidadian dancer



Sonia Dumas, Joyce Kirton, D. Towers, Beni Matias

Mike Quashie who was known as The Limbo King in the sixties. Susan Quist, a long time friend of Mike Quashie who hung with Jimi Hendrix, Lou Reed, and Led Zepellin, brought Mike to the screening. Also at the screening were Sonia's teachers from NYU, Phyllis Lamhut, Pat Hall and Pam Patrick.

The film *JULIA AND JOYCE: THE STORY OF TWO PIONEERS* looks at aspects of the Trinidad and Tobago dance world and its local and global impact through the eyes of two local dance legends--Julia Edwards and Joyce Kirton--in an attempt to capture some of this history. These two women, now in their seventies,



Sonia Dumas leads the class under Miss Kirton's instructions

have collectively contributed over 110 years of dedicated, pioneering work to the dance community of Trinidad and Tobago. Between them, they have been instrumental in the preservation of and innovation in countless traditional dance forms and their commitment to dance is echoed in the accomplishments of the many dancers and choreographers of the generations that have come after them. For more information on the film, contact Sonja Dumas at: aguawaterleau@yahoo.com.

Bronx Dance Directory

Artists

Kira Ackerman
137 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10024
917-848-4762
dancerforartsedu@aol.com

Christopher Aponte
Dragonstiger2@aol.com

Lucy Aponte
642 Rosedale Avenue
Bronx, NY 10473
178-684-51501
Laponte3@optonline.net

Julio Arroyo
Jualar3@aol.com

Norma Jean Barnes
4200 Hutchinson River Pkwy #13A
Bronx, NY 10452
718-320-1472

Claire Barratte
Cilla Yee Movement Projects - H&H Productions
P.O. Box 1642
Bronx, NY 10451
cilla_yee@verizon.net

Christal Brown
1513 Grand Concourse #5D
Bronx, NY 10452
(336) 253-1057
cncbrown78@hotmail.com

Marsi Burns
3901 Independence Ave. #6A
Bronx, NY 10463
Marsi21@aol.com

Jesús Candelario
joymc@earthlink.net

Darren Chase
2730 Bronx Park East
Bronx, NY 10467
718-653-4218
chase61@iwon.com

Félix Ciprián
Felix.ciprian@gmail.com

Elisa Clark
800 Grand Concourse #5D
Bronx, NY 10451
646-295-6354
clarkelis@aol.com

Richard Colon aka Crazy Legs
328 First Street
Jersey City, NJ 07302
www.rocksteadycrew.com

Dawn Crandell
26 Bedford Park Blvd. #E1
Bronx, NY 10468
347-276-8849
dawnusk@me.com

Jessica Danser
917-923-3126

Alexandra Delfin
huntspoint@hotmail.com

Mónica Figueroa
720 Manida St. Apt. 2
Bronx, NY 10474
646-515-6856
TapDiva19@aol.com

Jessie Flores
mayanf@yaho.com

Ariane Garcia
1084 Fox Street, Basement
Bronx, NY 10459
917-957-8975
ariane1229@yahoo.com

Melinda Gonzalez
917-757-3207
gonzalezmelinda@gmail.com

Noel Hall
345 Clinton Ave. 12D
Brooklyn, NY 11238
718-857-4643
nhall3@verizon.net

Pat Hall
38-39 Pratt Avenue
Bronx, NY 10466
718-390-7431
pat@pathalldance.com
pathalldance.com

Samantha Hewitt
836 Tilden Street
Bronx, NY 10467
718-231-0393

Shizu Homma
shizuny@yahoo.com

Cristina Ibarra
cristinaibarra@yahoo.com

Pedro Jimenez
917-532-4826
helpgetthewordout@yahoo.com

Amy Jones
Ajones23@nycboe.net

Peter Kalivas
PGKalivas@aol.com

Teresa Kochis
overheadarts@yahoo.com

Masako Koga
316 W. 95th Street #121
New York, NY 10025
212-749-8262

Rokafella and Kwikstep
fullcirclesoul@hotmail.com
contact@fullcirclesoul.com

Yvette Martinez
P.O. Box 7
Bronx, NY 10464
Retumba@retumba.org

Deborah Melendez
718-440-7465
melendezminnie@aol.com

Anthony Meyers
2180 Bronx Park East #5K
Bronx, NY 10462
718-822-8041
Amask1120@aol.com

Wendy Nicolls
P.O. Box 603
Bronx, NY 10453

Alethea Pace
718-537-0098
aletheapace@hotmail.com

Pepper
P.O. Box 740015
Bronx, NY 10474
718-860-6400
peppercbt@yahoo.com

Norka
norka1010@aol.com

Noele Philips
1650 Metropolitan Avenue #6H
Bronx, NY 10462
noel@kravenseneca.net
646-262-6986

Dennis Redmoon Darkeem
owiredmoon@aol.com
347-524-7030

Richard Rivera
646-685-6235
r2nluv@yahoo.com

Abimelek Rodriguez
Dancenation@gmail.com

Izzy Ruiz
Izzy_ruiz@hotmail.com

Laila Sailes
Lala1206@hotmail.com

Rhema Sterling
825 Boynton Avenue
Bronx, NY 10473
718-842-1183

Alice Teirstein
AliceTeirstein@aol.com

Maria and Eddie Torres
1964 Mathews Ave
Bronx, NY 10462
718-319-9317

Kimberly Vásquez
amiesoliel@yahoo.com

Damon White
damwhi@yahoo.com

Joy Dawn Williams
2304 Crotona Ave, #B1
Bronx, NY 10458
JDanceballet@yahoo.com
JDanceballetDP@aol.com

Zan Yassin
654 Manida Street
Bronx, NY 10474
718-991-9381

Dance Companies

Arthur Aviles Typical Theatre
Arthur Aviles - Artistic Director
841 Barretto Street
Bronx, NY 10474
718-842-5223
arthuraviles@gmail.com

BombaYo
Melinda Gonzalez
121 Wilson St. #13B
Bronx, NY 10457
646-938-3052
info@bombayo.org

Pepper - Artistic Director
PO Box 740015
Bronx, NY 10474

Camino de Paz
P.O. Box 801
Bronx, NY 10454
718-742-7832

Full Circle Productions
Rokafella & Kwikstep Directors
917-821-1499
fullcirclesoul@hotmail.com

JDanceballet Dance Productions
CEO & President JoyDawn Williams
JDanceballetDP@aol.com

JDanceballet Dance Ensemble
Manager- JoyDawn Williams
Jddanceballet@aol.com

Jessica Danser/JDDansfolk
Jessica Danser - Director
2544 Valentine Ave, Apt N31
Bronx, NY 10468
917-923-3126
dansfolk@hotmail.com

JoyCometh Liturgical Dance & Mime team Ministries
Minister of Dance JoyDawn Williams
JoyCometh@aol.com

Inspirit Dance Company
Christal Brown - Artistic Director
PO BOX 555
Bronx, NY 10451
718-731-9038
info@inspirit.com

Kanata Native Dance Theatre
Bess Pruitt - Artistic Director
819 E. 168th Street
Bronx, NY 10459
718-589-0400
www.uniqueartists.com

KUSH
Kimberly Vosquez
205 City Island Avenue #4
Bronx, NY 10464
718-312-2242

Mafata Dance Company, Inc.
301 Admiral Lane c/o Flores
Bronx, NY 10473

Kraven Seneca
Amin Jai - Artistic Director
aminjai@kravenseneca.net
www.kravenseneca.net

Opus Dance Theatre
James Buster Grant - Artistic Director
928 Gerard Avenue
Bronx, NY 10451
718-293-3333 - 212-996-8413
OPUSDTC@aol.com

Owl Red Moon
Darkeem Dennis
347-524-7030
owiredmoon@aol.com

Pepation
Jane Gabriels - Artistic Director
917-903-7651
Gabriels_j@yahoo.com

Physual
Richard Rivera - Artistic Director
646-685-6235
r2nluv@yahoo.com

Retumba - One World Arts
Yvette Martinez - Artistic Director
P.O. Box 7
Bronx, NY 10464
718-885-2574
retumba@retumba.org

Rock Steady Crew
rsevents@aol.com

Side Street Kids
Toni Mendoza - Director
1310 Unionport Rd.
Bronx, NY 10462
718-829-7200
www.sidestreetkids.org
sidestreetkids@hotmail.com

Young Dance Makers

Ethical Culture Fieldston School
Alice Teirstein
3901 Fieldston Road
Bronx, NY 10471
718-329-7300 ext 3358
AliceTeirstein@aol.com

Dance Schools

Andrea's Dance Studio
900 Morris Park Ave
Bronx, NY 10462
718-597-9869
www.andreasdancesstudio.com

Baker's Dance Co inc
450 East 165th Street

718-742-2712

Barbara Blackwood Dance

Barbara Skinner
2440 Hunter Ave
Bronx, NY 10475
718-994-9232

Bronx Ballroom & Latin Dance Lessons

Riverdale Avenue
Riverdale, NY 10471
866-439-1385

Bronx Dance Academy School

3617 Bainbridge Avenue
Bronx, NY 10467
718-515-0410

Bronx Dance Theatre

Lidia Peres
585 E. 187th Street, 2nd Floor
Bronx, NY 10458
718-364-2725
director@bronzdancetheatre.com

Bronx House School for Performing Arts

990 Pelham Parkway South
Bronx, NY 10461
718-792-1800
www.bronxhouse.org

Cultured Movement Incorporated

2415 Williamsbridge Road
Bronx, NY 10469
347-750-9042
culturedmovement.com

Dancers DreamZzz

1206 Spofford Ave
Bronx, NY 10474
718-440-7465
Debbie@DancersDreamZzz.com

Eddie Torres Latin Dance Studio

718-319-9317
mambokingon2@yahoo.com

El Grito Dance School

940 Garrison Ave.
Bronx, NY 10474
718-542-4139

Fancy Feet Dance Studio

1628 Crosby Ave.
Bronx, NY 10461
718-824-1981
info@fancyfeet.com

Fancy Feet Dance Studio

1295 Allerton Ave.
Bronx, NY 10469
718-405-5136

Gloria Wise Boys & Girls Club

Egeria Bennett - Director
950 Baychester Ave.
Bronx, NY 10475

InishFree

St. Stephen's Church - Irish Dance classes
439 E 238th Street
Bronx, NY 10470
718-324-5427

Just The Place Inc. Creative Arts Center

1623 Unionport Rd.
Bronx, NY 10462
718-794-5878 - 718-239-1118 (fax)
dancejfp@aol.com

Lindy Hop All Stars

135 West 225th Street
New York, NY 10463
917-359-7990
lindyhopallstars.com

Lola Luis Creative & Performing Arts Studio

755 East 235th Street
Bronx, NY 10466
718-655-1607
loulofa@aol.com

Maria's Dynamic Dance NY

3432 E. Tremont Ave.
Bronx, NY 10457
718-409-0889

Martha Graham Center

510 Jesup Avenue
Bronx, NY 10452
718-681-2560
marthagraham.org

Michele Compa Dance & Exercise

3590 Netherland Ave
Bronx, NY 10463
718-549-9635
www.michelecompa.com

Mind Builders Creative Arts Center

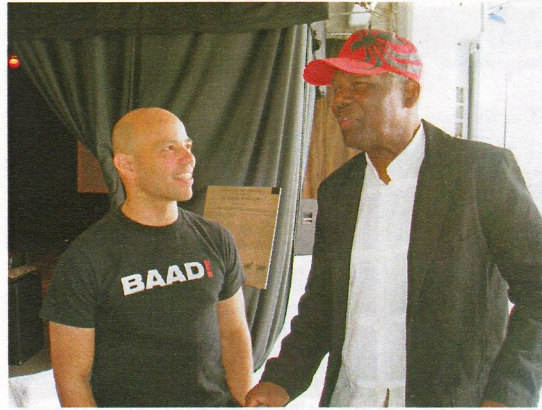
Madaha Kinsey-Lamb - Executive Director
260 E. 207th Street
Bronx, NY 10467
718-625-6256
www.mind-builders.org

Miss Audrey's Dance Studio

Audrey Avila - Thompson Director
1177 Castle Hill Ave.
Bronx, NY 10472

A BAAD! Tribute to Living Legend: Mike Quashie, the Limbo King

Written by Charles rice-Gonzalez



Arthur Aviles and Mike Quashie

Photo by Cassandra

On Sunday, May 23, 2010 as part of its Boogie Down Dance Series, BAAD! The Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance, held a special tribute to Mike Quashie, the Limbo King. The event was a brunch which included food from Quashie's homeland of Trinidad. There were testimonials by many of Quashie's friends and supporters including Susan Quist (who worked with BAAD!'s Carlo Quispe to organize the event) and former dancer Jean Lee. Patrick Shields edited a montage of photos and images from Quashie's career in dance and performance.

Quashie began dancing in New York at the Apollo Theater in Harlem. He starred in countless international tours and revues and performed on Broadway and on "The Ed Sullivan Show." In the 1970s and '80s, he morphed into the Spider King, and his glamorous costumes and special effects were adopted by many performers who saw him live, like when he opened for Led Zeppelin at Madison Square Garden in 1970, dressed in a gold lamé loincloth and spitting fire.



Mrs. Ross & Mike Quashie

Photo by Cassandra

He befriended musicians like Todd Rundgren and Billy Idol, was a constant companion to Lou Reed and was Jimi Hendrix's best friend.

He also ran masquerade and cross-dressing events where downtown drag queens would mix with uptown socialites. There were the annual "Society Freaks Out" parties at the Copacabana and the annual "Divine Decadence Ball."

Quashie lived for many years in the West Village and was recently featured in *The New York Times*, in an article about him moving to an assisted living facility in the Bronx. When BAAD! got wind of the news the welcome carpet was rolled out for the celebrated octogenarian former dancer with this event.

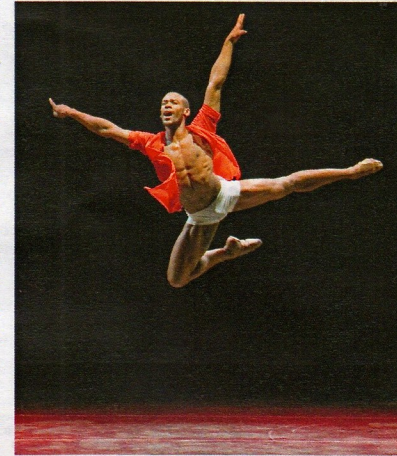
Lehman Center for the Performing Arts Announces Stellar Dance Programming for its 30th Anniversary Season

Lehman Center for the Performing Arts celebrates its 30th Anniversary Season with top notch acts including 10 exciting dance shows.

From world class companies like Paul Taylor Dance Company, Complexions Contemporary dance and Tony-Award winning Savion Glover to international favorites like Tango Buenos Aires and Poland's Mazowzse, plus the very best in Russian ballet.

Lehman Center is located at 250 Bedford Park Boulevard

West on the campus of Lehman College in the Bronx. For tickets and full listings of dance and all events visit www.LehmanCenter.org or call the box office at 718-960-8833. Tickets are kept affordable and children 12 and under are admitted for only \$10 any seat to any dance performance.



Complexions Contemporary Dance Co.

Below is a listing of Lehman Center's dance events:

BAYANIHAN PHILIPPINE NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY
Sunday, November 7, 2010 – 4pm | Tickets: \$25, \$20, \$15

MAZOWSZE - Vivacious Polish Culture at its Best!
Sat., December 11, 2010 – 2pm & 8pm | Tickets: \$45, \$40, \$35, \$30

THE ALUMINUM SHOW - A One-of-a-Kind Experience!
Sunday, February 6, 2011 – 4pm | Tickets: \$35, \$30, \$25

STATE BALLET THEATRE OF RUSSIA'S SWAN LAKE
Sunday, February 13, 2011 – 4pm | Tickets: \$35, \$30, \$25

TANGO BUENOS AIRES
Sunday, February 27, 2011 – 4pm | Tickets: \$35, \$30, \$25

SAVION GLOVER AND COMPANY - SoLo in TIME
Sunday, March 6, 2011 – 4pm | Tickets: \$35, \$30, \$25

COMPLEXIONS CONTEMPORARY BALLET
Sunday, March 13, 2011 – 6pm | Tickets: \$35, \$30, \$25

RUSSIAN NATIONAL BALLET THEATRE'S ROMEO and JULIET
Sunday, March 27, 2011 – 4pm | Tickets: \$35, \$30, \$25

PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY
Sunday, April 10, 2011 – 6pm | Tickets: \$25, \$20, \$15

CIRQUE LE MASQUE - Movement, Gravity-Defying Feats, Extraordinary Aerialists and Much More!
Sunday, May 15, 2011 – 4pm | Tickets: \$35, \$30, \$25

TRIBUTE TO ARTHUR AVILES AT PREGONES THEATRE – JUNE 19, 2010

Pregones Theater presented Arthur Aviles with a Master Artist award at this event celebrating his life as an artist. Photos by Marisol Diaz.



Arthur Aviles with Pregones Artistic Director Rosalba Román, surrounded by cast and members of the BAAD! Cli-chorus



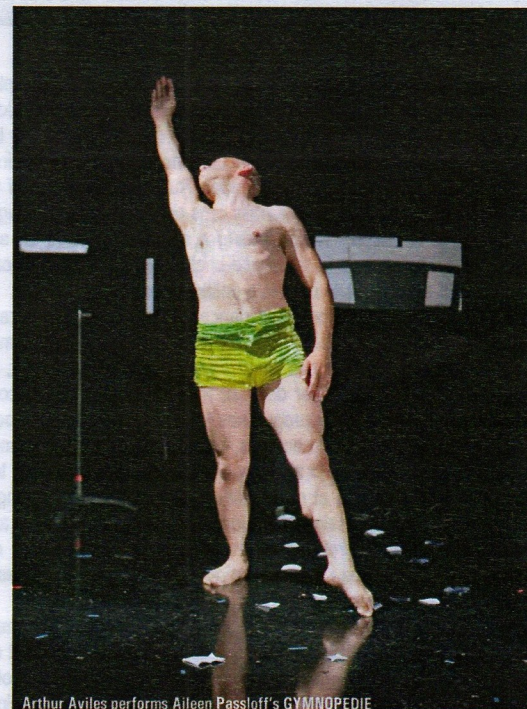
Front to back: Jasmin Rituper, Kevin Ferguson and Amin Jai perform Aviles' DOROTHUR'S JOURNEY



Arthur Aviles, Jennica Carmona and Aida Beluzco as the Maevasitas



The Maevasitas surrounded by the BAAD! Cli-chorus

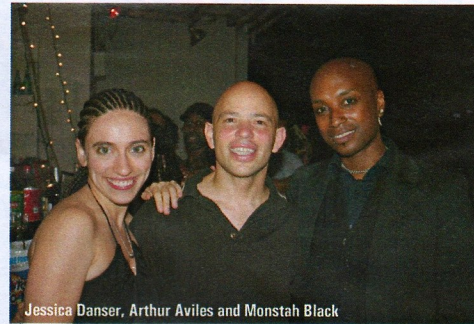


Arthur Aviles performs Aileen Passloff's GYMNOPEDIE

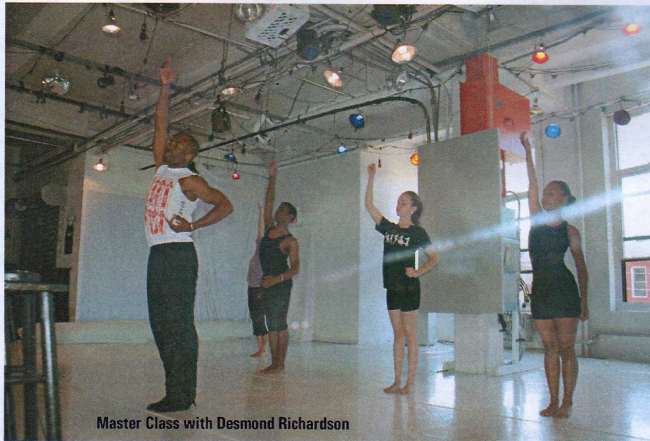
IMAGES & PEOPLE FROM BAAD! PERFORMANCES AND EVENTS



KaNu Dance Theater – 2010 BAAD!Ass Women Concert



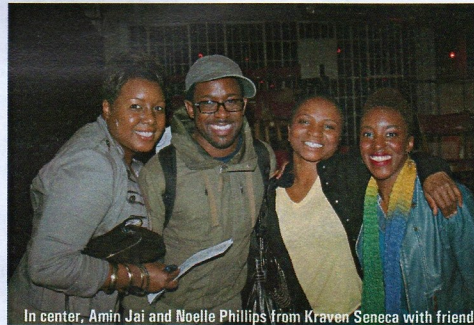
Jessica Danser, Arthur Aviles and Monstah Black



Master Class with Desmond Richardson



Paulito, Frances Lugo, Elizabeth Marrero, MiRi Park and Chino



In center, Amin Jai and Noelle Phillips from Kraven Seneca with friends



Post show dancing - in photo Damon White, Kelly McGowan, Alice O'Malley and Arthur Aviles



Sari Nortiman, Pedro Jimenez, Damon White & Juje Jo Ramirez