URBAN BUSH WOMEN

SCAT!... THE COMPLEX LIVES OF AL & DOT, DOT & AL ZOLLAR

JUNE 28-30, 2024 SOSNOFF THEATER



Dear Friends,

Welcome to Bard SummerScape 2024. Our festival opens with two world premieres about epic journeys—Urban Bush Women's tribute to the Great Migration, in which six million Black Americans moved from the South to the Midwest and North to start a new life, and Elevator Repair Service's theatrical map of Leopold Bloom's wanderings through Dublin on June 16, 1904.

These Fisher Center commissions bring two of New York City's most esteemed ensembles to SummerScape for the first time—Elevator Repair Service with *Ulysses*, and Urban Bush Women with *Scat!: The Complex Lives of Al & Dot, Dot & Al Zollar.* Both projects exemplify our commitment to providing exceptional support to leading American artists reexamining the past to create timely, imaginative, and compelling visions for the future.

Elevator Repair Service was born in 1991 in the downtown New York City performance scene. Over thirty remarkable years they have developed celebrated original works and adaptations with their company of versatile and virtuosic actors. ERS is perhaps best known for *Gatz*, their award-winning performance encompassing every word of F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby*. Last year we presented two preview performances of *Ulysses* which confirmed that the alchemy between ERS's style and Joyce's mountain of a novel made for pure delight. Their staging brings thrilling, joyful life to James Joyce's words, adding up to a work of raucous theatrical imagination, poetic and deeply moving.

We're honored to welcome Urban Bush Women to the Fisher Center to launch their fortieth anniversary season with this world premiere of *SCAT!* Founded in 1984 by Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, this Brooklyn-based, woman-centered dance company has risen to international acclaim for their life-affirming and spectacular performances that celebrate under-told stories of the African Diaspora through social dance, music, narrative, and song. SCAT! marks the culmination of Jawole's four decades leading the company and the passing of the torch to the next generation of creators; it is one of her most personal works to date." In partnership with the superb jazz composer and musician Craig Harris, she has created an homage to her parents' journey through the Great Migration as well as to her own forty-year history with Urban Bush Women. We're thrilled to have commissioned this powerful and gorgeous new production—in particular, because it marks the return of ensemblemember Roobi Gaskins '19, a graduate of Bard's dance program.

Both *SCAT!* and *Ulysses* are beginning their journeys here before setting out for much-anticipated tours. Unique among American performing arts centers, the Fisher Center commissions, incubates, and premieres performances in all disciplines, which then travel to audiences nationally and internationally. In the past season, we presented more than a dozen productions and performances in New York City, including Pam Tanowitz's *Song of Songs*, which premiered in SummerScape 22 and played at New York City Center last fall, and the Sufjan Stevens/Justin Peck/Jackie Sibblies Dury musical *Illinoise*, which we originated and premiered last summer before its presentations in Chicago and at the Park Avenue Armory and which recently opened on Broadway.

None of these journeys would be possible without your support, for which we are deeply grateful. We wish you a marvelous summer and look forward to seeing you again in the coming weeks for *Le Prophète*, the Bard Music Festival, and at the Spiegeltent.

Best wishes.

Gideon Lester

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Artistic Director and Chief Executive

Fisher Center at Bard

Chair Jeanne Donovan Fisher
President Leon Botstein
Artistic Director and Chief Executive Gideon Lester
Chief Operating Officer Aaron Mattocks

URBAN BUSH WOMEN

SCAT!... THE COMPLEX LIVES OF AL & DOT, DOT & AL ZOLLAR

SummerScape Commission/World Premiere

Conceived and Directed by Jawole Willa Jo Zollar
Original Music Composed by Craig Harris
Co-Choreographed by Jawole Willa Jo Zollar & Vincent Thomas in collaboration with the company
Dramaturgy by Talvin Wilks

Sosnoff Theater

June 28 at 7 pm June 29 at 7 pm June 30 at 3 pm

Runtime is 90 minutes, with no intermission.

Performers

Co-Choreographer/Writer/Director Jawole Willa Jo Zollar

Performer/Associate Artistic Director Courtney J. Cook

Performer/Company Member Kentoria Earle

Performer/Company Member Roobi Gaskins

Performer/Company Member Keola Jones

Performer/Company Member Symara Sarai

Performer/Company Member Mikaila Ware

Performer/Dance Captain Tendayi Kuumba

Performer Stephanie Battle

Musicians

Vocals Brandon Bain

Music Director, Bass Jordyn Davis

Drums Gary Jones

Keyboard T.W. Sample

Vocals Milton Suggs

Vocals Brianna Thomas

Vocals Charenee Wade

Design/Production

(Listed in Alphabetical Order)

Projections Designer Brittany Bland

SCAT! Intern Lyndon Bonnett

Production Stage Manager II Aislinn Curry

Associate Costume Designer Lori Gassie

Writing Collaborator Stephen Lloyd Helper

Costume Visionary Chanon Judson

Production Stage Manager I Jason Kaiser

Tour + Company Manager Jolie Saltiel

Lighting Designer Russell Sandifer

Production Assistant Shaena Smith

Associate Producer Cheri L. Stokes

Sound Designer/Supervisor Bill Toles

Movement Coach Bennalldra Williams

Administration

Executive Producer Jonathan D. Secor

Director of Production, Booking & Touring Michelle Coe

Music Management: Arts & Education Continuum, Inc. Darrell Bridges

Funding

The Fisher Center is generously supported by Jeanne Donovan Fisher, the Martin and Toni Sosnoff Foundation, Felicitas S. Thorne, the Advisory Boards of the Fisher Center at Bard and Bard Music Festival, Fisher Center and Bard Music Festival members, the Educational Foundation of America, the Ettinger Foundation, the Herman Goldman Foundation, the Smokler/Hebert Family Fund, the Thendara Foundation, and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature.

Lead commissioning support for the development and creation of SCAT!... The Complex Lives of Al & Dot, Dot & Al Zollar was provided by the Fisher Center at Bard through the Fisher Center's Artistic Innovation Fund, with lead support from Rebecca Gold and additional funding from The William and Lia G. Poorvu Family Foundation. Lead commissioning support was also provided by Brown Arts Institute at Brown University.

Additional commissioning support is generously provided by: The Perelman Performing Arts Center, The O'Donnell-Green Music and Dance Foundation, and American Dance Festival with support from the Doris Duke/SHS Foundations Award for New Works.

SCAT!... The Complex Lives of Al & Dot, Dot & Al Zollar is made possible in part by The Acton Family Fund, MAP Fund (supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Mellon Foundation), National Endowment for the Arts, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.









Special thanks

"Thank you to Florida State University School of Dance, Bob Holman, Paloma McGregor, William Nadylam, Al & Pat Zollar, and all of my family for their generous love and support." –Jawole Zollar

Thank you DuBois Akeen, Amanda Castro, Stephanie Mas, Chanon Judson & Mame Diarra Speis for their work in the development of SCAT!

Thank you to Kendra J. Bostock, Bianca Medina, Jaimé Yawa Dzandu, Pinar Goodstone, and the entire team at Urban Bush Women's BOLD initiative for spending time and making space with our Fisher Center and the greater Red Hook, Tivoli, Hudson, and Kingston communities.

Thank you to Tammy Bormann and Tahnia Belle for their long service to UBW.

DIRECTORS' NOTE

SCAT! is a poetic performance orature in the style of African American Toasts and informed by Chinua Achebe who combined the concept of the orality of African storytelling with literature. Toasts are the couplet form of rhyming that boast and toast the epic hero or heroine.

SCAT! is a post-vaudeville revue of jazz improvisation to make memory felt in the present while calling upon the past and imagining a future.

SCAT! is my ritual remembrance of my family migration through time and space from the Great Migration to the complex lives of Al & Dot Zollar in Kansas City. Part truth, part memory, part rumor, part myth... The Journey begins again and again.

-Jawole Willa Jo Zollar

WHO'S WHO

Jawole Willa Jo Zollar (Founder) Growing up in Kansas City, Missouri, Jawole Willa Jo Zollar earned her B.A. in dance from the University of Missouri at Kansas City and her M.F.A. in dance from Florida State University. In 1980 Jawole moved to New York City to study with Dianne McIntyre at Sounds in Motion. In 1984 Jawole founded Urban Bush Women (UBW) as a performance ensemble dedicated to exploring the use of cultural expression as a catalyst for social change.

In addition to creating over 34 works for Urban Bush Women, Zollar has created works for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Philadanco, and many universities across the United States. Her collaborations include Compagnie Jant-Bi from Senegal and Nora Chipaumire. She has recently worked as a choreographer for Taylor Mac's 24-Decade History of American Popular Music and Daniel Fish's Most Happy in Concert. In 2023, Zollar was commissioned by Houston Grand Opera to direct and choreograph a new Jake Heggie opera, *Intelligence*. Urban Bush Women has toured five continents and was selected as one of three U.S. dance companies to inaugurate a cultural diplomacy program for the U.S. Department of State in 2010. Zollar serves as director of the UBW Summer Leadership Institute, founding and visioning partner of Urban Bush Women, and as the Nancy Smith Fichter Professor of Dance and Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor at Florida State University. Zollar has been a United States Artists Wynn fellow and a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial fellow. She holds honorary degrees from Columbia College Chicago, Tufts University, Rutgers University, and Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA.

Zollar has received the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, the Dance Magazine Award, the Dance/USA Honor Award, the "Bessie" Lifetime Achievement in Dance Award for her work in the field, the Dance Teacher Award of Distinction, and the Martha Hill Dance Fund Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2020, The Ford Foundation declared Urban Bush Women one of America's Cultural Treasures. Zollar has recently been awarded a 2021 John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation fellow, the 2022 APAP Honors Award of Merit for Achievement in the Performing Arts, and the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize. Recently Jawole has been named the recipient of the American Dance Festival 2024 Samuel H. Scripps/American Dance Festival Award for lifetime achievement.

Chanon Judson (Co-Artistic Director) has been growing with the acclaimed Urban Bush Women since 2001, as a performer and now Co-Artistic Director. She's a director's fellow with New Perspective Theatre Women's Work Lab, Chicago Director's Lab, and APAP's Leadership Fellowship Program. Chanon is an avid arts educator and has served as faculty with Ailey Camp (Site Director), Alvin Ailey Arts in Education, Brooklyn Academy of Music, and Earl Mosley's Institute of the Arts. Chanon is the founder of Cumbe Center for Diasporic Arts' Dance Drum and Imagination Camp for Children and co-founder of Family Arts (FAM). Alongside her husband, they offer spaces for families to learn, explore, and create. Chanon is a newly appointed Visiting Associate Professor at the University at Buffalo where she is investigating jazz embodiment, education, and organizing aesthetics as well as leading a charge to redesign the jazz curriculum to better reflect the rich contributions of the African Diaspora.

Mame Diarra Speis (Co-Artistic Director) is a mother and movement improviser intrigued with play, risk, rigor, and experimentation. She is currently a performer and the Co-Artistic Director of the critically acclaimed Urban Bush Women. Speis has had the pleasure of working with Gesel Mason, The Dance Exchange, jumatatu poe, Deborah Hay (as part of "Some Sweet Day" curated by Ralph Lemon at The Museum of Modern Art), Baba Israel, Marjani Forte-Saunders, and Liz Lerman. She recently performed as a guest artist with MBDance in the Motherboard Suite with artist Saul Williams, under the direction of Bill T. Jones. Speis was the recipient of the Alvin Ailey New Directions Choreography Lab and was awarded a Bessie for Outstanding Performer in 2017. Her work has been featured at The Kennedy Center, Long Island University, The Joyce SoHo, Hollins University, Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance, Danspace Project, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Dixon Place, BRIC, Dance Place, and The Kelly Strayhorn Theater. Speis has developed a movement and teaching practice that explores pelvic mobility as the root of powerful locomotion and as a point of connection to the stories, experiences, and lineages that reside in each of us. She has been a guest artist and teacher throughout the United States, South America, Senegal, and Europe. Speis has also taught at Princeton University as a Lecturer in Dance. She has been fortunate to continue building a strong relationship with her alma mater, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), in various capacities and was the commencement speaker for the VCUarts graduating class of 2020-2021. Her recent projects include Walking with Trane co-choreographed with Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, and her collaboration with Chanon Johnson on Hair and Other Stories and Haint Blu.

Brandon Bain (Vocals) is a Brooklyn-born vocal and visual storyteller, and writer. Popularly welcomed at all of New York's major Jazz clubs, Bain was a staple at the legendary Minton's Playhouse in Harlem and has performed at the Apollo Music Cafe, Birdland, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center's Midsummer's Night Swing, the Havana Jazz Festival in Cuba and the All My Friends Are Stars Music Festival in Sweden. He has hosted a week-long celebration of Caribbean-American Heritage performing Jazz, Pop, and Calypso standards at Dizzy's Club at Jazz at Lincoln Center. As a visual artist, Bain found his niche as a videographer on the New York City Jazz scene focusing on younger talent. He specializes in stylized short-form documentaries, legacy projects, and capturing performances for under-sung musicians in traditional genres like Jazz, the Blues, and spoken word.

Stephanie Battle (Performer) is a dance artist, vocalist, somatic practitioner and educator. She earned her BFA from the University of the Arts and is currently working toward her MFA in Dance at Florida State University. Stephanie is a former member of Urban Bush Women under the direction of Jawole Zollar. She has danced with the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble, performing the works of Ronald K Brown, Donald McKayle, Milton Myers, Dianne McIntyre, Katherine Dunham and Talley Beatty. She has had the honor of working with Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon and Toshi Reagon in the rock opera, The Temptation of St. Anthony under the direction of Robert Wilson. Stephanie also had the privilege of performing in the Broadway production of The Lion King. She holds multiple certifications in yoga from Ishta, Sonic and Bend and Bloom in Hatha yoga, mindfulness meditation, yoga nidra, and restorative yoga. Stephanie is currently building a movement methodology that integrates dance, voice and somatic practice.

Brittany Bland (Projections Designer) is a passionate storyteller dedicated to fostering empathy through her work as a projection designer for the stage. She has an extensive portfolio that includes designs for theater, dance, and opera. Her notable recent credits include "Becoming A Man" at A.R.T., "Westerly Breath" at the MET Museum, "Amani" at Rattlestick Theater, "A Raisin

in the Sun" at the Public Theater, and "Goddess" at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Brittany holds an M.F.A. from the Yale School of Drama and is a proud recipient of the 1/52 Project grant, which supports emerging theater artists.

Lyndon Bonnett (SCAT! Intern) is a Trinidadian national interdisciplinary performing arts practitioner, dancer, choreographer, educator, and researcher. In December of 2020, Lyndon graduated Magna Cum Laude and was awarded his bachelor's in performing arts, from the University of Trinidad and Tobago, Academy for the Performing Arts. During his time there, he trained and further developed his dance vocabulary in genres such as ballet, contemporary, West African folk, modern, Indian classical improvisation, and Afro-Caribbean dance. He acquired training in production management, stage management, and sound and lighting design. In the Spring of 2024, Mr. Bonnett was awarded his MFA in Dance from the Florida State University School of Dance, where he was immersed in performance, choreographic exploration, dance kinesiology, dance pedagogy, and dance technological research.

Michelle Coe (Director of Production, Booking & Touring) has worked in the worlds of performing arts and independent film for more than two decades. Prior to joining UBW in 2017, she was Director of Booking at MAPP International Productions for 6+ years, overseeing the booking and touring of all of MAPP's multi-disciplinary projects. Artists included: Nora Chipaumire; Marc Bamuthi Joseph; Okwui Okpokwasili; Ralph Lemon; Samita Sinha; Dan Hurlin; Lars Jan; Gregory Maqoma/Vuyani Dance Theater; Emio Greco & Pieter C. Scholten (ICK Amsterdam); Faustin Linyekula; David Zambrano; and others. Prior to working with MAPP International, she was an Artist Representative at Pentacle and held a variety of positions in the dance and theater world with artists such as Noche Flamenca, Susan Marshall & Company, and many more. Michelle spent the earlier part of her career working on various film and television projects, and holding leadership roles in film organizations (Women Make Movies, Icarus Films, and Independent Filmmaker Project/Minnesota). She has served on numerous screening committees and evaluation juries, including Theater Communications Group/Global Connections, P.O.V./American Documentary, Corporation for Public Broadcasting's National Black Programming Consortium, and the New York State Council on the Arts. She is thrilled to be part of the UBW team.

Courtney J. Cook (Associate Artistic Director) is a Virginia Native now residing in Brooklyn, NY. She is a graduate of the Virginia Governor's School of the Arts and holds a B.F.A in Dance and Choreography from Virginia Commonwealth University. She is now Associate Artistic Director, BOLD facilitator, and performing company member with Urban Bush Women, was a company member with MBDance (Maria Bauman), and a featured artist with Marguerite Hemmings (we free). She is honored to be a recipient of the 2018 "Bessie" Award for Outstanding Performance for her work with all three of these organizations. As a creator, she has had the privilege of performing her solo work, "PoolPITT", as a featured artist in ModArts Dance Collective's Collective Thread '17, the Estrogenious Festival '17, curated by Maura Donohue, and BDAC's Creative Emancipation Collaboration, curated by Ebony Noelle Golden. She has also been able to create in collaboration with interdisciplinary artists Tendayi Kuumba and Greg Purnell (FLUXX), presented by BRICLab and Harlem Stage (2019). In 2022, Cook was involved as a performer/choreographic collaborator and vocalist in *Cannabis! A Viper Vaudeville*, created by Baba Israel and Grace Galu Kalambay (Soul Inscribed).

Jordyn Davis (Music Director, Bass) is a ground-breaking, multi-talented, and award-winning bassist, composer, singer-songwriter, and multi-instrumentalist. She is the first African-American woman to receive a Bachelor's Degree in Music Composition from Michigan State University and the first Michigan State student to receive a Bachelor's Degree in Music Composition and Jazz Studies concurrently. Davis has also completed a Masters's Degree in Jazz Studies at Michigan State University. After relocating to New York City, she was named one of two inaugural Jazz Leader Fellowship recipients by the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music & has been commissioned by the Kennedy Center, the New York Philharmonic, and the American Composers Orchestra. Her work spans various musical styles and has been featured on stages worldwide.

Kentoria Earle (Performer) was raised in Winter Haven, Florida, and is the proud daughter of Kent Earle and Victoria Wilson. She recently graduated from Florida State University where she obtained her Master of Arts in Dance and Studio Related Studies. Since graduating she has had the opportunity to work with choreographers/ artists such as Renegade Performance Group, Abigail Levine, and Urban Bush Women as an apprentice. Kentoria has spent her first few years post-grad entering the field as a Brooklyn-based performing artist and collaborator. She is working to build an artistic process that looks at solo and improvisational practices as a way to tap into ancestry and lineage-based movement exploration. Kentoria believes these practices support and open up spaces where artists can be fully present for what often results in holistic and sustainable approaches to our healing, individually and collectively.

Roobi Gaskins (Performer) is a NYC based artist, who specializes in dance, choreography, and wearable art. Although she has always had a passion for dance, she owes her movement genesis and training to 14 years of competitive figure skating, where she competed internationally as a member of the Puerto Rican national team. She began her formal dance training at Bard College where she received a BA in Dance with a focus in Africana Studies. Roobi has been a touring company member with Urban Bush Women since 2021. In addition, Roobi also holds a rigorous practice in house dance, where she teaches the form in the NYC area, and participates in battles both nationally and internationally.

Lori Gassie (Associate Costume Designer) After cultivating her design skills and southern charm while growing up in Florida, Lori Gassie moved to New York City. She has been designing costumes for dance, theater, film, and performance artists ever since. She graduated from Florida State University with a degree in Apparel Design. From there, she designed couture bridal wear under Suzanne Perron and custom dance costumes for Kenerly Kreations and Art Stone Theatrical. She is currently the owner and designer of Lori Gassie Designs, a custom costume studio in Queens, New York that brings to life a variety of concepts and characters whose work can be seen across international stages, performance artists, and television screens.

Craig Harris (Composer) exploded onto the jazz scene in 1976, bringing the entire history of the jazz trombone with him. Craig handled the total vernacular the way a skilled orator utilizes the spoken word. He has performed with a veritable Who's Who of progressive jazz's most important figures, and his own projects display both a unique sense of concept and a total command of the sweeping expanse of musical expression. Those two qualities have dominated Craig's forty years of activity, bringing him beyond the confines of the jazz world into multimedia and performance art as a composer, performer, conceptualist, music curator, and artistic director.

Craig, who comes from a tradition of art as cultural facilitation to help promote change, has employed his musical voice to comment on social injustice with projects including God's Trombones, based on James Weldon Johnson's book of sermons; Souls Within the Veil commemorating the centennial of W.E.B. DuBois's seminal work; TriHarlenium, a sound portrait and 30-year musical time capsule of Harlem; and Brown Butterfly, a tribute to the exquisite movements of Muhammad Ali.

Gary Jones (Drums) is a 23-year-old percussionist and composer based in Manhattan, New York. Born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, Gary has drawn a tremendous influence from Gospel and Hip Hop music growing up. Over the past few years, while attending the New School College of the Performing Arts, Gary has been studying traditional, avant-garde, and contemporary jazz with a notable list of artists, including Buster Williams, Dave Glasser, and Matt Wilson. Gary has worked and performed with many prestigious artists such as Terence Blanchard, Reggie Workman, Dominick Farinacci, and Cisco Swank among others. Gary has a deep passion for art and cherishes every moment serving as a creative vessel. His mission is to bring the community together through his music.

Keola Jones (Performer) born in Glen Allen, VA, land of the Powhatan people, is a 2022 graduate of the Dance & Choreography BFA program at Virginia Commonwealth University. Keola is a movement artist, performer, researcher, filmmaker, choreographer, and educator. Keola's movement practice is deeply influenced by research on how Black bodies hold and release emotions and trauma. She was recently an Inaugural Fellow with Johnnie Cruise Mercer's company TheRedprojectNYC in 2022 and now works for the company. She also works as an adjunct professor of dance at The College of William & Mary and is a company member of the Leah Glenn Dance Theatre.

Jason Kaiser (Production Stage Manager) has done 25 shows at Bard, including The Gauntlet, Most Happy in Concert, Bitter Sweet, Salome, and The Cunning Little Vixen. Select credits: Trisha Brown Dance Company tour; Bark of Millions (Sydney Opera House, tour); Monsoon Wedding (St. Ann's); Kiki and Herb SLEIGH (BAM); Social! and Party in the Bardo (both at Park Avenue Armory); Oklahoma! (Broadway, St. Ann's); A 24-Decade History of Popular Music with Taylor Mac (St. Ann's, tour); Available Light with Lucinda Childs Dance Company; Einstein on the Beach (BAM, tour); three world-premiere plays by Athol Fugard; two European tours of Jesus Christ Superstar directed and choreographed by Baayork Lee.

Tendayi Kuumba (Performer & Dance Captain) One of Dance Magazine's "25 to watch 2023" & Chita Rivera's Outstanding Female Dancer on Broadway 2022 as Lady in Brown in the Tony Nominated Broadway Revival of Ntozoké Shange's "For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/ When the Rainbow is Enuf" choreographed/directed by Camille A. Brown. International dancer, choreographer, singer, songwriter, & Spelman College graduate, Tendayi formerly performed as a background vocalist/dancer & original cast member of Special Tony Award-Winning David Byrne's America Utopia on Broadway and its World Tour in 2018 and the HBO Film adaptation directed by Spike Lee.

Choreographer, vocalist, actress, and previously a touring company member of Urban Bush Women, Tendayi is a longtime collaborator with partner Greg Purnell under the alias ÜFLYMOTHERSHIP. A Collective of sonic/choreographic projects including, The Mixtape, Incog-

negro, and other works that have been featured at AfroPunk, Gibney Dance, Stephen Petronio Residency Center, New York Live Arts, Movement Researches' Spring Festival, Czech Republic of NY, "Prague Effects", Dancespace "Collective Terrains " platform, Spelman Colleges' "Toni Cade Bambara Scholar- Activism Conference, Harlem Stage, Hi-ARTS, BRICLab, Dance Mission Theaters' D.I.R.T Festival 2021 & Park Armorys' 100 Women/ 100 Years and Lincoln Center's Restart Stages. She's worked with choreographers T. Lang, Marjani Forte'-Saunders (7NMS), ASÉ Dance Theater Collective, Nathan Trice, & Philadelphia Operas' We Shall Not be Moved directed by Bill T. Jones. She continues to build her pedagogy as a teaching artist & B.O.L.D Facilitator for Urban Bush Women. She gives thanks and blessings for life, love, breath, and the pursuit of happiness through creativity.

Mikaila Ware (Performer) (B.F.A. Florida State University) grew up in Atlanta, Georgia, where she trained at Price Performing Arts Center and Dekalb School of the Arts. Now a NY-based movement artist, teacher, and facilitator, Mikaila has worked with choreographers such as Kayla Farrish, André Zachery, and Johnnie Cruise Mercer. She was a guest teacher at SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Dance Program (Fall '20). Featured performances of Mikaila's appear in articles such as the NY Times, Dance Magazine, Dance Enthusiast, and Danspace Project. Additionally, Mikaila completed the Accessibility Partnerships and Programs Fellowship at Lincoln Center and is an alumna of the Diversity in Arts Leadership program with the Arts and Business Council of New York. She is currently a company member with Urban Bush Women.

Jolie Saltiel (Tour + Company Manager) is an arts administrator, dance artist, and cultural producer. A NYC native, Jolie holds a BFA in Dance and Business Administration from The State University of New York at Brockport. She has since worked across NYC and abroad to bring arts performances and installations to life. In her work activating performances and advocating for artists, Jolie has contributed to the NYC FREE festival at Little Island, Mark Morris Dance Group, Americans for the Arts Diversity in Arts Leadership program, Hivewild, and INSITU Site-Specific Dance Festival. As a mover and dance maker, Jolie is passionate about bringing art to public spaces and engaging with and contributing to communal joy, growth, and rebellion. She is thrilled to join the UBW community and to work with the powerful people involved.

Symara Sarai (Performer) a Portland, Oregon native currently residing in Brooklyn, has immersed herself in interdisciplinary and choreographic studies globally. Her work varies due to the different influences she has embraced throughout her life. A 2023 Bessie Winner for Breakout Choreographer, Symara is also a recipient of the Dai Ailian Foundation Scholarship based in Trinidad and Tobago. The scholarship led her to Beijing, China where she spent two years gaining an associate degree in modern choreography at the renowned Beijing Dance Academy. Symara is a graduate of SUNY Purchase's Conservatory of Dance Program. She was a resident artist for Bearnstow, Gibney 6.2 Work Up, Gallim's 2022 Moving Artist's Residency, BAX's Fall 2022 Space Grant Program, and Center for Performance Research's 2022 AIR Program. She is a 2023 Women in Motion Commissioned Artist. Their work as a performer and maker has been reviewed and featured in the NY Times, Dance Enthusiast, and Fjord, as well as promoted through Forbes. She has had multiple film works commissioned by Berlin-based choreographer Christoph Winkler.

T.W. Sample (Keyboard) a native of Memphis, Tennessee, has a style that spans from Jazz to Gospel, R & B to Hip-Hop, and Classic Rock to Country. His talent allows him to be a proficient pianist, Hammond B3 organist, and keyboardist. T.W. Sample graduated from The Ohio State

University with a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education, William Paterson University with a Master of Music in Jazz Performance, and Five Towns College with a Doctor of Musical Arts in Jazz Performance and Commercial Music. In addition to touring, Dr. T.W. Sample is an educator, a music producer, and a proud member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated. www. TWSample.com

Russell Sandifer (Lighting Designer) is a Professor, Associate Chair, Director of Production, and Lighting Designer for the Florida State University School of Dance, where he teaches visual design and production coursework. He has designed roughly 2,000 dance works over a forty-plus- year career, almost one hundred musicals, ten operas, and a few straight plays. Companies include The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts for The Suzanne Farrell Ballet, Urban Bush Women, and Seaside Music Theatre. He was also the Production Manager and Lighting Director for the 2012 American College Dance Association National Festival. Russell is a member of the United Scenic Artists and a lifetime member of the American College Dance Association.

Jonathan D. Secor (Executive Producer) has worked in and around the arts for over three decades as a facilitator for creative artists and ideas. He is delighted to once again be working with Urban Bush Women. As a creative producer, Jonathan has been part of projects large and small, including as a producer for the recent New York CityFree Festival on Little Island, as Artistic Director for the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Director of Performing Arts at MASS MoCA, Director of Programming at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and the Founder and Director of the Berkshire Cultural Resource Center in North Adams, MA. Jonathan was instrumental in the creation of the arts management major at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) and has taught at SUNY Purchase, Yale School of Drama, and MCLA. Jonathan was General Manager for 651, and started his career as a production manager and stage manager, working throughout the United States and Europe. Jonathan splits his time between Florida Mountain, MA, and Harlem, NYC, and is the proud father of Alegra Dora and Christina Gabriela.

Cheri L. Stokes (Associate Producer) born and raised in Bed-Stuy Brooklyn, received her M.F.A. in Choreography and Performance from Florida State University (2017) and a B.A. in Dance Studies with a K-12 Dance Teaching Licensure from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (2005). Cheri's expertise includes over ten years of dance education and arts administration. She has been a guest teaching artist at various institutions including, The Florida State University, Austin Peay State University, Elon University, Western Kentucky University, University of Tampa, Bard College, and The University At Buffalo. She is the recipient of the Stephen Petronio Retreat and Restore dance residency (Spring 2021), Brooklyn Arts Exchange Space Grant Residency (2023), Brooklyn Arts Exchange Artist in Residence (2024/2025), Hi-Arts Critical Breaks Artist in Residence (Spring 2024), and the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) Support for Artists Grant (2024). www.cherilstokes.com

Milton Suggs (Vocals) voice and musical approach reflect the profound African-American heritage from the past century and beyond Rooted in the blues, Suggs's rich baritone echoes the breadth and power of Joe Williams, his soulful intensity evokes Donny Hathaway, and his velvet tones are reminiscent of Nat King Cole. A master of phrasing and dynamics, Milton's music, as a composer, arranger, and lyricist, is both honest and inventive, drawing from a myriad of genres to create a distinct identity.

Voted repeatedly as a top 10 rising star male vocalist in Downbeat Magazine's annual critic's poll, Milton has worked with renowned artists like the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, Orrin Evans, Wycliffe Gordon, and Ulysses Owens. Milton has produced five albums and continuously develops new projects as he remains dedicated to exploring new creative terrain and furthering the legacy of his predecessors.

Brianna Thomas (Vocals) Born and raised in Peoria, Brianna grew up surrounded by music. Her father, Charlie Thomas, not only influenced her with his own unique talents as a vocalist and percussionist, he created an exceptionally well-rounded musical environment that fostered Brianna's emerging abilities. At the tender age of six, Brianna made her singing debut performing a duet rendition of the jazz classic, "What A Wonderful World," with her father. At the age of eight, she won her first of 13 trophies from various district and regional talent shows. Between the ages of eight and ten, she had her first gigs performing for a variety of banquets, black tie affairs, and as a guest on local radio stations. Brianna's extensive list of stateside performances includes appearances with Fred Anderson, Von Freeman, Houston Person, and the Barber Brothers. She has performed across the country from New Orleans to Washington, DC's Kennedy Center. In 2001, Thomas was awarded "High School Jazz Vocalist of the Year" by Downbeat magazine. Notably, Brianna Thomas is the youngest person ever to be inducted into Peoria's African-American Hall of Fame at the age of thirteen in 1996. She has also received a certificate of excellence from the State of Illinois in recognition of her musical accomplishments.

Vincent Thomas (Co-Choreographer) dancer, choreographer, and teacher, received his MFA in Dance from Florida State University and a BME in Music from the University of South Carolina. He has danced with Dance Repertory Theatre (FSU), Randy James Dance Works (NY/NJ), EDGEWORKS Dance Theater (DC), and Liz Lerman Dance Exchange (MD). His choreography has been presented at various national and international venues including DUMBO Festival (NY), Philly Fringe (PA), Edinburgh Fringe Festival (UK-Scotland), Barcelona and Madrid, Spain, Avignon, France, Athens, Greece, Bari, Italy, Copenhagen, Denmark, Taipei, and Singapore. He received rave reviews for his performance of "Come Change" (2012) and "iWitness" (2014) in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland. Vincent was the Movement Coach/Choreographer for Everyman Theater's Brother's Size by Tarell Alvin McCraney, Mosaic Theatre's Unexplored Interior by Jay Sander, and Everyman Theater's Los Otros by Ellen Fitzhugh. He is the Artistic Director/ Choreographer of the national touring What's Going On project. Vincent was awarded the 2017 Pola Nirenska Award for Outstanding Achievement in Dance (DC), the 2019 University System of Maryland Regents Faculty Award for Excellence in Research, Scholarship & Creative Activity, the 2020 MDEA Living Legacy Award, the 2021 Baker Artist Award, a 2022 Baker Award Finalist, and a 2023 Black History Month Honoree for Richland District Two (SC). He is the Founder/ Artistic Director of VTDance, an Urban Bush Women BOLD Facilitator, a faculty member for the UBW Summer Institutes (NY), an Associate Choreographer for INTELLIGENCE Opera (with Jawole Zollar), and Professor of Dance at Towson University (MD). www.vtdance.org

Bill Toles (Sound Designer/Supervisor) is an Audelco Award winner and Grammy nominee who works across specialties as a musician, composer, designer, director, creator, production manager, producer, and manager in theater, film, dance, music, and performance and installation art. He heads BLACK ATLANTIC creative collective and MAROON MOTION MEDIA, multi-media

production companies providing creative solutions for live performance, installation art, and film and video production. BAcc and M3's services include concert and event production planning and management, event documentation to recorded/filmed media, media design and implementation for live stage, film and video pre-and post-production, Foley, sound effects, music composition and audio production, music supervision services, information and direction on intellectual property rights issues, and audio design consultation.

Charenee Wade (Vocals) the 1st Runner-Up in the 2010 Thelonious Monk Vocal Competition, the award-winning and critically acclaimed vocalist, arranger, educator, and composer from New York City has excited audiences all over the world with her ingenuity and vibrancy through her artistry. Recipient of the 2017 Jazz at Lincoln Center Millennial Swing Award, Wade has worked with notable artists including Wynton Marsalis, Terri Lyne Carrington, Christian McBride, Winard Harper, Eric Reed, Jacky Terrason, Curtis Lundy, Robert Glasper, and Kyle Abraham (MacArthur Genius Awardee). Wade's current CD, Offering: The Music of Gil Scott-Heron and Brian Jackson, is a powerful re-interpretation of the poet's musical library, which features notable artists including Lonnie Plaxico, Marcus Miller, Stefon Harris, Malcolm-Jamal Warner, and Christian McBride (spoken word).

Talvin Wilks (Dramaturg) is a playwright, director and dramaturg based in Minneapolis and New York City. Dramaturgy Credits: for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enough (2022 Broadway Revival), Dreaming Zenzile (New York Theatre Workshop/NBT), Between the World and Me (The Apollo), Scat!, Haint Blu, Walkin' with 'Trane, Hep Hep Sweet Sweet (Urban Bush Women), ink, Black Girl: Linguistic Play, Mr. TOL E. RanCE (Camille A. Brown and Dancers), In a Rhythm, A History, Necessary Beauty, Landing-Place, Verge (Bebe Miller Company). He is an Associate Professor in the Theatre Arts and Dance Department, University of Minnesota/Twin Cities, a 2020 McKnight Theater Artist Fellow and a 2022 McKnight Presidential Fellow.

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BARD COLLEGE

Founded in 1860, Bard College is a four-year residential college of the liberal arts and sciences located 90 miles north of New York City. With the addition of the Montgomery Place and Massena properties, Bard's campus consists of more than 1,200 parklike acres in the Hudson River Valley. The College offers bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, and bachelor of music degrees, with majors in nearly 40 academic programs; advanced degrees through 13 graduate programs; nine early colleges; and numerous dual-degree programs nationally and internationally. Building on its 164-year history as a competitive and innovative undergraduate college, Bard has expanded its mission as a private institution acting in the public interest across the country and around the world to meet broader student needs and increase access to liberal arts education. The undergraduate program at the main campus in upstate New York has a reputation for scholarly excellence, a focus on the arts, and civic engagement. Bard is committed to enriching culture, public life, and democratic discourse by training tomorrow's thought leaders. For more information about Bard College, visit bard.edu.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR BARD COLLEGE IN ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON Developed in Cooperation with the Stockbridge-Munsee Community

In the spirit of truth and equity, it is with gratitude and humility that we acknowledge that we are gathered on the sacred homelands of the Munsee and Muhheaconneok people, who are the original stewards of this land. Today, due to forced removal, the community resides in Northeast Wisconsin and is known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. We honor and pay respect to their ancestors, past and present, as well as to future generations, and we recognize their continuing presence in their homelands. We understand that our acknowledgment requires those of us who are settlers to recognize our own place in and responsibilities towards addressing inequity and that this ongoing and challenging work requires that we commit to real engagement with the Munsee and Mohican communities to build an inclusive and equitable space for all. For more information about the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, please visit mohican.com.

URBAN BUSH WOMEN (UBW)

Celebrating its 40th Anniversary, URBAN BUSH WOMEN (UBW) is a groundbreaking Black women-led theatrical dance company and social activism ensemble founded in 1984 by visionary choreographer Jawole Willa Jo Zollar. Through its mission of engaging with artists, activists, audiences, and communities through performances, artist development, education, and community engagement, the award-winning nonprofit has performed throughout the United States, as well as Asia, Australia, Canada, Germany, South America, Europe, and Senegal (in collaboration with Germaine Acogny and her all-male Compagnie JANT-BI). UBW has been an engine and amplifier for the stories of Black Women+ for forty years. UBW affects the overall ecology of the arts by promoting artistic legacies; projecting the voices of the under-heard and people of color; bringing attention to and addressing issues of equity in the dance field and throughout the United States; and by providing platforms and serving as a conduit for experimental art makers. Signature programs run by UBW include the Summer Leadership Institute (SLI), (BOLD Builders, Organizers & Leaders through Dance) the Choreographic Center Initiative (CCI), and the CCI Producing Program (CCI 2.0). Now directed by artistic leaders Chanon Judson and Mame Diarra Speis, UBW combines radical performance, deep engagement, and ancestral knowledge from the African diaspora into a force that is urgent, forward-looking, and essential. www.urbanbushwomen.org

FOR LOVE OF THE WORLD

THE CAMPAIGN FOR BARD COLLEGE

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Spurred by a \$500-million challenge grant from George Soros and the Open Society Foundations, Bard College has raised for its endowment more than \$380,000,000 of the \$500-million match. Endowment commitments in the form of planned gifts and bequests made by December 31, 2025, will be matched dollar for dollar. Donations dedicated to the Fisher Center or Bard Music Festival ensure the resiliency and future of the performing arts at Bard.

The College has also embarked on a comprehensive campaign that includes raising critical annual support and securing dedicated funds for capital projects such as an expanded wellness and fitness center, new suite-style residences on North Campus, and the Maya Lin-designed Performing Arts Lab.

Fisher Center Performing Arts Lab

A creative haven in the Hudson Valley and catalyst for artistic innovation in the US, the Fisher Center at Bard is deepening its commitment to artists by expanding space for research and experimentation, rehearsal and performance. Situated in meadows to the west of the landmark Frank Gehry–designed Fisher Center building and overlooking woodlands and the Catskill Mountains, a new 23,500-square-foot studio building will broaden Bard College's cultural campus and provide an artistic home for artists at all stages of their careers.

Thanks to our generous donors, the Maya Lin-designed Performing Arts Lab will open in 2026 as the home of Fisher Center LAB, the acclaimed residency and commissioning program for professional artists, and the site of rehearsal and teaching facilities for Bard's undergraduate programs in Dance and in Theater and Performance.



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For more information or to pledge your support, please contact Alessandra Larson, Director of Institutional Advancement and Strategy at 845-758-7990 or alarson@bard.edu Support for the Fisher Center and Bard Music Festival is provided by the following individuals, corporations, and foundations, among others. We thank you for joining the late Richard B. Fisher with your generosity and partnership.

Special thanks to those who are supporting our programs with their commitments to the Bard College Endowment Challenge. Thank you for ensuring Bard's continuity as a beacon for higher education—bolstering the development of innovative programs that offer access to rigorous, high-quality education for new populations around the world.

If you wish to become a member or make a contribution in support of vital arts experiences, please call 845-758-7987 or visit fishercenter.bard.edu/support. Thank you!

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Nora Rubenstone, *Production Manager (Ulysses)*

Zoe Steenwyk, Stage Manager (Bard Music Festival)

Robert Strickstein, Assistant Production Manager

Piper Vaught, Associate Production Manager

Props

Patrice Escandón, Props Supervisor Nick Bernard, Props Artisan Lola Buncher '20, Assistant Props Supervisor Ellie Hart Brown, Props Artisan

Scenic

Tommy Bennett '25, Stagehand Jacob Bubeck, Carpenter Liz Cohen, Carpenter Emma Covert, Carpenter Alden Girsch, Carpenter
Robert Gyurko, Carpenter
Jonathan Jensen, Carpenter
Sage Liotta '25, Stagehand
Emma Pitot, Carpenter
Xeno Szalla '25, Carpenter
Daisy Taysom, Carpenter
Ros Werner Winslow '25, Carpenter

Video

Max Rosenfeld, Video Technician Hannah Tran, Projection Programmer

Spiegeltent

Maxwell Barnes, Spiegeltent Host Elsa Joiner '24, Spiegeltent Host Ada Malikova '25, Spiegeltent Host Mohammad Osman Saeedi '24, Spiegeltent Host Jazmine Williams, Spiegeltent Host Supervisor

Additional Ulysses Staff

Liz Cohen, Deckhand
Mina Devore '24, A2
Sam Dickson '19, Deckhand
John Gasper, Video Engineer
Chris Hanian, LUMA Head Electrician
Duane Lauginiger, House Engineer
Parker Nelson, Wardrobe Supervisor
Nora Rubenstone '11, Production Manager
tobin santoro, Light Board Operator
Jade Stricker, Dresser
Xeno Szalla '25, Deckhand
Ellie Turner, Dresser

SCAT!

Production Staff

Sarah Kay Adams, A2 Zoe Barash, Flyperson Ivy Comery, Electrician/Follow Spot Operator Emma Covert, Deckhand Shane Crowley '18, Light Board Operator Hunter Cuyler GCP '25, Dresser Walter (Walli) Daniels, Electrician/ Follow Spot Operator Cortnei Edwards, First Hand/Dresser Jay Greenberg, Electrician/Follow Spot Operator Robert Gyurko, Deckhand Uvenka Jean-Baptiste, Wardrobe Supervisor Maggie McFarland '21, Deck Captain Laura McGrath, Dresser Lauren Petrocelli, A2

Graham Polhill, Electrician

Katie Thorn, Electrician Ros Werner Winslow '25, Deckhand

Luca Raufer '26, Production Assistant Hick Renadette, Flyperson

Conor Thiele, Sosnoff Head Electrician

Alexander Roberts, *Mix Engineer* Max Rosenfeld, *QLab Programmer* Jest Spickler, *Electrician* Gemma Tait, *Electrician* "A HOTHOUSE FOR THE CREATION OF UNCOMPROMISING, CROSS-DISCIPLINARY HITS"-New York Times

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GIACOMO MEYERBEER

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