

MUSIC CENTER
STRATHMORE

Strathmore Presents

PHILADANCO!
THE PHILADELPHIA DANCE COMPANY
CO-PRESENTED BY CITYDANCE

Friday, January 28, 2022, 8pm



PROGRAM

BETWEEN THE LINES

Choreographer: Francisco Gella

Music: Philip Glass & Gidon Kremer

Lighting Design: Nick Kolin

Costume Design/Execution: Natasha Guruleva

Dancers

Kaylah Arielle, Janine Beckles, William E. Burden, Mikaela Fenton, Clarricia Golden,
Jameel M. Hendricks, Victor Lewis, Jr., Brandi Pinnix, Lamar Rogers, Brittany Wright

“Between the Lines” is a work that was created and inspired by the architectural drawings of Frank Lloyd Wright who himself was inspired by Beethoven’s lush compositions. Wright often stated that whenever he listened to Beethoven’s music he saw movement and design. The dance illustrates a certain architectural flare with more than a hint of romanticism while drawing influences from choreographic legend Gene Hill Sagan and the classical idiom.

This ballet is made possible by generous support from the National Endowment for the Arts, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and The Philadelphia Foundation.

Pause

THIS PLACE

Choreographer: Ray Mercer

Music: Darryl J. Hoffman

Costumes Design & Execution: Natasha Guruleva

Lighting Design: Nick Kolin

Dancers

Kaylah Arielle, Janine Beckles, William E. Burden, Mikaela Fenton, Clarricia Golden,
Jameel M. Hendricks, Victor Lewis, Jr., Brandi Pinnix, Lamar Rogers, Brittany Wright

The piece is motivated by the idea and feeling of community. It is a collage of movements that addresses how a group that shares a common interest interacts socially, humanistically, and intimately. This is a technically based, high energy, physical work that explores many aspects of community in five very different sections, coming together in one collage of work.

This ballet is made possible by generous grants from the New England Foundation for the Arts, PNC Arts Alive, National Endowment for the Arts, William Penn Foundation, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Lincoln Financial Group, Portfolio Associates, Inc., and the Doris Duke Foundation.

Intermission

WITH(IN)VERSE

Choreographer: Tommie-Waheed Evans
Sound Design: Jon Baldwin
Costumes Execution: Mondo Morales
Lighting Design: Clifton Taylor
Music: Signal, Loscil, T.L. Barrett
Collaborators: The Dancers

Dancers

Kaylah Arielle, Janine Beckles, William E. Burden, Mikaela Fenton, Clarricia Golden,
Jameel M. Hendricks, Victor Lewis, Jr., Brandi Pinnix, Lamar Rogers

This does not seek to be gospel as celebration nor as evangelism. This is gospel as desperation. The work intertwines the ideas of spirituality and sorrow by focusing on the often strong presence of these ideas when hitting rock bottom. Pastor T. L. Barrett's song "Father Stretch My Hands" becomes the embodiment of deliverance.

This work was cocommissioned by The Krannert Center of The University of Illinois @ Urbana-Champaign. Additional support comes from The Lomax Family Foundation, PNC Arts Alive, The Philadelphia Cultural Fund, Art Work-National Endowment for the Arts, and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.

CONGLOMERATE

Choreographer: Anthony Burrell
Assistant to Choreographer: Charon Mapp
Music Compilation by: Darryl J. Hoffman
Costumes Design: Emilio Sosa
Costume Execution: Natasha Guruleva
Lighting Design: Nick Kolin

Dancers

Kaylah Arielle, Janine Beckles, William E. Burden, Mikaela Fenton, Clarricia Golden, Jameel M. Hendricks,
Victor Lewis, Jr., Floyd McLean, Jr., Brandi Pinnix, Lamar Rogers, Brittany Wright

"This work pays homage to the rich history of Black Dance in Philadelphia that inspired my journey as a Dancer, Choreographer and Creative Director. . ." (A. Burrell)

This ballet is made possible by generous grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and the Jean Fishers Foundation.

ABOUT PHILADANCO!

The award-winning Philadelphia Dance Company (PHILADANCO!), the resident company of The Kimmel Center, turned 50 in 2020 and is now celebrating 52 years of providing exceptional dance performances and training to dancers and audiences throughout the United States and around the world.

Its original mission “to present the highest quality of professional dance performance and to provide exceptional training for the improvement of skills for emerging professional dancers and choreographers in a nurturing environment while increasing the appreciation of dance among its many communities” has withstood budget cuts and the passage of time. PHILADANCO! survives and thrives despite the current economic climate.

Since its inception in 1970, PHILADANCO! has had a significant impact on the dance world. As a cultural ambassador representing the United States, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and Philadelphia, its artistic direction and renowned national and international guest choreographers have developed a reputation of producing a dance repertory with passion, power, skill, and diversity. A stellar faculty (handpicked by Joan Myers Brown, Founder of PHILADANCO!) has trained more than 4,500 dancers in a comprehensive program achieving the highest level of technical skills in dance and performance. The unique blend of dance styles of PHILADANCO!, and its roster of 50 to 60 concert performances and approximately 45 residencies each year has made them one of the most sought-after modern dance companies in the United States.

It has received recognition such as, a National Endowment of the Arts Fellowship and the prestigious National Choreography Planning Grant. It organized the historic first two International Conferences for Black Dance Companies in Philadelphia (1988). For the past 30 years, more than 600 people have assembled annually for the International Conference on Black Dance, headed by the International Association of Blacks in Dance (1991). Its most recent success was the collaboration with The Apollo Theater Foundation, Inc. “Get On The Good Foot,” and “Straight Outta Philly” with Rennie Harris Pruemovement. It constantly engages with the community through Drexel University, The University of Pennsylvania, Next Move concerts, Breaking Barriers, and others.

More importantly, PHILADANCO! believes in and continues to provide quality arts instruction to young people with authentic learning experiences that engage their minds, hearts, and bodies. Its record of performing opportunities, commissioned works, and life changing experiences is unequalled.

ABOUT THE CHOREOGRAPHERS

FRANCISCO GELLA (*Between the Lines*)

Francisco Gella's distinguished career as a dancer, choreographer, artistic director, dance educator, and social entrepreneur spans more than 20 years—since he took his first formal dance class at the University of Washington at 19. His award-winning, innovative choreography and highly effective teaching methods are sought after by professional companies, universities, and conservatories across North America and around the globe. Gella's choreographic commissions include Repertory Dance Theatre, Ballet Pacifica, California Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet's Shut-Up and Dance Production, and PHILADANCO!'s Danco on Danco program, to name a few. In 2013, Gella premiered *Concentric Harmonies* at Celebrate Dance in Los Angeles, which received the Grand Prize at the McCallum Theatre Choreography Festival in 2014. From 2014–15, his work *Solstice*, performed by the Phoenix Ballet, had its world premier at the 60th Anniversary Gala of the Beijing Dance Academy and its European premiere at Poland's prestigious Lodz International Ballet Festival. In April 2016, his work *Souvenirs de Mouvement* was featured at the nationally recognized Booker T. Washington High School of the Performing and Visual Arts annual Flying Horse Gala. Gella is the founding artistic director of NUEVO School of Contemporary Dance and COLABO Youth Dance Collective (2008–2015), the founding artistic director of New Century Dance Project, and the lead ballet faculty of the 24/Seven Dance Convention.

RAY MERCER (*This Place*)

Ray Mercer is a native of Omaha, Nebraska, and has set works with various companies across the country including PHILADANCO!, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, New Jersey Ballet, Dallas Black Dance Theatre, Ballet Pensacola, Cleo Parker Robinson Dance, and Dancers Responding to Aids. He has performed with Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, as a guest artist with Boston Ballet, and is currently in the Broadway production of *The Lion King*. He is also a resident choreographer for the Ailey/

Fordham Bachelor of Fine Arts Program. Mercer is the recipient of many awards including a 2012 Joffrey Ballet Choreographers of Color Award, a Pensacola Ballet Choreographers Award, and he is a five-time winner of Broadway's Gypsy of the Year Award for best onstage performance. Acknowledged for his choreography in *The New York Times*, *Chicago Sun Times*, and *Movement Magazine*, Mercer has also been commissioned to choreograph a work for the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, DC.

TOMMIE-WAHEED EVANS (*With(in)Verse*)

Tommie-Waheed Evans began his formal training with Michelle Blossom at the Dance Connection in Los Angeles, California. He continued his studies under the mentorship of Andrea Calomee and Karen McDonald at Hamilton High School and received a fellowship at the Ailey School. Evans has performed works of Matthew Rushing, Benoit-Swan Pouffer, Karol Armitage, and Debbie Allen. He was an assistant to the artistic director of Ailey II, Troy Powell. Appearances include *The Parkers*, the Emmy Awards, HopeBoykinDance, *Radio City Christmas Spectacular*, Lula Washington Dance Theater, PHILADANCO!, and Complexions Contemporary Ballet. In 2006, Evans founded Waheed-Works. He has set choreography on The Garden State Dance Festival, Philadelphia Dance Boom Festival, Verb Ballet, Eleone Dance Theatre, Boston Conservatory, and The University of the Arts. Evans is currently the Artist-in-Residence at PHILADANCO! and on faculty at the University of the Arts. His awards include a Dance/USA Philadelphia, Rocky Award, Billy Penn: Who Next Arts, the Howard Gilman Foundation Fellowship Winner, *The Tribune's* 2017 Most Influential African Americans, 10 People under 40, BalletX 2017 Ballet Choreographic Fellowship, and he was selected as an emerging leader by Dance/USA. Evans recently received his Master of Fine Arts in Choreography from Jacksonville University and is a member of the International Association of Blacks in Dance's COHI project. Most recently, Evans received the 2021 prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship.

ANTHONY BURRELL (*Conglomerate*)

Anthony Burrell is a Philadelphia born creative director, choreographer, and actor. He can be seen as the creative force on E! Entertainment for *Mariah's World*, Mariah Carey's Vegas Residency *ItoInfinity*, *Sweet Sweet Fantasy Tour*, *Un-Silent Night Christmas*, and *All I Want for Christmas* at the Beacon Theater. Burrell is part of the artistic team behind Beyonce's Super Bowl halftime shows, and her performances at the Grammy's (2017), MTV Music Awards (2016), Country Music Awards (2016), and The Formation World Tour, as well as countless music videos.

He won an MTV Video Music Award (Best Choreography) for Beyonce's *Formation* and was nominated (Best Choreography) in Beyonce's *Sorry*. Recent film credits include *Lemonade* visual album, *Bad Grandpa Jack Ass 4*, and *Leave It on the Floor*, as well as commercials for Pepsi, Direct TV, DKNY, Ivy Park. He made his Broadway debut as Hank in Twyla Tharp's *Come Fly Away* and costarred in the film *The Skinny*. Burrell has choreographed and performed in Don Ardens' *Jubilee* (lead choreographer), *Raising Asia*, Abby Ultimate Dance Competition, *Good Morning America*, *So You Think You Can Dance Top 24*, *Dance Moms*, *GLEE*, and Fox's hit series *Empire*. Burrell has danced with PHILADANCO!, Eleone, Koresh, Prism Dance Theater, Danco II, Ailey II, and The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater as a principal dancer. He is the founder and director of Breaking Barriers Summer Dance Intensive and AB Project. Most recently, Burrell opened the Anthony Burrell Center for Dance, a multifaceted dance institution for preprofessionals located in Atlanta, Georgia.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Joan Myers Brown, DFA, DHL, DA

Founder / Artistic Advisor, Philadelphia, PA

Joyce Myers Brown is the honorary chairperson for the International Association of Blacks in Dance, an organization she established in 1991. She is also the founder of the International Conference of Black Dance Companies in 1988 and is a distinguished visiting professor at the University of the Arts and Howard University in Washington, DC. She was awarded an honorary doctorate in Humane Letters by Ursinus College and an honorary doctorate in arts from the University of Pennsylvania. Listed in *Who's Who in America* and described as an "innovator and communicator," Brown's efforts for dance excellence are only part of her contribution to the field. She served as cochair of Dance/USA Philadelphia. Her life is documented in *Joan Myers Brown and the Audacious Hope of the Black Ballerina* by Brenda Dixon Gottschild. She has received awards from the city of Philadelphia, the state of Pennsylvania, the Embassy of the United States of America, and she has been recognized as a Distinguished Daughter of Pennsylvania and Outstanding Alumni of West Philadelphia High School. She also received the prestigious National Medal of Arts from President Barack Obama in 2012. In 2017, Brown has received the *Philadelphia Inquirer's* Industry Icon Award, and she was honored with the Philadelphia Cultural Funds David Cohen Award in 2019.

Kaylah Arielle

Kaylah Arielle is a native of Baltimore, Maryland, and started her dance training at age 5 with classical ballet and pointe at the Ballet Royale Institute of Maryland. She then attended Baltimore School for the Arts where she studied under Norma Pera, Linda-Denise Fisher-Harrell, and Anton Wilson. Arielle has received scholarships to train at the Dance Theatre of Harlem and the Ailey School. She graduated from Spelman College with her bachelors of arts in dance performance and choreography. While pursuing her degree, Arielle was a company artist with the Atlanta Dance Connection under the direction of Allyne D. Gartrell. She is also a former member of the U.S. Air Force Reserve, where she held the rank of Airman first class.

Janine N. Beckles

Janine N. Beckles started dancing at 6 years old with the Dance Theatre of Harlem. She continued with the studio for 8 years, receiving fellowships. Beckles continued her training at LaGuardia High School of the Performing Arts and the Ailey School (performing *Memoria*, *Hymn*, and *Revelations*) on full scholarship. Beckles received her bachelors of fine arts degree in dance performance and a bachelors of arts degree in sociology from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. She was a National Foundation of the Arts award recipient in modern dance (2000). A former member of Dallas Black Dance Theatre for five years, Beckles is also a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and serves on the staff of the Philadelphia School of Dance Arts teaching ballet. She has served as an assistant to choreographer for Thang Dao. In her spare time, she is an assistant at a law firm in Philadelphia and is the assistant to the artistic director of PHILADANCO!

William E. Burden

Formal dance training for **William E. Burden** began at the Creative and Performing Arts High School under the direction of LaDeva Davis. He attended the Rock School of Dance Education and was a scholarship student at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center. Burden also has many years of training with Tap Team Two and Company codirected by his father, Robert Burden. He has been a company member with Eleone Dance Connection, Eleone Dance Theater with Artistic Director Shawn Lamere Williams, and Spectrum Dance Theatre under the artistic direction of Donald Byrd. Burden has been the recipient of the Marion Anderson Award in Philadelphia multiple times. Most recently he received his bachelor of fine arts degree from the University of the Arts.

Mikaela Fenton

Mikaela Fenton, native to Southern New Jersey, began dancing at age 4. Her training with Chez Dance Studio under the direction of Roseann Mastrogiamaco Gatto sculpted the early stages of her dance training. She later was part of the

performing arts program with Paul VI High School under the direction of Courtney Daniels, receiving a scholarship in dance to further her education. While attending The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Summer Program, she performed several works by Jonathan Lee. Fenton, under scholarship, earned a bachelors of fine arts degree in dance at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia where she has performed works choreographed by Katie Swords-Thurman, Jesse Zaritt, Sidra Bell, Kyle and Dinita Clark, Milton Myers, and Meredith Rainey. Parallel to her schooling, Fenton joined PHILADANCO!'s D/2 under the direction of Donald T. Lunsford before being accepted into PHILADANCO!

Clarricia Golden

Clarricia Golden began dancing at Miss. Libby's School of Dance under the direction of Libby Singelton and Jennifer Alford-Reimer in Sumter, South Carolina. She continued her training under Gaynell Sherrod at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. Golden was a scholarship recipient of The Alvin Ailey summer program and has spent summers training at PHILADANCO! After receiving a bachelors of science degree in health, physical education, and fitness with a concentration in dance, she decided to move to Philadelphia where she initially joined D/2 under the artistic direction of Donald Lunsford before becoming a member of PHILADANCO!

Jameel Malik Hendricks

Jameel Malik Hendricks is a graduate of the Philadelphia High School for the Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) where he received his early dance training and was presented with the Dance/Humanitarian/Congeniality award. Hendricks attended Eleone Dance Unlimited as a scholarship student and was appointed dance captain for Eleone Connections. After graduating from CAPA, he continued his training in dance at Rutgers University in the Mason Gross School of the Arts, majoring in dance education. Hendricks has also had the opportunity to attend the Rock School for Ballet on a full scholarship. He currently teaches at several dance schools and is working on furthering his artistic abilities as a member of PHILADANCO!

Victor Lewis, Jr.

Victor Lewis, Jr. first became involved with dance in Los Angeles, California, at age 13 when he joined the dance ministry at Faithful Central Bible Church, under the direction of Ariyan Johnson. His other training came from The Debbie Allen Dance Academy. Lewis, Jr. graduated from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia with a bachelors of fine arts degree in modern dance. He has performed with Eleone Dance Theatre, Rebecca Davis Dance Company, Dance Del Bello, Dissonance Dance Theatre, Classical Contemporary Ballet Theatre, and the touring company Illstyles & Peace

Productions. He has traveled internationally to teach dance and has had the pleasure with working with artist such as Keke Palmer, Jazmine Sullivan, Jill Scott, Laura Mvula, and choreographers Anthony Burrell, Chuck Maldonado, and more.

Brandi Pinnix

Brandi Pinnix began her ballet training at the American Repertory Princeton Ballet School under the direction of Douglas Martin. After graduating from high school in 2013, she was accepted into the LINES Ballet Training program in San Francisco, California. She finished the program in 2015 and moved back to the tristate area to train at the Ailey School, in their Independent Study Program and Scholarship Program. Pinnix has also studied at some of the most prestigious dance programs, including The Juilliard School, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Ballet X, and Point Park University. She's had the opportunity to work with choreographers such as Eric Wagner, Sidra Bell, Uri Sands, Kara Davis, Dexandro Montalvo, Carmen Rozenstraten, Danielle Polanco, and Darshan Bhuller.

Floyd McLean Jr.

Floyd McLean Jr. began his pre-professional dance training at age 13 with Sharron Miller's Academy for the Performing Arts in Montclair, New Jersey. He has trained with residencies/intensives such as The Dance Theater of Harlem, Ballet Hispanico, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, New York University Future Dancers/Dance Makers, and Dallas Black Dance Theatre. He received his bachelors of fine arts degree from Point Park University in 2018, with a concentration in modern dance. There he was awarded the Don Craig Scholarship. After graduation, he began his first season with Dallas Black Dance Theatre's DBDT: Encore! under the direction of Nycole Ray. He has performed works by choreographers including Rennie Harris, Kate Skarpetowska, Joshua Peugh, Christopher Huggins, and more.

Lamar Rogers

Lamar Rogers began his training at age 14 as a scholarship student at the Eleone Dance Unlimited School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He has also trained at Koresh School of Dance, while being a member of the Koresh Youth Ensemble and the Rock School for Dance Education. Rogers attended the Philadelphia High School for Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) where he graduated as cocaptain of the CAPA dance company under the direction of LaDeva Davis. He became a member of Eleone Dance Theater after performing with their second company, Eleone Connection for five years. Rogers received his bachelors of fine arts degree in dance from the University of the Arts where he studied with—and performed works by—Douglas Becker, Sidra Bell, Kyle and Dinita Clark, Gary Jeter, Helen Simoneau, and Jesse Zaritt.

Brittany Wright

Brittany Wright began her training at age 4 with the Olney Ballet Center under Jane Bittner. She went on to study with Patricia Berrend in Olney, formerly of Washington Ballet. She also studied with Aaron Jackson, Demetri Malikov, and Tim Fox. She continued her training at Hope Garden Ballet under Fran Ichijo and at City Dance in Rockville where she studied under Stanislavsky Issaey, Ludmika Morkovina, Caroline Rocher, and Rob Priore. At Towson University she received her bachelors of fine arts degree in dance and performance under professors including Linda-Denise Fisher-Harrell, Catherine Horta-Hayden, Alison Sidenstricker, Runqiou Du, and Vincent Thomas. She completed summers intensives at Hubbard Street, Ruth Page, Alonzo King Lines, Miami City Ballet, Carolina Ballet, and Arts of Umbrella.

Kim Y. Bears-Bailey, Artistic Director

A bachelors of fine arts graduate of the University of the Arts, **Kim Y. Bears-Bailey** joined PHILADANCO! in 1981. A 1992 Bessie Award recipient (The New York Dance and Performance Award), Bears-Bailey represented PHILADANCO! at the 1988 American Dance Festival performing works of Dr. Pearl Primus and appeared in the movie *Beloved*. Bears-Bailey is an associate professor of dance at the University of the Arts. She is one of few artists granted permission to remount the works of many world-renowned choreographers including Talley Beatty, Pearl Primus, Gene Hill Sagan, and Louis Johnson. She received the Mary Louise Beitzel Award for Distinguished Teaching and the Silver Star Alumni Award from UArts. Bears-Bailey choreographs, directs, and produces an annual Dancing with the Stars of Philadelphia event. Bears-Bailey received the 2017 Bring it to the Marley Icon Award and the 2018 Legacy Award from DCNS Dance.

Tracy Vogt, Rehearsal Director/Coach

Originally from Erie, Pennsylvania, **Tracy Vogt** received scholarships to the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts, Jacob's Pillow Modern Intensive, Point Park Summer Dance, and attended the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She was also a scholarship student at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center in New York, New York, where she was personally chosen to demonstrate the Martha Graham technique by School Director Denise Jefferson. For 12 years, Vogt was a principal dancer and assistant rehearsal director with PHILADANCO! She was also a rehearsal director and principal dancer with the Wylliams Henry Contemporary Dance Company in Kansas City, Missouri, and with the Cleveland Contemporary Dance Theater. Vogt also danced with Verb Ballets in Ohio under the direction of Hernando Cortez. She received the Philadelphia Rocky Award for Dance Excellence and has performed lead roles in works by Martha Graham, Paul

Taylor, David Parsons, Gene Hill Sagan, Elisa Monte, Talley Beatty, George Faison, Bill T. Jones, Dianne McIntyre, and Christopher Huggins to name a few. Vogt has taught in Uganda, Rwanda, and Guinea, Africa, for the NGO MindLeaps. She is also pursuing her master's degree in dance at Hollins University.

Marlisa Brown-Swint, Director of Operations

A native Philadelphian, **Marlisa Brown-Swint** was introduced very early to the world of dance. She grew up in and around The Philadelphia School of Dance Arts—little did she realize this was the beginning of a very special relationship. Then and now, dance classes and recitals are a part of her daily routine. Brown-Swint is the assistant to the director (her mom) for The Philadelphia School of Dance Arts and runs it like the prodigy she

is. As artistic administrator she handles many duties especially the touring for PHILADANCO! She also oversees PHILADANCO's youth ensemble D/3: organizing classes, rehearsals, and performance schedules. Brown-Swint has two talented daughters following her footsteps Amari Noelle (gold medal nationally rated diver) and Mariah Dannielle (a rhythmic gymnast).

Melody Beal, Lighting/Technical Manager

An award-winning designer and director, **Melody Beal** has devoted more than 20 years to PHILADANCO! as the technical coordinator starting under the tutelage of William H. Grant III. She is currently designing lighting for the Negro Ensemble Company, Mindbuilders, Trilogy Opera Company, Asase Yaa African American Dance Theater, and Laguardia Performing Arts Center in New York City.

PHILADANCO — The Philadelphia Dance Company Staff

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PMG Arts Management, Inc.

P.O. Box 52346

Durham, NC 27717

4003 Kerley. Road

Durham, NC 27705

ph: 919-813-6092

fax: 919-908-8200

www.pam@pmsgartsmgt.com