



## **BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music) announces spring 2021 programming**

**Dynamic season features live, in-person performances staged throughout Brooklyn and a slate of new virtual events**

Bloomberg Philanthropies is the Season Sponsor

**March 11, 2021/Brooklyn, NY**—BAM today announces a new season—an ambitious mix of outdoor in-person programming and new virtual events—that is all about bringing live arts back to Brooklyn, and bringing Brooklyn’s creative spirit to the world. The season spans theater, dance, music, talks, visual arts, community events, and its annual gala.

"We've put together a season that transforms some of Brooklyn's most beloved and distinctive sites into stunning stages," said BAM Artistic Director, David Binder. "This group of world-class artists—encompassing dance, theater, music, and the visual arts—have met the moment and are presenting work in surprising and thrilling ways."

"This is an exciting time for BAM as we continue to elevate the virtual art form," said Co-Interim President, Coco Killingsworth who also heads BAM's virtual programming. "Every virtual event this season features brand-new content, programs, and technology from locally and globally renowned artists. As our digital space evolves, we look forward to growing our audiences by making iconic BAM programs and the unique culture of Brooklyn accessible to everyone."

Reimagining performance within the context of current times, adventurous live, in-person engagements will take place at some of Brooklyn's most striking locations from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, to Prospect Park, to the Brooklyn Navy Yard, to Brooklyn Borough Hall, to the sidewalks of Ft. Greene.

Outdoor presentations include Aleshea Harris's play, *What to Send Up When It Goes Down* (originally produced by the Movement Theatre Company), in a co-presentation with Playwrights Horizons; *Influences* (contemporary dance on ice skates); the interactive public art piece *Arrivals + Departures* by YARA + DAVINA; *Pop-Up Magazine: The Sidewalk Issue*; and *1:1 CONCERTS* curated by Silkroad and featuring members of the Silkroad Ensemble with guests.

Annual favorites such as *DanceAfrica* and *Word.Sound.Power.* return this year as virtual productions allowing audiences from around the world the opportunity to connect with artists and new content designed and directed for screen. In BAM's first live virtual

performance, *Word. Sound. Power. 2021* will produce an innovative hip-hop and spoken word concert featuring electrifying performances and new music and work by some of the best emcees and spoken word artists in Brooklyn and beyond. And *DanceAfrica 2021* will celebrate Haiti's spirited movement traditions and feature newly commissioned digital works by dance companies from Haiti and across the U.S.

The season also includes virtual presentations of *Unbound* with Hanif Abdurraqib (also BAM Guest Curator at Large) and Wesley Morris, and the popular *Eat, Drink & Be Literary* series, presented in partnership with the National Book Foundation. Marking its 17<sup>th</sup> year, *Eat, Drink & Be Literary* will welcome three acclaimed writers—Tayari Jones, Sigrid Nunez, and Luis Alberto Urrea—who will read from their work and share creative processes, inspirations, and anecdotes with the audience who can raise a glass in the comfort of their homes. Each evening features a discussion moderated by Deborah Treisman, and a Q&A. A range of books by each author are available for purchase from Greenlight Bookstores.

Full season details, updates, and confirmations will continue to be posted on BAM.org.

BAM is grateful to present this extraordinary season with the support of season sponsor, Bloomberg Philanthropies.

\*\*All outdoor performances will adhere to protocols developed in accordance with New York State regulations and in consultation with medical professionals for the safety of our artists, audiences, and staff. Capacities for all events will comply with government-issued guidelines.\*\*

Photos are available [here](#).

## **OUTDOOR, IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENTS**

***Arrivals + Departures*** (visual art)  
YARA + DAVINA

**US Premiere/BAM Debut**

Board graphics and website design by Tom Merrell  
Digital fabrication by Rob Prouse  
3D design and construction by Other Fabrications (UK)  
Production management by Steve Wald

**Front of Brooklyn Borough Hall** (209 Joralemon Street)  
March 14 —April 11  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week  
Free and open to the public

“...a beautiful gesture to celebrate and commemorate.” — *Londonist*

*Arrivals + Departures* is a large-scale public art installation that pays tribute to people—both those entering the world and leaving it. The work takes the recognizable form of a train station arrivals and departures board that displays names submitted by the public to celebrate a birth (arrivals), honor someone living, or commemorate a death (departures).

Created by British social practice artist duo **Yara El-Sherbini** and **Davina Drummond**, the US premiere of *Arrivals + Departures* offers a timely platform to engage with the effects of Covid-19 and the continuing racial and social injustice within our communities. Through this act of naming, the interactive installation offers the opportunity to explore issues around birth, life, death, loss, and collective grief; to question and change who is honored through public statues and memorials. The outdoor installation transforms the everyday space of Brooklyn Borough Hall into a site of recognition and remembrance. The boards are accessible both in-person and virtually. The public is invited to submit names online, beginning at 12pm on March 14, 2021, at [www.arrivalsanddepartures.net](http://www.arrivalsanddepartures.net)

*Arrivals + Departures* will include a free online conversation with the artists and special guests:

***The Power of Naming***

In conjunction with *Arrivals + Departures*

A virtual conversation with artist duo YARA + DAVINA and special guests

Tuesday, March 23

Free

Artists Yara El-Sherbini and Davina Drummond are joined by special guests to reflect on their public art installation *Arrivals + Departures* and explore the power of naming as a personal and political act in terms of public sculpture and memorials

**YARA + DAVINA** are a British artist duo who make ambitious and playful public artworks that respond to site, context, and audience. Unfailingly inventive, their artworks are rooted within the everyday, using formats from popular culture, such as mini-golf to jokes, to explore issues that touch on the human condition. They've created artworks for multiple world-leading art venues and public organizations across the world such as Tate Modern and Tate Britain, Venice Biennale, National Portrait Gallery, Studio Museum Harlem, The Victoria & Albert, London, ZKM (Germany), HIAP (Finland), Kaunas Art Biennial (Lithuania), Modern Art Oxford, National Maritime Museum, and the ICA. In 2021, they are working on several large-scale public artworks, including *Kick Off*, a project with the National Trust, UK that explores women's football and the power of communal crafting, and *Local Tea*, a long term social practice artwork for the Museum of the Home, London.

Supported by Without Walls and commissioned by Artsadmin, Freedom Festival (Hull) and Norfolk & Norwich Festival. Funded through the Create To Connect > Create to Impact network supported by Creative Europe programme of the European Union and Arts Council England.

Development phase of *Arrivals + Departure* (2018) supported by In Situ Network through the Creative Europe programme of European Union, Without Wall's Blueprint programme and Seedbed Residency at 101.

For press information, contact Cynthia Tate: [ctate@BAM.org](mailto:ctate@BAM.org).

***Influences*** (dance)

**NY Premiere/BAM Debut**

Le Patin Libre

Choreography by Alexandre Hamel, Pascale Jodoin, Samory Ba, Taylor Dilley, Jasmin Boivin

Music by Jasmin Boivin

Dramaturgy by Ruth Little

Lighting design by Lucy Carter

Costume design by Jenn Pocobene

Commissioned by Emma Gladstone and the Dance Umbrella Festival (London, UK), the National Arts Centre (Ottawa, Canada) and the Théâtre de la Ville (Paris, France)

*Influences* is presented in cooperation with the Consulate General of Canada in New York and the Québec Government Office in New York

**LeFrak Center at Lakeside, Prospect Park** (171 East Dr., Brooklyn)

Apr 6—10 at 8pm; Apr 10-11 at 2pm

Tickets: single, \$45, pair, \$90

On sale to BAM Members and Patrons on March 23

General Public tickets to follow. Please sign up at [BAM.org](http://BAM.org) for updates.

Ages: 5+

“...a pure body rush of liberation and space.”—*The Guardian* \* \* \* \* \*

This unique work of choreographed movement on ice explores human interconnectivity and the relationship between a group and its individuals. Observations on leadership, bullying, individualism, and rivalry are revealed throughout this thrilling rhythmic work, which heightens the relationship between performers and spectators by seating the audience directly on the ice. This arrangement offers an intense and intimate look at the intersection of virtuosity, velocity, and artistry.

**Le Patin Libre** (French for “Free Skate”) is a contemporary ice skating company that uses ice, skates, and glide as mediums of storytelling. Founded in 2005, Le Patin Libre is a premier international touring company under the artistic vision of Alexandre Hamel, activating skating rinks globally as a place where diverse audiences can gather and discover a new art form. Committed to designing inclusive events, the company uses ice skating as an entry point to the arts as well as a way to create unforgettable experiences for audiences of all ages. What began as spontaneous demonstrations on frozen ponds, Le Patin Libre was created by former high-level figure skaters with the intention of transforming their athleticism into a means of free expression and an elevated theatrical artform. In addition to extensive touring throughout North America and France, the company has previously performed at Sadlers Wells, Dance Umbrella Festival London, and Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

For press information, contact Sarah Garvey: [sgarvey@BAM.org](mailto:sgarvey@BAM.org)

BAM Presents

**1:1 CONCERTS at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, US Premiere/BAM Debut**  
**Curated by Silkroad** (music)

Conceived for BAM by Stephanie Winker, Franziska Ritter and Christian Siegmund

Featuring Members of the Silkroad Ensemble & Guests

**The Brooklyn Navy Yard**

May 8-9 and 15-16, 2021

“...almost shamanic in its power.” — *Australian Stage*

“...what began as a clever adaptation to coronavirus rules has since become something more profound...” — *The New York Times*

Step into a world-class concert for one. Nestled in secluded corners of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, acclaimed New York musicians—including artists from the Silkroad Ensemble—play a one-to-one performance, creating an intimate and utterly unique concert experience. Each audience member follows a unique path to a socially distant, private stage and discovers which musician will share their spirit in a ten-minute set. The safety restrictions of the pandemic open up new performance possibilities, inviting you to an intimate musical experience unlike any other, and encouraging you to give back the profound gifts of an appreciative audience: admiration, connection, and joy. In a world where we are more separated than we have ever been, this series invites audience and musician to re-connect, one person at a time.

**1:1 CONCERTS GbR** is an interdisciplinary team—flutist, Stephanie Winker, scenographer, Franziska Ritter and cultural mediator Christian Siegmund—that have worked together on various cultural projects for the past several years. Motivated by creative energy and a passionate playfulness, the team aims to break new ground in the design of musical experiences with ingenious site-specific works. Their projects explore the manifold relationships between music, space and people in new and different ways.

Yo-Yo Ma conceived **Silkroad** in 1998, recognizing the historical Silk Road as a model for radical cultural collaboration – for the exchange of ideas, tradition, and innovation across borders. In an innovative experiment, he brought together musicians from the lands of the Silk Road to co-create a musical language founded in difference, thus creating the foundation of Silkroad: both a touring ensemble comprised of world-class musicians from all over the globe and a social impact organization working to make a positive impact across borders through the arts. Today, under the leadership of Artistic Director Rhiannon Giddens, Silkroad leads social impact initiatives and educational programming alongside the creation of new music by the Grammy Award-winning Silkroad Ensemble.

For press information, contact Sarah Garvey: [sgarvey@BAM.org](mailto:sgarvey@BAM.org)

BAM and Playwrights Horizons present the Movement Theatre Company production of

***What to Send Up When It Goes Down*** (theater)

**BAM Debut**

Written by Aleshea Harris

Directed by Whitney White

### **Brooklyn Botanic Garden**

June 2021

“Harris has created a play that leaps across categories, registering as part theater piece and part ritual of mourning, remembrance, and resolve.” — *The Boston Globe*

“It’s as though Harris had taken her artistic forebear’s Ntozake Shange’s loose-woven theatrical fabric and stretched into something tighter and crisper, capable of resounding like a struck drumhead.”— *Time Out New York*

BAM and Playwrights Horizons present the Movement Theatre Company production of *What to Send Up When It Goes Down*. Aleshea Harris's acclaimed, groundbreaking work is a play, a ritual, and a homegoing celebration that bears witness to the physical and spiritual deaths of Black people as a result of racist violence. Setting out to disrupt the pervasiveness of anti-Blackness and acknowledge the inherent value of Black people throughout history, this theatrical work blurs the boundaries between actors and audiences, offering a space for catharsis, discussion, reflection, and healing. Specifically reimaged for the expanse of Brooklyn Botanic Garden, this co-production will also have an indoor staging at Playwrights Horizons in the fall.

**Aleshea Harris'** (Playwright) play *Is God Is* (directed by Taibi Magar at Soho Rep) won the 2016 Relentless Award, an OBIE Award for playwriting in 2017, the Helen Merrill Playwriting Award in 2019, and was a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize. *What to Send Up When It Goes Down* (directed by Whitney White, produced by The Movement Theatre Company), a play-pageant-ritual response to anti-Blackness, had its critically-acclaimed NYC premiere in 2018. The play was featured in the April 2019 issue of *American Theatre Magazine* and received a rare special commendation from the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize. Harris was awarded a Windham-Campbell Literary Prize and the Mimi Steinberg Playwriting Award in 2020, and the Hermitage Greenfield Prize in 2021.

**Whitney White** is a director and musician based in New York. Recent: *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord* by Alexis Scheer, WP Theater/Second Stage; *for all the women who thought they were Mad* by Zawe Ashton, Soho Rep; *A Human Being, of a Sort* by Jonathan Payne (starring Andre Braugher and Frank Wood), Williamstown Theatre Festival; *What to Send Up When It Goes Down* (New York Times Critics' Pick), The Movement; *Jump*, PlayMakers Rep, NNPN Rolling World Premiere; *Canyon* (LA Times Critics' Choice), IAMA; *An Iliad*, Long Wharf; *Rita También Rita, Juilliard*; *Othello*, Trinity Rep; Br'er Cotton, Endstation. Her original musical Definition was part of the 2019 Sundance Theatre Lab, and her musical look at *Macbeth*, *Macbeth In Stride* was part of 2019 Under the Radar Festival (The Public Theater). Associate Directing: *Marvin's Room* (Broadway); *If I Forget* (Roundabout); *The Secret Life of Bees* (Atlantic Theater). Whitney is an Associate Artist at Roundabout and current recipient of the Susan Stroman Directing Award. Past fellowships: 2050 NYTW Fellow, Ars Nova, Drama League, the Inaugural Roundabout

Directing Fellowship, and Colt Coeur. Education/Training: BA, Northwestern; MFA Brown University/Trinity Rep.

**The Movement Theatre Company** creates an artistic social movement by developing and producing new works by artists of color. Under the leadership of David Mendizábal, Deadria Harrington, Eric Lockley, Ryan Dobrin, and Taylor Reynolds, their work engages a multicultural audience in a rich theatrical dialogue, enlightens communities to the important issues affecting our world, and empowers artists to celebrate the many sides of their unique voice. Founded in 2007, The Movement has established itself as an artistic staple in the New York theatre community and was awarded a 2019 OBIE-Award grant. They are passionate about using their platform to shift the status quo of American Theatre both on-stage and behind the scenes. As an organization run by producers of color, they are committed to highlighting artists of color that are exploding traditional theatrical forms.

Their 2018 production of *What to Send Up When It Goes Down* by Aleshea Harris, directed by Whitney White, received critical praise and recognition (New York Times Critics Pick / 2019 Drama Desk Award nomination), increased the visibility of Black people affected by racially-motivated violence, and challenged the limitations of a theatrical experience. *What to Send Up* went on tour in 2019 and was presented at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company in DC and American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge. It went on to be a part of The Public's Under the Radar Festival in January 2020 and is slated to be presented by Playwrights Horizons in their 2021/2022 season. Additional past production successes include *And She Would Stand Like This*, and *Look Upon Our Lowliness*, both by Harrison David Rivers; and their breakout New York Times lauded production of *Bintou* by Koffi Kwahulé, translated by Chantal Bilodeau. Past programming successes include their 1MOVE: DES19NED BY initiative, the Ladder Series touring production of *Hope Speaks* created by Jonathan McCrory; *Last Laugh* by Eric Lockley; *Think Before You Holla* created and devised by Taylor Reynolds; the workshop production of *Black Boy & The War* by Antoinette Nwandu; as well as numerous Harlem Nights events. For more information visit: [www.themovementtheatrecompany.org](http://www.themovementtheatrecompany.org)

**Playwrights Horizons** is dedicated to cultivating the most important American playwrights, composers, and lyricists, as well as developing and producing their bold new plays and musicals. Adam Greenfield became Artistic Director in 2020; Leslie Marcus has served as Managing Director since 1993. As it enters its 50th anniversary season, Playwrights builds upon its diverse and renowned body of work, counting 400 writers among its artistic roster. In addition to its onstage work each season, Playwrights' singular commitment to nurturing American theater artists guides all of the institution's multifaceted initiatives: our acclaimed New Works Lab, a robust commissioning program, an innovative curriculum at its Theater School, and more. Robert Moss founded Playwrights in 1971 and cemented the mission that continues to guide the institution today. André Bishop served as Artistic Director from 1981–1992. Don Scardino succeeded him and served until 1996. Tim Sanford, the organization's longest-serving Artistic Director, held the position from 1996-2020. Over its 50-year history, Playwrights has been recognized with numerous awards and honors, including seven Pulitzer Prizes, 13 Tony Awards, and 47 Obie Awards.

Founded in 1910, **Brooklyn Botanic Garden (BBG)** is a 52-acre urban botanic garden that connects people to the world of plants, fostering delight and curiosity while inspiring an appreciation and sense of stewardship of the environment.

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**The sidewalks of Fort Greene**

June 4-20

Free

“Pop-Up Magazine redefines the art of storytelling...a captivating, multisensory experience.” —*Chicago Reader*

This spring, the multimedia storytelling company Pop-Up Magazine takes to the streets. Walk, listen, read, and immerse yourself in a series of story installations that unfold across Fort Greene. In true Pop-Up Magazine style, this boundary-pushing work mixes journalism, storytelling, and art to create a unique theatrical experience. Specifically designed to meet all social distancing, health, and safety requirements, these Brooklyn installations are just one part of a larger live magazine that’s popping up across the country.

For press information, contact Sarah Garvey: [sgarvey@BAM.org](mailto:sgarvey@BAM.org)

**VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENTS**

***Word. Sound. Power. 2021*** (music)

Sa-Roc, Okai, Nejma Nefertiti, Peggy Robles-Alvarado, Jade Charon, Baba Israel, DJ Reborn, and more

**BAM.org/wordsoundpower**

April 23

“...an amazing celebration of hip-hop and spoken word.” —*BK Reader*

BAM's first live virtual show will produce an innovative hip-hop and spoken word concert featuring electrifying performances by some of the best emcees and spoken word artists in Brooklyn and beyond. Through performances from Atlanta emcee Sa-Roc, Brooklyn-born Haitian vocalist and percussionist Okai, Brooklyn hip-hop artist Nejma Nefertiti, award-winning Bronx poet Peggy Robles-Alvarado, and Brooklyn-based dancer and Chuck Davis Emerging Choreographer Fellow Jade Charon, audiences will discover how the political becomes poetic, and vice versa. *Word. Sound. Power* is hosted by hip-hop emcee, poet, and spoken word artist Baba Israel with music by DJ Reborn. The artists will create new work and perform around the theme of rejuvenation and celebration across the African Diaspora using the transformative power of hip-hop and poetry. *Word. Sound. Power's* first live virtual production will be created in collaboration with innovative designers who create live performances through virtual platforms.

**Sa-Roc** is a hip-hop artist, health and wellness advocate, and public speaker based in Atlanta, GA. She has toured globally and has facilitated workshops and lectures in both the US and abroad. She serves as a cultural ambassador for Hip Hop is Green, a plant-based health and wellness organization, performing and campaigning in public schools nationwide to promote and educate communities on healthy eating initiatives. Her single, "Forever," an ode to self-love and empowerment, has been met with international acclaim,

amassing over four million YouTube views and over one million streams. In March 2020, Sa-Roc was featured on NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts. Her 13th studio album, *The Sharecropper's Daughter*, was released in the fall of 2020 on Rhymesayers Entertainment.

**Okai** is a Brooklyn-born Haitian vocalist/percussionist who embodies the music of the African Diaspora. He was drawn to the sound of the drum at a very young age, from the intricate boom-bap drum loops of hip-hop to roots music from the Caribbean. His interest in the drum led him on a musical path to explore music with rich percussion sounds—rock, jazz, samba, salsa, rumba, and more. After playing percussion for various churches, congas for his high school band, he started playing the West African Djembe. Okai is also a skilled emcee. His solo albums are *Deconstruction of the Mind* and *Okai's Odyssey*. He is currently the lead singer and percussionist of the Brown Rice Family, winner of NYC's 2012 Battle of the Boroughs. Okai is also co-founder of Strings N Skins. Locally Okai has performed at the BAM, Brooklyn Museum, the legendary African Art auction exhibition at Sotheby's, Madison Square Garden, Carnegie Hall, and more. He's also performed internationally, including shows in Haiti, Canada, Tanzania, Ivory Coast, Colombia, Brazil, Australia, and Japan. Okai is a teaching artist at BAM.

**Nejma Nefertiti** is a Brooklyn-based hip-hop artist, sound designer, and songwriter. Her work inspires awareness, self-determination, and social change for the oppressed. Nefertiti's theater work includes Marina Celandier's solo show *Mermaid's Howl*, Caridad "La Bruja" De La Luz's adult comedy cabaret *The Bru HA*, and *The Migrant Liberation Movement Suite* with The Afro Yaqui Music Collective. She has worked with hip-hop pioneer Louis "Breakbeat Lou" Flores and is a core member of The Afro Yaqui Music Collective, the ASCAP Award-winning, multi-lingual jazz band. Nefertiti was a featured artist in Nona Hendryx's annual Rock Solid Women's Festival: Celebrating Women in Art & Music and Toshi Reagon's Word\*Rock\*Sword: A Festival Exploration of Women's Lives. She collaborates with hip-hop Afrobeat artist Napoleon Da Legend, several international artists and is a mentor to younger generations.

**Peggy Robles-Alvarado** is a 2021 Jerome Hill Foundation Fellow in Literature, a two-time Pushcart Prize nominee, and a 2020 Atticus Review Poetry Contest winner. She is also a BRIO award winner with fellowships from CantoMundo, Desert Nights Rising Stars, The Frost Place, VONA, Academy for Teachers, and The Home School. Robles-Alvarado is a three-time International Latino Book Award winner who authored *Conversations With My Skin* (2011), and *Homage To The Warrior Women* (2012). Through Robleswrites Productions, she created *The Abuela Stories Project* (2016) and *Mujeres, The Magic, The Movement, and The Muse* (2017). Her work has appeared in *The Breakbeat Poets Vol. 4: LatiNext*, *¡Manteca! an Anthology of Afro- Latin@ Poets*, *great weather for MEDIA*, *What Saves Us: Poems of Empathy and Outrage in the Age of Trump* and *The Soul Sister Revue* Anthology. Online she has been published in Tribes.org, The Quarry at Split This Rock, The Common, 92Y.org #wordswelivein, Centro Voices Letras Literary Journal, and NACLA.org. As a performance poet her work has been featured in HBO Habla Women, Lincoln Center Out Of Doors, Pregones Theater, Harlem 9 Presents: 48 Hours En El Bronx, Smithsonian Institute- Museum of the American Indian, Pen America World Voices Festival, Harvard University, Association of Writers and Writing Programs Tampa, FL, and NYU Latinx Caribbean Poetry Festival. For more visit Robleswrites.com.

**Jade Charon** is an interdisciplinary artist, choreographer, filmmaker, and international dance educator, hailing from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, based in Brooklyn. Charon received an MFA in Dance from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a BA in Dance and Theater from Columbia College Chicago. Charon was awarded the 2020 Hicks

Choreographer Fellowship from the School of Jacob's Pillow where she received mentorship from Dianne McIntyre and Risa Steinberg. In 2018, Charon was selected as the Chuck Davis Emerging Choreographer Fellow from BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music). She is an Assistant Professor of Dance and Technology at Medgar Evers College. As a filmmaker, her films have been accepted in festivals and conferences such as Montreal Independent Film Festival, Milwaukee Film Festival, Toronto International Women's Film Festival, American Dance Festival Movie By Movers, and The Outland Dance Project Dance Film Festival. She was awarded the jury select Cream City Award from Milwaukee Film Festival and the semi-finalist for Best Experimental Film for Montreal Independent Film Festival.

**Baba Israel** was raised in New York and has toured across the US, Europe, South America, Australia, and Asia. He's performed with hip-hop acts, including Outkast, The Roots, Ron Carter, and Arturo O'Farrill. He began his career as an arts educator in Australia and has gone on to be a leading educator and consultant working with Urban Word, BAM, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He worked as a cultural ambassador with the State Department. He served as artistic director and CEO of Contact Theatre in Manchester, England, from 2009—12. Israel is the co-founder and artistic director of Playback NYC Theatre Company, bringing theater to underrepresented communities. He has also served as a lead teaching artist for the Brooklyn Reads education program at BAM. His debut solo show, *Boom Bap Meditations*, was supported by the Ford Foundation and the Hip-Hop Theater Festival. Israel is a core member of the hip-hop/soul project Soul Inscribed and has an MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts from Goddard College. Baba Israel is currently a Resident Artist at HERE Arts Center and has received both the Map Fund and the NEFA NTP grant in 2020 (with collaborator and composer Grace Galu). His band Soul Inscribed released their second studio album, *Tune Up* on Tokyo Dawn Records. He has served as director and host of BAM's *Word. Sound. Power.* for more than ten years.

**DJ Reborn** is a trailblazing, international DJ, sound collage artist, hip-hop theater musical director, and arts educator. She has spent the last two decades utilizing her passion for music and her skills as a DJ within these worlds to make an impact. Reborn has a myriad of impressive accomplishments, including her time as a DJ/creative writing mentor for teen girls at Urban Word NYC, DJ instructor and curriculum designer for music school Dubspot, and mentor at The Lower Eastside Girl's Club. In the music world, she has opened shows for The Roots, John Legend, Bilal, and Erykah Badu. In the art world, she has spun for celebrated artists Kara Walker, Wangheci Mutu, Carrie Mae Weems, and Sanford Biggers. She has rocked the decks on BET and for the live telecast of the NAACP Image Awards and MSNBC's One Nation Rally at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC.

She has graced many stages, including The Kennedy Center, The Apollo Theater, and The Sydney Opera House in Australia. In the theater world, she has provided live soundscapes for activists Eve Ensler's *V-Day* project and Howard Zinn's *Voices of a People* and was the musical director and DJ for Will Power's *FLOW*, the tour DJ for the Tony Award-winning *Def Poetry Jam*, and the sound conductor for Nsangou Ngikam's *Syncing Ink*. DJ Reborn recently conceived, created, and performed a theater piece about and featuring all women DJs. In late 2020 she founded DJs For Justice, a coalition of DJs using their platforms supporting racial, social, and economic justice. She is also the opening DJ for the legendary Ms. Lauryn Hill's world tour. DJ Reborn has served as house DJ for BAM's *Word. Sound. Power.* for ten years.

For press information, contact Cynthia Tate: [ctate@BAM.org](mailto:ctate@BAM.org)

***DanceAfrica 2021*** (dance)

*Vwa Zanset Yo: Y'ap Pale, N'ap Danse!* "Ancient Voices: They Speak... We Dance!"

Haiti

Artistic Director Abdel R. Salaam

**BAM.org**

May 2021

"This festival heals, pumps up, and moves one to tears." —*Dance Enthusiast*

"There is, literally, no other dance celebration quite like it."—*Amsterdam News*

After 43 years of honoring Africa's rich culture and its Diaspora, *DanceAfrica* is still going strong. The nation's largest festival of African and African-diasporic dance returns with new content reimagined for the digital space. *DanceAfrica 2021* will draw from the strength of the ancestors to celebrate the spirited movement traditions, vibrant culture, and indestructible spirit of Haiti with the theme *Vwa Zanset Yo: Y'ap Pale, N'ap Danse!*, in Haitian Kreyòl or "Ancient Voices: They Speak... We Dance!". This year's festival brings together dance companies from Haiti and around the United States for an unforgettable celebration of dance and culture; featuring newly commissioned digital dance works, a visual art presentation, dance workshops, the annual FilmAfrica series co-presented by the New York African Film Festival, and community offerings, including the digital *DanceAfrica Bazaar*. More details will be announced in the weeks to come as programmers look to add live elements to the festival as it becomes safe to do so.

**Abdel R. Salaam** became DanceAfrica's artistic director in 2016. He is also the executive artistic director/co-founder of Forces of Nature Dance Theatre (FONDT), founded in 1981. Born in Harlem, Salaam is a critically acclaimed choreographer and has served as a dancer, teacher, and performing artist on five continents throughout his 50-year career in the dance world. He has received numerous awards and fellowships for excellence in dance, including the National Endowment for the Arts, New England Foundation on the Arts, New York Foundation for the Arts, New York State Council for Arts, National Council for Arts and Culture, and Herbert H. Lehman College. Salaam and Forces of Nature Dance Theatre were honored with a 2017 Bessie for Outstanding Production for DanceAfrica's centerpiece performance, *Healing Sevens*.

He is currently a director at the Harlem Children's Zone/Forces of Nature Youth Academy of Dance and Wellness at St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Harlem. The company also received the 2013 Audelco Award for Dance Company of the Year. Salaam has served on the American Dance Festival's faculties in the US and Seoul, Korea; Herbert H. Lehman College; Alvin Ailey American Dance Center; Restoration Youth Arts Academy; and Harlem Children's Zone. Inspired by Dr. Maulana Karenga, Salaam created Kwanzaa Regeneration Night Celebration at the Apollo Theater, now in its 40th year.

For press information on DanceAfrica Festival, contact Cynthia Tate: [ctate@BAM.org](mailto:ctate@BAM.org)

For press information on FilmAfrica, contact Lindsay Brayton: [lbrayton@BAM.org](mailto:lbrayton@BAM.org)

## **VIRTUAL LITERARY TALKS**

### **Sigrid Nunez**

Part of *Eat, Drink & Be Literary 2021*

Presented in partnership with the National Book Foundation

Moderated by Deborah Treisman

**BAM.org/edbl**

March 16 at 7:30pm

\$10



“one of the most dizzyingly accomplished of our writers” —Gary Shteyngart

Sigrid Nunez has published eight novels, including *A Feather on the Breath of God*, *The Last of Her Kind*, *Salvation City* and *The Friend*, which was a *New York Times* bestseller and winner of the 2018 National Book Award. Nunez’s other honors and awards include four Pushcart Prizes, a Whiting Award, a Berlin Prize Fellowship, and the Rome Prize in Literature. Her work has appeared in several anthologies, including *The Best American Short Stories 2019* and four anthologies of Asian-American literature. Nunez is also the author of *Sempre Susan: A Memoir of Susan Sontag*. Her eighth novel, *What Are You Going Through*, was published by Riverhead Books in fall 2020. Nunez lives in New York City.

### **Hanif Abdurraqib in conversation with Wesley Morris**

Launch of *A Little Devil in America*

Part of *Unbound*

Co-presented by BAM and Greenlight Bookstore

**BAM.org**

March 31 at 7pm

Free with RSVP



“A rapturous exploration of Black genius . . . Whether heralding unsung entertainers or reexamining legends, Hanif Abdurraqib weaves together gorgeous essays that reveal the resilience, heartbreak, and joy within Black performance. I read this book breathlessly.” —Brit Bennett, author of *The Vanishing Half*

Poet, essayist, cultural critic and BAM Guest Curator at Large Hanif Abdurraqib joins Wesley Morris in a conversation about Black performance to celebrate his new book, *A Little Devil in America* (March 30, 2021, Random House). Whether it’s Merry Clayton singing in “Gimme Shelter,” a schoolyard fistfight, or a dance marathon, Abdurraqib delves into the poignancy of performances big and small. His work has layers of resonance in Black and white cultures, the politics of American empire, and Abdurraqib’s own personal history of love, grief, and performance. He’ll be joined in conversation by Wesley Morris, critic-at-large at *The New York Times* and a staff writer at *The New York Times Magazine*.

This event is part of *Unbound*, a series celebrating new book releases co-presented by BAM and Greenlight Bookstore.

### **Tayari Jones**

Part of *Eat, Drink & Be Literary 2021*

Presented in partnership with the National Book Foundation

Moderated by Deborah Treisman

**BAM.org/edbl**

April 20 at 7:30pm

\$10



“one of the most important voices of her generation” —*Essence*

Tayari Jones is the author of *An American Marriage*, which was a *New York Times* bestseller, an Oprah’s Book Club pick, and was selected by Barack Obama for his summer reading list. She is a native of Atlanta, which serves as the setting for *An American Marriage* as well as her other novels *Leaving Atlanta*, *The Untelling*, *Silver Sparrow*, and the forthcoming *Old Fourth Ward*. Her writing has appeared in *The New York Times*; *The Washington Post*; *O, The Oprah Magazine*; *Time*; *Tin House*; and *The Believer*, among other publications. Jones is currently a Charles Howard Candler Professor at Emory University and an A.D. White Professor-at-Large at Cornell University.

### **Luis Alberto Urrea**

Part of *Eat, Drink & Be Literary 2021*

Presented in partnership with the National Book Foundation

Moderated by Deborah Treisman

**BAM.org/edbl**

May 4 at 7:30pm

\$10



“a kind of literary badass who still believes in love...He is a master storyteller with a rock-and roll heart” —NPR

A finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for his landmark work of nonfiction, *The Devil’s Highway*, Luis Alberto Urrea is also the bestselling author of the novels *The House of Broken Angels*, *The Hummingbird’s Daughter*, *Into the Beautiful North*, and *Queen of America*, as well as the story collection *The Water Museum*—a PEN/Faulkner Award finalist. He has won the Lannan Literary Award, an Edgar Award, a 2017 American Academy of Arts and Letters Award in Literature, and was a 2019 Guggenheim Fellow, among many other honors. Born in Tijuana to a Mexican father and American mother, he lives outside of Chicago and teaches at the University of Illinois-Chicago.

For literary talks press information, contact Sarah Garvey: [sgarvey@BAM.org](mailto:sgarvey@BAM.org)

## **BAM Gala 2021**

### **BAM.org/gala** June 2021

Join us as we celebrate what is most meaningful to BAM: our stalwart supporters and the unstoppable creativity of our artists.

The evening includes a virtual celebration and the opening of the annual BAM Art Auction powered by Artsy, which can be easily accessed from home. We're also looking forward to potential in-person festivities, in accordance with the most up-to-date health and safety protocols. More details to be announced soon.

For press information, contact Sarah Garvey: [sgarvey@BAM.org](mailto:sgarvey@BAM.org)

For press information, contact Cynthia Tate: [ctate@BAM.org](mailto:ctate@BAM.org)

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