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BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC PETER JAY SHARP BUILDING 30 LAFAYETTE AVENUE BROOKLYN, NY 11217—1486

BAM presents DanceAfrica Festival 2022

The nation's largest African dance festival and BAM's longest-running program returns for its 45th anniversary

With a special program, including a reunion of past favorites on the Howard Gilman Opera House stage and a celebration of the 25th anniversary of BAM RestorationArt Dance Youth Ensemble, May 27—30

Annual community events, including the Tribute to the Ancestors, Community Day, DanceAfrica Bazaar, dance workshops, visual arts, and FilmAfrica return along with new programs, including a Teen Expo and Talent Show

Bloomberg Philanthropies is the Season Sponsor

DanceAfrica 2022

Homegrown

Artistic Director Abdel R. Salaam

Asase Yaa African American Dance Theater
Bambara Drum and Dance Ensemble
Farafina Kan: The Sound of Africa
Harambe Dance Company
LaRocque Bey School of Dance Theater
BAM/Restoration Dance Youth Ensemble
DanceAfrica Spirit Walkers

Produced by BAM

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House (30 Lafayette Ave)

Fri, May 27 at 7:30pm; Sat, May 28 at 2pm & 7pm; Sun, May 29 at 3pm; Mon, May 30 at 3pm

Tickets start at \$25 (half-price for ages 16 & under)

Brooklyn, NY/April 28, 2022—BAM's annual DanceAfrica, the country's largest showcase of African dance, returns to the Howard Gilman Opera House this May with **DanceAfrica 2022: HOMEGROWN**. Under the artistic direction of **Abdel R. Salaam**, dancers, drummers, and musicians take the stage together in a unique program that features five popular companies

making return visits. Each company will offer their homegrown vision of traditional African dances.

Last seen at DanceAfrica 2017, **Asase Yaa African American Dance Theater** is a Brooklyn-based troupe known for its explosive African dance and drum performances. Marking their sixth DanceAfrica appearance, **Bambara Drum and Dance Ensemble** of the Bronx brings West African traditions to the stage in a high-octane performance. Rousing and critically acclaimed percussion orchestra and dance ensemble **Farafina Kan** (last seen at DanceAfrica 2012), from Washington, DC, shares the history and spirit of traditional West African drumming and dancing, blended with contemporary music. Bronx-based **Harambee Dance Company** (DanceAfrica 2013) reflects the majesty of the African diaspora through movement, modern dance forms, and live percussion. First seen at DanceAfrica 1992 (and marking their sixth DA appearance), **LaRocque Bey School of Dance**, the oldest African dance school in the US, will showcase its unique fusion of dance forms.

In five performances, each company brings to the stage movement and musical styles from Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, and the Caribbean, supported by Arkestra Africa, created by members of each company. All will be joined on stage by the **DanceAfrica Spirit Walkers** and the **BAM RestorationArt Dance Youth Ensemble**, celebrating their 25th anniversary. An integral component of the Festival, the Ensemble symbolizes DanceAfrica's commitment to education and community outreach.

BAM has hosted this beloved festival for 45 years, an unparalleled part of BAM's history. DanceAfrica founder Baba Chuck Davis first put an "African Village" in BAM's Lepercq Space in 1977, thus launching a now 45-year-long program that has become an enduring tradition with performances by national and international companies, community events, education components, films, visual arts, and an all-out celebration of dance culture across the African diaspora. More than 90 dance troupes from more than 15 nations have participated in this annual showcase, including companies from Ivory Coast, Congo, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Zaire, Benin, Uganda, Ghana, Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, Peru, Zambia, Madagascar, Senegal, and the US.

A Tribute to the Ancestors ceremony will be held at 10am on Sat, May 21, at the Weeksville Heritage Center (158 Buffalo Ave). This traditional ceremony, which includes music and drumming, dance performances, and a libation ceremony conducted by the DanceAfrica Council of Elders, is an integral part of DanceAfrica that honors elders who have passed. The event is free and open to the public.

It will be followed by the annual **Community Day** at Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Plaza (1368 Fulton St) at 1pm to kick off the annual festival. This year's program celebrates RestorationArt's 25-year participation in DanceAfrica with an awards ceremony honoring past and present instructors, parent volunteers, administrators, and ambassadors; and an exceptional performance by past alumni members of Dance Africa and current members of Youth Arts Academy; and more.

The Memorial Room is dedicated to preserving the tradition of paying homage to the ancestors of DanceAfrica's past and present and the ancestors of the visiting companies. The Memorial Room is located in the Devitre Lounge (Peter Jay Sharp Building, 30 Lafayette Avenue) and is open May 26—30. Visit BAM.org for times.

The 2022 recipients of the **Samuel H. Scripps BAM Scholarship** for post-secondary education will be awarded on the BAM Howard Gilman Opera House stage on May 27. Inspired by the spirit of DanceAfrica, BAM Trustee Richard Feldman launched the Samuel H. Scripps BAM Scholarship Fund in 2008 in memory of former BAM Trustee and arts patron Samuel Scripps. The scholarships exclusively benefit students who have participated in BAM's arts education programs and plan to major or minor in an arts-related field of study.

The fifth **Chuck Davis Emerging Choreographer Fellow** will also be feted at the May 27 performance. Created to honor Baba Chuck Davis, founder of DanceAfrica, this unique Fellowship offers dance practitioners the chance to travel to Africa and study dance in its cultural context.

The month-long celebration, centered around the dance performances at the BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, also includes DanceAfrica workshops; the popular outdoor DanceAfrica Bazaar with over 150 vendors offering crafts, food, and fashion; a Choreographer's Conversation; a stained glass art display; a film series at BAM Rose Cinemas; and a dance party at BAMcafé with live music. More information is below.

All 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. Visit BAM.org/Safety for the most up-to-date information.

For schedule updates, ticketing, and reservations visit BAM.org. Advance registration is required for some events. Visit BAM.org/danceafrica2022

Downloadable photos [here](#).

A full festival schedule of events and programs follows below.

For press information, contact Cynthia Tate at ctate@BAM.org or 718.724.8022.

About the Events

DanceAfrica 2022 Bazaar

Sat, May 28, 12—10pm; Sun, May 29 & Mon; May 30, 12—8pm

Ashland Pl/ Lafayette Ave.

Free

DanceAfrica's beloved bazaar returns, featuring more than 150 vendors from around the world, offering African, Caribbean, and African-American food, crafts, and fashion. Celebrate the rich

and diverse cultural heritage of Africa and its diaspora—and see the streets surrounding BAM transformed into a global marketplace.

Late Night Dance Party with DJ YB

Sat, May 28 at 10pm

The Adam Space/BAMcafe (Peter Jay Sharp Building, 30 Lafayette Avenue)

Free

Keep the DanceAfrica celebration going after hours with DJ YB, who brings a mix of Afrobeat, funk, soul, rock, jazz, and hip-hop stylings to the dance floor of BAMcafé. Called “The General of Afrobeats,” he has played across the globe, including in Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, London, Paris, and more.

Workshops and Classes

DanceAfrica Artist Workshops

Tue, May 3 at 6:30pm; Sat, May 14 at 1pm

Mark Morris Dance Center (3 Lafayette Ave)

Tickets: \$12 per class

Work directly with some of the festival's choreographers in these open level workshops exploring different movement practices. Led by artists from Asase Yaa African American Dance Theater, Bambara Drum and Dance Ensemble, Harambee Dance Company, and LaRocque Bey School of Dance, each workshop features two different companies, so participants experience a range of practices and styles. *For teens and adults, all levels of experience are welcome.*

DanceAfrica Community Workshop

Co-presented by BAM and Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy

Sat. May 28 at 11am

Brooklyn Bridge Park (Pier 6 Liberty Lawn)

Free (Pre-registration is required)

All ages

Caregivers and children deepen their engagement with DanceAfrica in this fun-filled, hands-on workshop with BAM teaching artist Adia Whitaker on the fundamentals of Haitian movement and music. Space is limited; pre-registration is required. Visit brooklynbridgepark.org/danceafrica to register.

DanceAfrica Family Workshop

Mon, May 30 at 10am

Mark Morris Dance Center (3 Lafayette Ave)

Tickets: In-Person (\$12 adults; \$15 family of two; \$20 family of three; \$25 family of four) & Virtual (\$10 Pre-registration is recommended)

All ages

DanceAfrica featured company Farafina Kan invites caregivers and children to explore the fundamentals of West African dance movement and music in this fun-filled, hands-on workshop.

DanceAfrica Physically Integrated Movement Workshop

Led by Pat Hall

Mon, May 30 at 11am

Mark Morris Dance Center (3 Lafayette Ave)

Tickets: In-Person: \$12; Virtual: \$10

Acclaimed dancer, choreographer, and teacher Pat Hall leads this inclusive, interactive class designed for persons with or without disabilities. Choose to participate in person at the Mark Morris Dance Center or through livestream and discover how African and diasporic dance forms celebrate community and aspects of daily life, providing a unique window into its people's culture, history, and traditions. *For adults, all levels of experience are welcome. When you register, we invite you to share how we can make this class as accessible to you as possible and any other information that will help us best support your experience.*

DanceAfrica Master Class

Mon, May 30 at 12:30pm

Mark Morris Dance Center (3 Lafayette Ave)

Tickets: In-Person: \$12; Virtual: \$10

A member of Farafina Kan leads this immersive workshop in the music and dance of West Africa, introducing participants to rhythmic traditions and teaching the fundamentals of traditional movement styles. *For intermediate to advanced dancers.*

Conversations on DanceAfrica

Choreographers' Conversation

Tue, May 17 at 6:30pm

BAM.org - Virtual Broadcast

Free

Choreographers from this year's festival come together for a conversation about honoring and celebrating the legacies of Africa and its diaspora through their practices. DanceAfrica artistic director and founder of DanceAfrica Spirit Walkers Abdel R. Salaam is joined by Yao Ababio of Asase Yaa African American Dance Theater; Jewel Love of Bambara Drum and Dance Ensemble; Lesina Martin of Farafina Kan; Sandella Malloy of Harambee Dance Company; and Jerome Hunter of LaRocque Bey School of Dance for an informal discussion. Moderated by choreographer, dancer, educator, and arts presenter Sandra L. Burton.

Council of Elders Roundtable: Legacy & Preservation

With members of the DanceAfrica Council of Elders

Facilitated by Camille Lawrence

Sun, May 29 at 12:30pm

The Adam Space/BAMcafé (Peter Jay Sharp Building, 30 Lafayette Ave)

Free with RSVP

Since its inception, the DanceAfrica Council of Elders has been an instrumental part of the Festival. In this roundtable discussion, members of the Council will discuss preserving the DanceAfrica legacy and how their personal work creates connections between the ancestors, the art and culture of Africa, its diaspora, and the community that gathers at BAM each year. In

conjunction with the DanceAfrica Oral History Project launch, this conversation serves as a gathering point and opportunity for the DanceAfrica community to ask questions.

Visual Art

“Be Lost Well (Stay in the House All Day)”

Christopher Myers

Dorothy W. Levitt Lobby (Peter Jay Sharp Building, 30 Lafayette Ave)

Located along the escalator wall

On display daily

Free

In this new work made of stained glass, “Be Lost Well (Stay in the House All Day),” artist and writer Christopher Myers pays homage to interdisciplinary artist Ralph Lemon and continues to unfurl his interest in employing a cross-cultural approach to his artistic practice as a forum to cultivate new narratives. Curated by BAM’s Guest Curator-At-Large, Larry Ossei-Mensah, Myers’ piece will premiere at DanceAfrica 2022 and remain on exhibit through BAM’s spring season.

Christopher Myers in Conversation

With Larry Ossei-Mensah

BAM Rose Cinemas (30 Lafayette Ave)

Tue, May 10 at 6:30pm

Free with RSVP

Artist and writer Christopher Myers is joined in conversation by BAM Guest Curator-at-Large Larry Ossei-Mensah to discuss Myers’ creative practice and his newly created stained glass piece “Be Lost Well (Stay in the House All Day)” at BAM. This conversation offers holistic insight into the Brooklyn-based artist and delves into the range of Myers’ work, from design and writing for theater with *JACK & (Next Wave 2018)* and dramaturgy for *Triptych (Eyes of One on Another)* (BAM 2019) to his solo exhibition this spring “The Hands of Strange Children” at James Cohan Gallery.

DanceAfrica Teen Event

Water Your Roots: Youth Dance Expo & Talent Show

Fri, May 20 at 6pm

BAM Fisher (Hillman Studio, 321 Ashland Pl)

Free with RSVP

Teens from grades 9 to 12 are invited to join this unique event hosted by BAM's very own Brooklyn Interns for Art and Culture. This talent expo aims to connect youth and extend the legacy of DanceAfrica to teen community members. For teens of color living in Brooklyn, this event offers a creative social atmosphere to share culture and roots and connect with peers through creative artistic expression.

FilmAfrica

BAM Rose Cinemas (30 Lafayette Ave)

May 27—Jun 2

Looking back at more than a decade of FilmAfrica at BAM, this series gathers recent work with hits from past festivals to celebrate the incredible cinema New York African Film Festival brings to BAM each year.

TGV: 25th Anniversary Screening (1997)

Fri, May 27 at 7pm & Mon, May 30 at 4pm

Passengers on the TGV bus between Senegal and Guinea risk danger in a revolt at the border. In French and Wolof with English subtitles.

When the Stars Meet the Sea (1996)

Sat, May 28 at 2pm

A blind mystic guides Kapila—born during an eclipse, so feared and abandoned—back home. In French and Malagasy with English subtitles.

FilmAfrica Shorts

Sat, May 28 at 4:30pm & Tue, May 31 at 6:30pm

These short films invite us into the struggles and dreams of families in Sudan, Senegal, England, South Africa, and more. In Arabic, French, Yoruba, English, Tong-Jieng, and Xhosa with English subtitles.

Min Alesh? (2019)

Sat, May 28 at 6:30pm & Tue, May 31 at 4:30pm

An international race offers Selam, a passionate runner, the chance to achieve her dreams. In Amharic with English subtitles.

Saloum (2021)

Sat, May 28 at 8:30pm

Three mercenaries go into hiding in Dakar, where devastating secrets are revealed. In French and Wolof with English subtitles.

A Child's Love Story (2004)

Sun, May 29 at 2pm

Innocent love and friendship between children in Senegal reveal cultural and class divides. In Wolof and French with English subtitles.

Mrs. F. (2019)

Sun, May 29 at 4:30pm

Patriarchy and religion complicate the staging of a play about gender inequality in Nigeria.

Hot Irons (1998) + ***Histoire de tresses*** (2002)

Sun, May 29 at 6:30pm

In Detroit and Rwanda, stories of extravagant hair styling offer windows into the personal, cultural, and political.

***Sex, Okra and Salted Butter* (2008)**

Sun, May 29 at 8:30pm & Wed, Jun 1 at 5pm

Pure separation comedy: Traditional African man copes with his wife's extra-marital affair. In French with English subtitles.

***The Promises* (2020)**

Mon, May 30 at 6:30pm

Director Hawa Aliou N'Diaye interviews Malian women who, like her, claim to be possessed by supernatural jinn. In Bambara and French with English subtitles.

***Juju Factory* (2006)**

Mon, May 30 at 8:30pm

Kongo Congo, a writer living in Brussels, weaves Congolese history with Belgium's ghosts. In French with English subtitles.

***Head Gone* (2014)**

Tue, May 31 at 8:30pm

A Nigerian bus driver loses psychiatric patients and tries to cover it up in this comedy. In English and Pidgin English with English subtitles.

Don't F With Me, I Have 51 Brothers and Sisters* (2004)**

Wed, Jun 1 at 7:30pm

Dumisani Phakathi documents finding his 51 siblings and grieving his father in South Africa. In English and Zulu with English subtitles.

Retro ShortsProgram

Thu, Jun 2 at 5pm

These shorts take us from a village in Ethiopia to the streets of Marseille, and beyond. In French, Amharic, Wolof, and English with English subtitles.

***Clouds Over Conakry* (2007)**

Thu, Jun 2 at 7:30pm

The son of a village imam is called to art over tradition when chosen to succeed his father. In French and Malinke with English subtitles.

Tickets: \$16 per screening for adults; \$11 (seniors & veterans); \$8 (BAM Members Level 1-3); free (BAM Members Level 4 & above). Tickets are available starting April 27, by visiting BAM.org/film

FilmAfrica press contact: Lindsay Brayton, lbrayton@BAM.org.

DanceAfrica and BAM Hamm Archives

BAM Hamm Archives continues to preserve the incredible legacy of DanceAfrica through projects with partner organizations focused on oral history, audiovisual media, and the 25th anniversary of RestorationArt at DanceAfrica.

DanceAfrica Archives in Action is a series of small workshops exclusively for members of the DanceAfrica Council of Elders to interpret, document, digitize, and share their personal collections. The workshops will be recorded, and digitized materials will be curated into a digital collection to share on the Shelby White & Leon Levy BAM Digital Archive, a program of the BAM Hamm Archives, and on social media.

DanceAfrica Oral History Project, in partnership with Black Dance Stories—a community committed to amplifying Black creatives' voices—documents the narratives of the people who have shaped DanceAfrica over its rich history. The collection begins with the DanceAfrica Council of Elders and will be available on the Shelby White & Leon Levy BAM Digital Archive, a program of the BAM Hamm Archives, serving as an essential resource to an international audience of scholars, artists, and fans.

About the Companies

Asase Yaa African American Dance Theater

Artistic Director Yao Ababio set out to establish a Brooklyn-based arts institution steeped in African philosophical values and authentic creative expressions, one that would play a critical role in bridging existing cultural gaps between Africa, the Caribbean, and the US. Under his leadership, the company has distinguished itself in the dance and drum world for its dynamic, high-energy performances and commitment to excellence and discipline. They have produced more than 17 concerts, including *Djembe in the New Millennium*, *An Ananse Tale*, and *Africa, A Journey in Dance*. Previous BAM appearances include DanceAfrica 2005, 2012, 2014, and 2017.

Farafina Kan

This professional West African percussion orchestra and dance troupe is dedicated to maintaining the history and integrity of traditional African music and dance. Under the tutelage of renowned artists like Mamady Keita, Famadou Konate, and Djimo Kouyate, the company seeks to sustain the work initiated by these legends through professionalism, artistry, continual learning, and proactive intergenerational transmission of African culture through music and movement. Founded in 2004 by Mahiri F. Keita, Farafina Kan is now under the direction of Mahiri's son, Agyei Keita, and nephew, Kweku Sumbry. Previous BAM appearances include DanceAfrica 2009 and 2012.

Harambee Dance Company

In Swahili, *harambee* means “let us pull together.” Harambee Dance Company pulls together the essence of African and African-American dance and music, presenting it from an innovative and exciting new contemporary perspective. Artistic Director and resident choreographer Sandella Malloy has developed a high-energy repertoire that draws on African-based movement, modern dance forms, live percussion, original music, and vibrant costumes to create captivating performances reflecting the majesty of the African diaspora. Harambee was a guest company for DanceAfrica 2013.

Bambara Drum and Dance Ensemble

The mission of the Bambara Drum and Dance Ensemble is to educate and preserve through music and dance the Black aesthetic, from its beginning in Africa to the present day and beyond. The group aims to instill traditional African cultural values while bridging the cultural gap between people of all backgrounds and generations. This unique company of “edutainers” has dazzled audiences throughout the US, performing challenging repertoires from West Africa, Central Africa, and Cuba. The company’s energy and creative versatility engages audiences and allows each individual to become one with this experience. Previous BAM appearances include DanceAfrica 2004, 2006, 2007, 2011, and 2015.

LaRocque Bey School of Dance

Established by the late LaRocque Bey in the Harlem community in 1960, when it offered classes in traditional African dance for as little as 25 cents, the LaRocque Bey School of Dance is the oldest African dance school in the US. Today, under the direction of Brother Jerome Hunter, the school continues to provide cultural enrichment and affordable dance, fitness, and drum classes to both economically disadvantaged and advantaged communities. It has taught well over 15,000 students and worked with artists including Duke Ellington, Otis Redding, Debbie Allen, George Clinton, Phylicia Rashad, Savion Glover, and more. Previous appearances include The Soul Brother (1968), DanceAfrica 1992, 1993, 1997, 2002, and 2008.

DanceAfrica Spirit Walkers

The DanceAfrica Spirit Walkers were founded by Baba Abdel R. Salaam in 2016 to theatrically honor the ancestors of Africa and its diaspora through the annual DanceAfrica Memorial Tribute, originally developed by the late Baba Chuck Davis. The group comprises professional dance artists and musicians from the RestorationArt alumni and Forces of Nature Dance Theatre, melding African vernacular forms, modern, hip-hop, and contemporary dance.

BAM RestorationArt Dance Youth Ensemble

This DanceAfrica favorite returns to the BAM Howard Gilman Opera House for the 25th year. The ensemble serves as a symbol of youth involvement in the preservation of African heritage, celebrating both ancestral roots and the modern-day community.

Abdel R. Salaam

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 41st year.

Credits

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