A Letter to My Nephew

Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company
In association with New York Live Arts
Conceived and directed by Bill T. Jones

BAM Harvey Theater
Oct 3—7 at 7:30pm
Running time: approx. one hour & 10 minutes, no intermission

Choreography by Bill T. Jones with Janet Wong and the Company
Original score composed by Nick Hallett
Set design by Bjorn Amelan
Lighting design by Robert Wierzel
Costume design by Liz Prince
Projection design by Janet Wong
Sound design by Samuel Crawford

Season Sponsor:

Bloomberg Philanthropies

Leadership support for dance at BAM provided by The Harkness Foundation for Dance.

Major support for dance at BAM provided by The SHS Foundation.
A LETTER TO MY NEPHEW

The Company
Vinson Fraley Jr., Barrington Hinds, Shane Larson, I-Ling Liu, Penda N’diaye, Jenna Riegel, Christina Robson, Carlo Antonio Villanueva, Huiwang Zhang

Music performed by
Nick Hallett and Matthew Gamble

Production Staff
Hillery Makatura, Lauren Libretti, Veronica Falborn, Sam Crawford


The creation of new work by Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company is made possible in part by the company’s Partners in Creation: Anonymous, Anne Delaney, Zoe Eskin, Eleanor Friedman, Ellen Poss, Slobodan Randjelovic & Jon Stryker, and Carol Tolan.

We also thank founding PIC members Abigail Congdon & Joe Azrack, Barbara & Eric Dobkin, and Marcia Radosovich.

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Special thanks to DJTONYMONKEY.
PROGRAM NOTES

In the fall of 2015 when I had just started working on the second part of the Analogy Trilogy about my nephew Lance, we received an invitation to perform in France. Instead of bringing a pre-existing work, I decided to use this opportunity to make a site-specific piece. My complicated relationship with my nephew would be a point of entry to reflect on the moment at hand. Our country had erupted in protests that summer, and we were going to a Europe that was struggling with the refugee crisis. It seems that, from the very beginning, the work rubs against the conscience of this era. The night of the opening in Paris was also the night of the Bataclan attack.

A Letter to My Nephew is my attempt to bring together two impulses: the social/political and the deeply personal. Some of the elements on stage—the style of movement, the characters in the street, the walking motif, the house music—came from my trying to imagine a world that my nephew might have inhabited, and to reference a demimonde that I did not know personally but knew it through him. The work is conceived as a kind of postcard sent from uncle to nephew from wherever we are at the moment, and on this occasion, from a Brooklyn that has changed beyond recognition since the company’s first engagement at BAM in 1983. For good or bad, change is what we can depend on.

—Bill T. Jones
BILL T. JONES (artistic director/co-founder/choreographer: Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company; artistic director: New York Live Arts) is a multi-talented artist, choreographer, dancer, theater director, and writer, has received major honors ranging from the Human Rights Campaign’s 2016 Visibility Award, a 2013 National Medal of Arts to a 1994 MacArthur Award and the Kennedy Center Honors in 2010. Jones was honored with the 2014 Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, recognized as Officier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French government in 2010, inducted into the American Academy of Arts & Sciences in 2009 and named “An Irreplaceable Dance Treasure” by the Dance Heritage Coalition in 2000. His ventures into Broadway theater resulted in a 2010 Tony Award for Best Choreography in the critically acclaimed FELA!, the new musical co-conceived, co-written, directed, and choreographed by Jones. He also earned a 2007 Tony Award for Best Choreography in Spring Awakening as well as an Obie Award for the show’s 2006 off-Broadway run. His choreography for the off-Broadway production of The Seven earned him a 2006 Lucille Lortel Award.

Jones began his dance training at the State University of New York at Binghamton (SUNY), where he studied classical ballet and modern dance. After living in Amsterdam, he returned to SUNY, where he became co-founder of the American Dance Asylum in 1973. In 1982 he formed the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company (then called Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane & Company) with his late partner, Arnie Zane. Jones is currently artistic director of New York Live Arts, an organization that strives to create a robust framework in support of the nation’s dance and movement-based artists through new approaches to producing, presenting, and educating. For more information, visit newyorklivearts.org.

His work in dance has been recognized with the 2010 Jacob’s Pillow Dance Award, the 2005 Wexner Prize, the 2005 Samuel H. Scripps American Dance Festival Award for Lifetime Achievement, the 2003 Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize, and the 1993 Dance Magazine Award. His additional awards include the Harlem Renaissance Award in 2005; the Dorothy B. Chandler Performing Arts Award in 1991; multiple New York Dance and Performance Bessie Awards for his works The Table Project (2001), The Breathing Show (2001), D-Man in the Waters (1989), and the company’s groundbreaking season at the Joyce Theater (1986). In 1980, 1981, and 1982, Jones was the recipient of Choreographic Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, and in 1979 he was granted the Creative Artists Public Service Award in Choreography.

Jones was profiled on NBC Nightly News and The Today Show in 2010 and was a guest on The Colbert Report in 2009. Also in 2010, he was featured in HBO’s documentary series MASTERCLASS, which follows notable artists as they mentor aspiring young artists. In 2009, Jones appeared on one of the final episodes of Bill Moyers Journal, discussing his Lincoln suite of works. He was also one of 22 prominent black Americans featured in the HBO documentary The Black List in 2004. In 2001, ARTE France and Bel Air Media produced Bill T. Jones–Solos, highlighting three of his iconic solos from a cinematic point of view. The making of Still/Here was the subject of a documentary by Bill Moyers and David Grubin entitled Bill T. Jones: Still/Here with Bill Moyers in 1997. Additional television credits include telecasts of his works Last Supper at Uncle Tom’s Cabin/The Promised Land (1992) and Fever Swamp (1985) on PBS’s Great Performances. In 2001, D-Man in the Waters was broadcast on the Emmy-winning documentary Free to Dance.

Bill T. Jones’ interest in new media and digital technology has resulted in collaborations with the team of Paul Kaiser, Shelley Eshkar, and Marc Downie, now known as OpenEnded Group. The collaborations include After Ghostcatching—the 10th anniversary re-imagining of Ghostcatching (2010, SITE Sante Fe Eighth International Biennial); 22 (2004, Arizona State University’s Institute for Studies in the Arts and Technology, Tempe, AZ); and Ghostcatching—A Virtual Dance Installation (1999, Cooper Union, New York, NY).

He has received honorary doctorates from Yale University, Art Institute of Chicago, Bard College, Columbia College, Skidmore College, The Juilliard School, Swarthmore College, and the State University of New York at Binghamton Distinguished Alumni Award, where he began his dance training with studies in classical ballet and modern dance.

In addition to his company—which celebrates its 35th year this season—and Broadway work, Jones also choreographed Sir Michael Tippett's *New Year* (1990) for Houston Grand Opera and Glyndebourne Festival Opera. His *Mother of Three Sons* was performed at the Munich Biennale, New York City Opera, and the Houston Grand Opera. Jones also directed *Lost in the Stars* for the Boston Lyric Opera. Additional theater projects include co-directing *Perfect Courage* with Rhodessa Jones for Festival 2000 in 1990. In 1994, he directed Derek Walcott's *Dream on Monkey Mountain* for The Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, MN.

**ARNIE ZANE** (co-founder/choreographer) (1948—88) was a native New Yorker born in the Bronx and educated at the State University of New York (SUNY) at Binghamton. In 1971, Arnie Zane and Bill T. Jones began their long collaboration in choreography and in 1973 formed the American Dance Asylum in Binghamton with Lois Welk. Zane's first recognition in the arts came as a photographer when he received a Creative Artists Public Service (CAPS) Fellowship in 1973. Zane was the recipient of a second CAPS Fellowship in 1981 for choreography, as well as two Choreographic Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts (1983 and 1984). In 1980, Zane was co-recipient, with Bill T. Jones, of the German Critics Award for his work, *Blaueit Mountain. Rotary Action*, a duet with Jones, was filmed for television, co-produced by WGBH-TV Boston and Channel 4 in London.

**COMPANY**

**VINSON FRALEY, JR.** (dancer) hails from Atlanta, GA. He began his training at the age of 14 under the direction of Lynise and Denise Heard. Fraley studied at Tisch School of the Arts at New York University and was most recently a company dancer for Abraham.In.Motion. He has been fortunate enough to work with many choreographers and instructors including Rashawn Mitchell, Cora Bos Kroese, Gus Solomons jr., Cindy Salgado, Seán Curran, and many more. Fraley joined the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company in 2017.

**MATTHEW GAMBLE** (baritone) has established himself as an artist of rare versatility, while his young career continues to grow with theaters in both North America and Europe. Recent and future engagements include debuts with the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, the Royal Danish Opera in Copenhagen, Lorin Maazel’s Castleton Festival, Princeton Festival, Phoenicia Festival of the Voice, Connecticut Lyric Opera, and a collaboration as the baritone soloist with Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company in the development of two new works: *Analogy/Lance*, and *A Letter to My Nephew*, which have included residencies at Bard College and Montclair State University, with engagements in France, New York, Boston, Wyoming, North Carolina, and others. Gamble has studied with Joan Dornemann at IVAI in New York, Martina Arroyo’s Prelude to Performance, with noted coach Ira Siff, as well as acclaimed tenor Richard Margison in Toronto. Roles include Mozart’s Count Almaviva, Papageno, and Don Giovanni, Mr. Ford in Verdi’s *Falstaff*, multiple Puccini roles, Luther/Schlemiel in *Les Contes d’Hoffmann*, Mr. Bobineau in Menotti’s *The Medium*, multiple roles in the Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess*, and Smirnov in William Walton’s *The Bear*.

**NICK HALLETT** (composer) has been writing music for and performing with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company since 2014. His scores include all three evenings of the *Analogy Trilogy*, *A Letter to My Nephew*, and *Fishkill/Movements*. His first opera, *Whispering Pines 10*, created in collaboration with artist Shana Moulton, was staged at The Kitchen, New Museum of Contemporary Art, SFMOMA, PICA TBA Festival, and the Warhol Museum (among others), and is currently being adapted for the internet. A new opera, titled *To Music*, is currently in development. His arrangements and remixes of music by the late choreographer John Bernd appear in *Variations on Lost and Found*, directed by Ishmael Houston-Jones and Miguel Gutierrez. In recent years, his music has been performed at Mass MoCA, Ecstatic Music Festival, Palais
BARRINGTON HINDS (dancer) is from West Palm Beach, FL. He began his training at the School of Ballet Florida under the direction of Marie Hale. Hinds holds a BFA in dance from SUNY Purchase College and has worked professionally with VERB Ballets, Northwest Professional Dance Project, and the national tour of Twyla Tharp’s Broadway show, Movin’ Out. In 2011, Hinds was a finalist for the Clive Barnes Award for young talent in dance. He has worked with leading choreographers including Laurie Stallings, Edgar Zendejas, Sarah Slipper, Helen Pickett, Thaddeus Davis, and Cherylyn Lavagnino to name a few. Hinds recently danced with Stephen Petronio Company, freelances in commercial TV and print work, and is a choreographer and teacher. Hinds joined the company in 2017.

SHANE LARSON (dancer) was born and raised in Minnesota, where he received his training at the St. Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists. He graduated from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts, with a BFA in dance and a minor in child and adolescent mental health studies. During his time in New York City, he has branched out to collaborate with punk musicians, filmmakers, improvisational music ensembles, and site-specific visual artists. He also had the opportunity to study at the Salzburg Experimental Academy of Dance in Austria, where he was exposed to the expanse of the European contemporary dance scene. With a new outlook on the limitless possibilities and pathways of the body, he hopes to continue the exploration of dance with a sense of newness and discovery. Larson joined the company in 2015.

I-LING LIU (dancer), a native of Taiwan, received her BFA from Taipei National University of the Arts in 2005. She has performed with Ku and Dancers, Taipei Crossover Dance Company, Image in Motion Theater Company, Neo-Classic Dance Company, and in works by Trisha Brown, Lin Hwai-min, and Yang Ming-lung. Liu joined the company as an apprentice in 2007 and became a member of the company in 2008. PENDA N’DIAYE (dancer) a native of Denver, CO, ignited her love for dance at Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Theater. She has danced with Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion, David Dorfman Dance, and Forces of Nature Dance Theater. N’Diaye received her BFA in dance from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts which led her to study abroad in Salzburg, Austria at Salzburg Experimental Academy of Dance and Springboard Danse in Montreal. She has had the honor of expanding her body of work with award-winning artist and photographer Carrie Mae Weems in addition to the performance artist Nick Cave. N’diaye has shared her love for dance with students at Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Steps on Broadway, Peridance, and Steffi Nossen Dance. In 2017, N’Diaye began her own YouTube talk show, Glowing Up with Penda. N’diaye joined the company in 2017.

JENNA RIEGEL (dancer), a native of Fairfield, IA, has been a New York-based dancer, performer, and teacher since 2007. Riegel holds an MFA in dance performance from the University of Iowa and a BA in theater arts from Maharishi University of Management. She has performed and toured nationally and internationally as a company member of David Dorfman Dance, Alexandra/Beller Dances, Bill Young/Colleen Thomas & Dancers, Johannes Weiland, and Tania Isaac Dance. Riegel began working with the company as a guest artist in 2010 and was ecstatic to join the company in 2011.

CHRISTINA ROBSON (dancer), originally from Tewksbury, MA, received her early dance training from Tammy Ivers Aspell and graduated summa cum laude from Roger Williams University in 2009 under the direction of mentor Kelli Wicke Davis. Since relocating to New York City, she has had the opportunity to perform with the Seán Curran Company, David Dorfman Dance, Monica Bill Barnes and Company, Alexandra Beller, Heidi Henderson, Third Rail Projects, and Deganit Shemy. Robson became a member of the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company in 2015.

CARLO ANTONIO VILLANUEVA (dancer) was born and raised in Wallington, NJ. He received his primary movement training from Scott Chandler and TJ Doucette while touring with the Blue Devils Drum and Bugle Corps of Concord, CA. He received his BFA summa cum laude from Mason Gross School of the Arts, studied Dance
abroad at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, and continued his training in classes and workshops provided by the Merce Cunningham Trust. Villanueva is roused by the work of Doug Elkins and Netta Yerushalmy, and collaborates continuously with Miriam Gabriel. This season, he is also working on projects with Abby Zbikowski and Ash Yergens. Villanueva joined the company in 2015.

HUIWANG ZHANG (dancer) is a dancer, choreographer, and screen dance artist originally from Jiujiang, China. He received his early dance training from Beijing Dance Academy, and later earned his MFA in dance from the University of Utah. As a performer, he has had the honor of working with choreographers like Stephen Koester, Eric Handman, Sara Pearson, and Patrik Widrig, and touring nationally and internationally as a member of the China National Opera and Dance Drama Theater in Beijing. He attended Palucca Hochschule für Tanz Dresden (Germany) to study choreography under the direction of Katharina Christl. Currently, his own artistic practice discloses the relationship between linguistic expression and body perception in different sociocultural contexts. His work has been presented in the Beijing Dance Festival 2016 and 12 Minutes Max Salt Lake City 2017. He is very grateful to join the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company and feels honored to work with a company that fervently devotes its strength to this body-based art form. Zhang joined the company in 2017.

BJORN G. AMELAN (creative director) was the partner of the late fashion designer Patrick Kelly from 1983 until Kelly passed away on January 1, 1990. Amelan moved to the US to begin his collaboration with Bill T. Jones in 1993. He has designed sets for the following works by Bill T. Jones: Green and Blue (1997) for the Lyon Opera Ballet; How! Do! We! Do! (1999) for Bill T. Jones and Jessye Norman, in conjunction with Lincoln Center’s Great Performers (1999); You Walk? (2000); The Table Project (2001); Another Evening (2002); Verbum (2002); World Without/In (2002); Black Suzanne (2002); Reading, Mercy and The Artificial Nigger (2003); Mercy 10 x 8 on a Circle (2003); Chaconne (2003); and Blind Date (2005) for the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company. Amelan is the recipient of the 2001 Bessie Award for his designs of The Breathing Show and The Table Project.

SAM CRAWFORD (sound designer) completed degrees in English and audio technology at Indiana University in 2003. A move to New York City led him to Looking Glass Studios where he worked on film projects with Philip Glass and Björk. His recent sound designs and compositions have included works for the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company (Venice Biennale, 2010), Kyle Abraham (Pavement, 2012; 2016 Next Wave), Camille A. Brown and Dancers (BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play, 2016), and David Dorfman Dance (Come, and Back Again, 2013 Next Wave; and Aroundtown, 2017 Next Wave). La Medea, Crawford’s live multimedia collaboration with director Yara Travieso, premiered at PS 122’s Coil Festival in 2017.

HANNAH EMERSON (producing associate) completed her BFA in contemporary dance from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts in 2011. She moved to NYC shortly after being awarded the William R. Kenan, Jr. Fellowship at the Lincoln Center Institute. Choosing to remain in the northeast, she has held administrative positions at New York Live Arts and The Yard while continuing to be artistically involved in the dance community. Emerson joined Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company in 2014 as company manager before most recently moving into the producing associate position at New York Live Arts.

VERONICA FALBORN (production stage manager) is incredibly excited to be working with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company. Other dance credits include New York City Ballet, School of American Ballet, Trisha Brown Dance Company, Vail International Dance Festival, Dances Patrelle, and NJ Ballet. She is a proud graduate of SUNY Purchase.

LAUREN LIBRETTI (lighting supervisor) has worked on dance productions with Jody Oberfelder, Kate Weare Dance Company, Lori Belilove, Isadora Duncan Dance Company, Jose Limón Dance Company, and Ailey II. Her designs have been seen at DamageDance, Umbrella Collective, Staten Island Ballet, and Ann Liv Young’s Elektra. She was lighting director with Martha Graham Dance Company, where she redesigned the classic, Errand into the Maze. Laurenlibretti.com

HILLERY MAKATURA (director of production) graduated from Stephen F. Austin State Univer-
sity with a BFA in theater. She has been touring both internationally and throughout the US since 2006. She has worked as production manager for The Actors Studio, Big Art Group, Theater Mitu, and Trisha Brown Dance Company.

**KYLE MAUDE** (producing director) graduated from Drake University with a BFA in theater. She has worked with Ballet Tech/Feld Ballets New York, Royal Ballet School of London, Buglisi-Foreman Dance, and Lesbian Pulp-o-Rama! Maude joined the company in 2003.

**LIZ PRINCE** (costume designer) designs costumes for dance, theater, and film and has had the great pleasure of designing for Bill T. Jones since 1991. Her work has been exhibited at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, 2011 Prague Quadrennial of Performance Space and Design, Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art, Rockland Center for the Arts, and Snug Harbor Cultural Center. She received a 1990 Bessie Award and a 2008 Charles Flint Kellogg Arts and Letters Award from Bard College. She teaches costume design at SUNY Purchase College and Manhattanville College.

**ROBERT WIERZEL** (lighting designer) has worked with artists in theater, dance, new music, opera, and museums, and on stages throughout the country and abroad. He has worked with Bill T. Jones and his company since 1985. Projects include *Blind Date, Another Evening/II Bow Down, Still/Here, You Walk?, Last Supper at Uncle Tom’s Cabin/The Promised Land, How to Walk an Elephant*, and *We Set Out Early, Visibility Was Poor*. Other works with Bill T. Jones include projects at the Guthrie Theatre, Lyon Opera Ballet, Deutsche Opera Ballet (Berlin), Boston Ballet, Boston Lyric Opera, the Welsh dance company Diversions, and London’s Contemporary Dance Trust. Wierzel has also worked with choreographers Trisha Brown, Doug Varone, Donna Uchizono, Larry Goldhuber, Heidi Latsky, Seán Curran, Melissa Fenley, Susan Marshall, Margo Sappington, Alonzo King, and Joann Fregalette-Jansen. Additional credits include national and international opera companies, Broadway and regional theater. Wierzel is on the faculty of New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts and Yale School of Drama.

**JANET WONG** (associate artistic director/projection designer) was born in Hong Kong and trained in Hong Kong and London. Upon graduation she joined the Berlin Ballet where she first met Bill T. Jones when he was invited to choreograph on the company. In 1993, she moved to New York to pursue other interests. Wong became rehearsal director of the company in 1996, associate artistic director in August 2006, and associate artistic director of New York Live Arts in 2016.

**BILL T. JONES/ARNIE ZANE COMPANY**
Over the past 35 years the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company has shaped the evolution of contemporary dance through the creation and performance of over 140 works. Founded as a multicultural dance company in 1982, the company was born of an 11-year artistic collaboration between Bill T. Jones and Arnie Zane. Today, the company is recognized as one of the most innovative and powerful forces in the modern dance world. The company has performed its ever-enlarging repertoire worldwide in over 200 cities in 30 countries on every major continent. In 2011, the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company merged with Dance Theater Workshop to form New York Live Arts of which Bill T. Jones is the artistic director and Janet Wong is the associate artistic director. The repertory of the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company is widely varied in its subject matter, visual imagery, and stylistic approach to movement, voice, and stagecraft and includes musically driven works as well as those using a variety of texts. Some of its most celebrated creations are evening length works including *Last Supper at Uncle Tom’s Cabin/The Promised Land* (1990 Next Wave); *Still/Here* (1994, Biennale de la Danse in Lyon, France; Next Wave); *We Set Out Early…Visibility Was Poor* (1996, Hancher Auditorium, Iowa City, IA; 1998 Next Wave); *You Walk?* (2000, European Capital of Culture 2000, Bologna, Italy); *Blind Date* (2006, Peak Performances at Montclair State University); *Chapel/Chapter* (2006, Harlem Stage Gatehouse); *Fondly Do We Hope…Fervently Do We Pray* (2009, Ravinia Festival, Highland Park, IL); *Another Evening: Venice/Arsenale* (2010, La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy); *Story/Time* (2012, Peak Performances); and *A Rite* (2013, Carolina Performing Arts at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill; Next Wave). The company is also currently touring *Body Against Body*, an intimate and focused collection of duet works drawn from the company’s 35-year history.
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Located in the heart of Chelsea in New York City, New York Live Arts is an internationally recognized destination for innovative movement-based artistry offering audiences access to art and artists notable for their conceptual rigor, formal experimentation, and active engagement with the social, political, and cultural currents of our times. At the center of its identity is Bill T. Jones, world-renowned choreographer, dancer, theater director and writer. New York Live Arts serves as the home base for the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company and is the company's sole producer, providing support and the environment to originate innovation and challenging new work for the company and the NYC creative community. New York Live Arts produces and presents dance, music, and theater performances in its 20,000 square foot home, which includes a 184-seat theater and two 1,200 square foot studios that can be combined into one large studio. New York Live Arts offers an extensive range of participatory programs for adults and young people and supports the continuing professional development of artists and commissions.

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