

The logo for BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music) is displayed in large, bold, white letters against a red background. A white rectangular box is superimposed over the letters 'A' and 'M', containing the text 'BAM 2018 Winter/Spring Season' in red.

BAM 2018 Winter/Spring Season

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

## **BAM presents 2018 DanceAfrica Festival, May 25—28**

**The nation's largest African dance festival and BAM's longest-running program celebrates the rich cultural traditions of South Africa**

**Annual events include the Tribute to the Ancestors, Community Day, dance workshops, visual arts, FilmAfrica, and DanceAfrica Bazaar**

Bloomberg Philanthropies is the Season Sponsor

### **DanceAfrica 2018**

#### ***Remembrance, Reconciliation, and Renewal***

Artistic Director Abdel R. Salaam

Ingoma Kwazulu Natal Dance Company  
Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre  
BAM/Restoration Dance Youth Ensemble (Brooklyn)

Lighting design by Al Crawford  
Sound design by David Margolin Lawson

**BAM Howard Gilman Opera House** (30 Lafayette Ave)  
May 25 at 7:30pm; May 26 at 2pm & 7pm; May 27 & 28 at 3pm  
Tickets start at \$25

**April 3, 2018/Brooklyn, NY**—In 1977, dancer and choreographer Chuck Davis installed an “African village” in the BAM Lepercq Space for his dance engagement. No one anticipated his vision would evolve into DanceAfrica—BAM's longest continuous program and one of its most beloved. The nation's largest African dance festival returns for its 41<sup>st</sup> year with *Remembrance, Reconciliation, and Renewal*, a stirring tribute to the rich cultural history and traditions of South Africa. Created by Artistic Director **Abdel R. Salaam**, the program honors the centennial of Nelson Mandela's birth with a celebration of freedom fighters past and present.

South African supergroup **Ingoma Kwazulu Natal Dance Company** brings traditional movement idioms alongside the contemporary stylings of Durban-based **Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre**. They are joined by the **BAM/Restoration Dance Youth Ensemble** in a performance that draws parallels between South African anti-apartheid and American civil rights movements, reflecting on the history that connects the Sharpeville massacre and the march from Selma to

the current struggles for social justice. The promise of hope and renewal are embodied in the transcendent forms of dance and music, creating a triumphant celebration of culture to pave the path forward.

### **Community Events**

A Tribute to the Ancestors ceremony will be held at 10am on Sat May 19 at the Weeksville Heritage Center (158 Buffalo Ave, Brooklyn). This traditional ceremony, which includes dancing and music by participating artists, is an integral part of DanceAfrica that honors elders who have passed on. The event is free and open to the public.

It will be followed by the DanceAfrica Community Day at Restoration Plaza (1368 Fulton St, Brooklyn) at 1pm to kick off the annual festival. It features performances by students from RestorationART.

The Memorial Day weekend celebration also includes the popular DanceAfrica outdoor Bazaar which hosts more than 150 vendors selling crafts, food, and fashion; dance workshops, and FilmAfrica, a BAMcinématek film series at BAM Rose Cinemas. Information on FilmAfrica is below.

The 2018 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 25. 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, including the DanceAfrica Education initiative.

Jade Charon, the third Chuck Davis Emerging Choreographer Fellow, will also be feted at the May 26 performance. Created to honor Baba Chuck Davis, this unique opportunity offers dance practitioners the chance to travel to Africa and study with masters of African dance. Charon is a choreographer, community activist, dancer, filmmaker, and teaching artist from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Her professional experience—including work with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee and Signature Dance Company—centers on dance, education, and youth activism. She is currently a MFA dance student and Graduate Opportunity Fellow, at the University of California, Los Angeles where she explores the ways in which dance can be used as ministry to uplift people of color and heal all people.

For press information, contact Christian Barclay at [cbarclay@BAM.org](mailto:cbarclay@BAM.org) or 718.724.8044.

### **About the Artists**

**Ingoma Kwazulu Natal Dance Company** comprises the following South African dance groups: The Champions (an *isiPantsula* dance group); Kanagroo (a traditional Zulu dance group); Tswana Group (an all-female group specializing in Setwana, Pedi, Venda, and Xhosa dance); and Amatsheketshe (an all-female group specializing in Ushiyameni, Umkhomaas, and Umzansi dance). The super-group, created especially for this event, is the brainchild of Duma Ndlovu, a well-known South African filmmaker, writer, and TV producer, and choreographer Siyanda Mwandla. It offers a unique opportunity to experience the breadth of both traditional and modern South African dance styles.

**Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre** was founded in Durban, South Africa in 1995 under the directorship of Jay Pather and resident choreographer Simphiwe Magazi. *Siwela Sonke* means

“crossing over to a new place altogether” in Zulu and the company exemplifies this by drawing from a variety of influences: the classical and contemporary dance vocabularies of KwaZulu Natal, isicathamiya, contemporary African dance, hip hop, pantsula, classical Indian dance, and ballet. Central to the company’s work is a process of creative collaboration through improvisation and choreography, one that searches for new languages, images, and hybrid forms. The company has travelled extensively through Europe and Africa with a wide range of work, including site-specific series performed at architectural landmarks and public spaces.

An annual favorite and symbol of youth involvement in the preservation of African heritage, the **BAM/Restoration Dance Youth Ensemble** returns to BAM for the 21<sup>st</sup> year. Under the artistic direction of Ronald K. Brown, Arcell Cabuag, and Karen Thornton-Daniels, the gifted young dancers of RestorationArt celebrate both ancestral roots and present-day community. *The Village Voice* has praised these young dancers as “exuberant and disciplined” and “a group worth following.”

**Abdel R. Salaam** is the executive artistic director/co-founder of Forces of Nature Dance Theatre (FONDT) founded in 1981. Born in Harlem, New York, Salaam is a critically acclaimed choreographer and served as a dancer, teacher, and performing artist on five continents throughout his 47-year career in the dance world. He has received numerous awards and fellowships for excellence in dance including from 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. The company also received the 2013 Audelco Award for Dance Company of the Year. Salaam has served on the faculties of the American Dance Festival in the US and Seoul, Korea; Herbert H. Lehman College; The Ailey School; Restoration Youth Arts Academy; and Harlem Children’s Zone. Inspired by Dr. Maulana Karenga, Salaam created Kwanzaa Regeneration Night Celebration in Harlem, now in its 37th year.

### **DanceAfrica Bazaar**

Each year, the free outdoor Bazaar delights the crowds with local and international vendors who transform the streets surrounding BAM into a marketplace of African, Caribbean, and African American food, fashion, artifacts, jewelry, and crafts. An estimated 40,000 people from all five boroughs of New York and the tri-state area sample these delights and bask in the communal atmosphere throughout the weekend. *The Village Voice* declared it "the boldest party in town" and *The New York Times* called it "a colorful kickoff for the summer street festival season." The bazaar also features entertainment for families.

The bazaar takes place on May 26 from 12–10pm, and on May 27 & 28 from 12–8pm on Ashland Pl between Hanson Pl & Fulton St. Admission is free and hours are subject to change.

### **DanceAfrica Workshops**

Co-presented by BAM and Mark Morris Dance Group  
Location: Mark Morris Dance Center (3 Lafayette Ave)

Mon May 28 at 10am: Family Workshops (Prices vary, see BAM.org for details)

Mon May 28 at 11am: DanceAfrica for EveryBODY Workshop for all levels and abilities \$12 (ages 16 and up)

Mon May 28 at 12pm: Master Class \$12

## **Visual Arts**

BAM Visual Art is pleased to present a survey of recent video work by South African artist **Nandipha Mntambo**, on view in the Diker Gallery Café May 24—June 24. Featuring three videos from roughly the last decade—*Ukungenisa* (2009), *Paso Doble* (2011), and *The Island* (2015)—together these works underscore the artist's exploration into the relationship between life and death, power and fragility.

Artist Talk: Saturday May 26 at 5pm  
Fisher Hillman Studio  
BAM Fisher (321 Ashland Pl)

## **FilmAfrica at BAMcinématek**

This cinematic companion to DanceAfrica, BAM's annual celebration of African dance and music, returns for its 25th edition. This year's program features a special focus on South Africa, offering a showcase of the country's best new narrative, documentary, and short films.

### ***Tilai*** (1990)

Directed by Idrissa Ouédraogo

Idrissa Ouédraogo, the late master of Burkinabe cinema, directs this stunning family tragedy, a folkloric fable of forbidden love and punishment that won the Grand Prix at Cannes.

Thu, May 24 at 7pm (81min)

### ***Green White Green*** (2016)

Directed by Abba Makama

Shot on location in Lagos, the audaciously funny, giddily irreverent feature debut from Abba Makama bursts with the freewheeling energy and invention of early Spike Lee.

Fri, May 25 at 4:30 & 9:15pm (102min)

### ***Play the Devil*** (2016)

Directed by Maria Govan

Set against the vivid backdrop of Trinidad's Carnival, this emotionally charged coming-of-age drama is a potent study of sexuality and power.

Fri, May 25 at 7pm & Sat, May 26 at 2pm (89min)

## **Shorts Program 1**

Imaginative looks at the lives of children growing up in Senegal and Burkina Faso.

Sat, May 26 at 4:30 & 9:15pm (97min)

### ***Boxing Girl***

Directed by Iman Djonnie, Senegal, 2016, 26m (French with English subtitles)

### ***Marabout***

Directed by Alassane Sy, Senegal, 2016, 28m (Wolof and French with English subtitles)

### ***Samedi Cinema***

Directed by Mamadou Dia, Senegal, 2016, 12m (Fulani, Wolof, and French with English subtitles)

### ***Twaaga***

Dir. Cedric Ido, Burkina Faso, 2013, 31m (French with English subtitles)

### ***The African Who Wanted to Fly*** (2016)

Directed by Samantha Biffot

How did a boy from Gabon follow in the footsteps of his hero Bruce Lee to become a martial arts master in China?

Sat, May 26 at 7pm (70min)

**BAMKids Movie Matinee: *Liyana* (2017)**

Directed by Aaron Kopp and Amanda Kopp

This wondrous blend of animation and documentary was born of the imaginations of five children living in an orphanage in Swaziland.

Sun, May 27 at 2pm (77min)

***A Gentle Magic* (2017)**

Directed by Tseliso Monaheng and Lerato Mbangeni.

This probing documentary interweaves psychology, history, anthropology, and personal, first-hand testimonies to shed light on the contentious—and increasingly popular—phenomenon of skin-bleaching.

Sun, May 27 at 4pm (55min)

***High Fantasy* (2017)**

Directed by Jenna Bass

In her smart, punkish DIY sophomore feature, Jenna Bass uses the “body swap” formula (à la *Freaky Friday*) to explore issues of race and gender in the supposed “rainbow nation” of post-apartheid South Africa.

Sun, May 27 at 5:45pm (71min)

**Shorts Program 2: South Africa (2006-2017)**

Captivating shorts that speak to South Africa’s history, folklore, and vibrant culture.

Sun, May 27 at 7:45pm (113min)

***dancedance/RE♦VOLUTION***

Directed by Mark Freeman, South Africa, 2017, 27m (English)

***Conquest and Prison***

Directed by Mark Freeman, South Africa, 2018, 8 min

***Meokgo and the Stick Fighter***

Directed by Teboho Malatshi, South Africa, 2006, 19m (Sotho with English subtitles)

***The Hangman***

Directed by Zwelethu Radebe, South Africa, 2017, 30 min

***The Suit***

Directed by Jarryd Coetsee, South Africa, 2016, 30m (English with some Zulu and Tsotsitaal)

***She is King* (2017)**

Directed by Gersh Kgamedi

Boasting a powerhouse cast of South African luminaries, this glittering, star-is-born showbiz saga is both a joyous musical and an empowering, feminist celebration of Zulu culture.

Mon, May 28 at 4:30 & 9:40pm (100min)

***Asinamali* (2017)**

Directed by Mbongeni Ngema

Based on the acclaimed Broadway play, this explosive political musical takes place in an apartheid-era prison where black inmates channel their resistance into theater, song, and dance.

Mon, May 28 at 7pm (105min)

**BAM Rose Cinemas** (30 Lafayette Ave)

Tickets: \$15 per screening for adults; \$11 (seniors & veterans); \$7.50 (members levels 1-3); free (members levels 4 & above)

Tickets available starting April 19, by phone at 718.777.FILM or by visiting BAM.org

FilmAfrica press contact: Maureen Masters, [mmasters@BAM.org](mailto:mmasters@BAM.org) or 718.724.8023.

#### Credits

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