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Halfway to Dawn

David Roussève / REALITY

BAM Harvey Theater

Dec 5—8 at 7:30pm

Running time: approx. 1 hour 50 minutes, including intermission

Written, choreographed, and directed by **David Roussève**

Music by **Billy Strayhorn**

Lighting design by **Chris Kuhl**

Video art by **Cari Ann Shim Sham**

Sound design by **d. Sabela grimes**

Costume design by **Leah Piehl**

Dramaturgy by **L. MSP Burns**

Season Sponsor:

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*Leadership support for dance at the BAM Harvey and the BAM Fisher provided by the
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BERNARD BROWN



RAYMOND EJIOPOR



DEZARÉ FOSTER



JASMINE JAWATO



KEVIN LE



JULIO MEDINA



SAMANTHA MOHR



LEANNE IACOVETTA POIRIER



KEVIN WILLIAMSON

PERFORMED BY

Bernard Brown
Raymond Ejiofor
Dezaré Foster
Jasmine Jawato
Kevin Le

Julio Medina
Samantha Mohr
Leanne Iacovetta Poirier
Kevin Williamson

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS

Screen design & fabrication **Mary Hale**
Technical director **Chris Kuhl**
Tour manager/assistant TD **Katelan Braymer**

COMMISSIONED BY

ArtPower at UC San Diego; Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans; Kelly Strayhorn Theater, Pittsburgh; Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; NC State LIVE, Raleigh; REDCAT, Los Angeles.

SPECIAL THANKS

Arsenio Apillanes, Casey Brown, Lynn Dally, Ken Foster, Susan Foster, Conor McTeague, David Roman, NYU Tisch Dance, UCLA Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, Joe Melillo, and the entire staff at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

FUNDING

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Halfway to Dawn is a National Performance Network (NPN) Creation Fund Project co-commissioned by REDCAT in partnership with ARTPower at UC San Diego, Contemporary Arts Center of New Orleans, the Kelly Strayhorn Theater, and NPN. The Creation Fund is supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency). npnweb.org.

Halfway to Dawn was created with the generous support of UCLA Chancellor's office research funds.

Halfway to Dawn was created in part during a development residency at the Pillow Lab at Jacob's Pillow Dance, technical residencies at NC State LIVE, REDCAT and Kaufman Hall UCLA and a video art residency at NYU Tisch Dance.

For booking information, contact Sophie Myrtil-McCourty, Lotus Arts Management.
Tel: 347.721.8724; email: sophie@lotusartsmgmt.com website: lotusartsmgmt.com

For more information on the company or to join our mailing list visit davidrousseve.com. Follow the company on Instagram @davidrousseveready and David Roussève @davidrousseve.



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Photo: Rose Eichenbaum

NOTE

In 1999, after my company's last appearance at BAM's Next Wave Festival, a commercial producer approached me about rewriting, choreographing, and directing the musical *Rose Colored Glasses* that Billy Strayhorn and Luther Henderson began but abandoned in 1956. Although that project did not make it to the stage, I was humbled by Strayhorn's life path and vowed to someday return to the genius of his music.

Though partly responsible for one of the greatest bodies of work in American music history, Billy Strayhorn (1915—67) remains largely unknown beyond the jazz community. With *Halfway to Dawn*, I am seeking to excavate the deeper truths of the life of this famously private, out and gay, artist, thinker, and activist. The piece conveys the facts of Strayhorn's life through a video-projected timeline, while simultaneously exploring the emotional undercurrents of his journey through abstract video art, dance, and his own brilliant music. There is no relationship between the timeline and dances beyond their tones, textures, and throughlines of emotion.

—David Roussève

MUSIC (in performance order):

Recorded music performed by: The Dutch Jazz Orchestra; Duke Ellington and His Orchestra; The Ray Brown Trio; Darius deHaas; Dizzy Gillespie; Ella Fitzgerald & Oscar Peterson; Stan Getz; Duke Ellington

“Le Sacre Supreme”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn
Published by Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.

“Grievin”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn and Duke Ellington
Published by Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
Published by Sony ATV.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of Sony ATV
Published by EMI.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of EMI

“Johnny Come Lately”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn
Published by Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.

“Take the A-Train”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn
Published by Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.

“After All”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn
Published by Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.

“Valse”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn
Published by Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.

“Your Love Has Faded”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn
Published by Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.

“Hues”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn
Published by Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.

“UMMG”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn
Published by Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.

“I’m Checkin’ Out Goombye”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn and Duke Ellington
Published by Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
Published by Sony ATV.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of Sony ATV

“My Little Brown Book”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn
Published by Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
Music Rights Provided Courtesy of Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.

“Lush Life”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn
Published by Billy Strayhorn Songs, Inc.
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“Love Came”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn and Duke Ellington
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“Blood Count”

Composed by Billy Strayhorn
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“Lotus Blossom”

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DAVID ROUSSÈVE (writer, choreographer, director), a choreographer, writer, director, and performer, is a magna cum laude graduate of Princeton University and a Guggenheim Fellow. His dance-theater company REALITY has performed throughout the UK, Europe, South America, and the US, including three commissions for BAM's Next Wave Festival. Other commissions include Houston Ballet, Ballet Hispanico, Cleo Parker Robinson, Dancing Wheels, Atlanta Ballet, and Ilkhom Theater of Tashkent, Uzbekistan where Roussève spent six weeks creating an evening-length work surrounding the homoerotic art of Russian painter Usto Mumin. In 2017, Roussève choreographed Kurt Weill's *Lost in the Stars* for director Anne Bogart/SITI Company and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra; as well as the piece *Enough?* for the San Francisco duet company RAWdance, a work that asks whether dance can address social movements like Black Lives Matter. In June 2018, *Enough?* was performed by Lula Washington Dance Theatre at the Ford Theatres. Roussève has created three short films, the most recent screening at festivals in 11 countries, receiving 10 awards including four for best film. Roussève has been published in collections by Bantam Press and Rutledge Press, and was twice a fellow in the Sundance Institute's Screenwriter Lab. Roussève just completed *Twit*, a feature screenplay based on his 2014 dance-theater work *Stardust*. In 2017, *Twit* was a finalist in two best screenplay categories at the Nashville Film Festival and a semi-finalist for the Los Angeles Outfest Screenwriter's Lab. Among others, Roussève's awards include a Bessie Award, Creative Capital Fellowship, three Horton Awards, the CalArts/Herb Alpert Award in Dance, and seven consecutive NEA fellowships. At UCLA, Roussève is professor of choreography in the Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance. For the UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture he has served as associate dean (2014—15), acting dean (2015), and interim dean (2015—17).

L. MSP BURNS' (dramaturgy) writings on the racial politics of performance, on the performance of race, about the Philippines and

its elsewhere are published in several journals including *The Dance Research Journal*, *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*, *The Asian American Literary Review*, and *The Writing Instructor*. Burns' monograph, *Puro Arte: Filipinos on the Stages of Empire* (Asian American Studies Outstanding Book Award in Cultural Studies 2014), is published by NYU Press. As a dramaturg, Burns has collaborated with notable artists such as David Roussève, R. Zamora Linmark, and TeAda Productions. Burns is currently at work on *Qnoum Kaun Khmer/! am Khmer*, a musical/movement performance with mixed-race Cambodian singer/songwriter/dancer Tiffany Lytle. Among Burns' writing projects is *Personating Robots, Impersonating Humans*, a book on the racialization and a robot race. Instagram: @resistancecompanions

D. SABELA GRIMES, (sound design) a 2017 County of Los Angeles Performing Arts Fellow and 2014 United States Artists Rockefeller Fellow, is a trans-media storyteller, sonic ARKivist, and movement composer cultivating a devoted interest in Afro ubiquitous life practices. Grimes has conceived, written, scored, choreographed, and produced several dance theater works including *BulletProof Deli, plus Philly XP, World War WhatEver*, and *40 Acres & A Microchip: Salvation or Servitude* from his *Experiment Earth* sound-movement triptych. Recent creative projects include *Electrogynous* (2017) and *Dark Matter Messages* (2018). *Electrogynous* is a dance-theater experience which articulates that black gender qualities are infinite, multi-dimensional, and distinct manifestations of wombniversal consciousness. *Dark Matter Messages* is a collection of live poetry, video projections, and music interwoven with improvisational movement meditations that realize AfroFuturism as a means to play within the nowness of impending futures. Moved by how Octavia E. Butler invents interrelated notions of humanness in her Parable Series, *Dark Matter Messages* dreams Butler's unfinished manuscript, *Parable of the Trickster*, into a live performance experience. On faculty at USC's Glorvia Kaufman School of Dance, he continues to cultivate Funkamental MediKinetics, a

movement system he created that focuses on the methodical dance training and community building elements evident in hip-hop, black vernacular and street dance forms. grimes loves pancakes, declarative realness, and his kinfolk.

CHRIS KUHL (lighting design) is a lighting and scenic designer for new performance, theater, dance, and opera. Recent work includes: *Stardust* (David Rousseve); *Inflatable Trio* (Lionel Popkin); *PANG!* (Dan Froot); *Home* (BAM, 2017); *The Parable of the Sower* (The Public Theater); *Dog Days* (Los Angeles Opera); *The Object Lesson* (BAM, 2014); Edinburgh Festival; Sydney Festival); *The Source* (San Francisco Opera, REDCAT, BAM, 2014); *The Institute of Memory* (Public Theater, T:BA Festival); *Straight White Men* (Young Jean Lee's Theater Company, The Public Theater, Kaai Theater, Centre Pompidou), *The Elephant Room* (St. Ann's Warehouse); and *ABACUS* (BAM, 2014; Sundance Film Festival; EMPAC). He has received two Bessie Awards, two Ovation awards and a Sherwood, Drammy, and Horton award. He is originally from New Mexico and a graduate of CalArts.

LEAH PIEHL's (costume design) recent work includes: *Romeo and Juliette* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Krapp's Last Tape*, *Underneath the Lintel* (Geffen Playhouse); *Kings*, *Once*, *The Light in the Piazza*, *Mr. Wolf*, *The Motherf**ker with the Hat* (South Coast Rep); *Race*, *Twist Your Dickens* (Kirk Douglas/Center Theater Group); *The Steward of Christendom* (Mark Taper Forum/Center Theatre Group); *The Most Deserving* (Denver

Center Theater); *Intimate Apparel*, *Pygmalion*, *The Heiress* (Pasadena Playhouse); *Arcadia*, *The Doctor's Dilemma*, *The Eccentricities of a Nightingale* (A Noise Within); *Paradise Lost* (Intiman Theatre); *Bars and Measures*, *Futura*, *The Pain and the Itch*, *Tartuffe* (The Theatre @ Boston Court); *Hedda Gabbler* (Antaeus); and *Full Still Hungry* (Ford Amphitheater). She designed the feature films *All Stars* and *BuzzKill*. Her work has been featured at MoMA, Art Basel Miami, and the 2010 Whitney Biennial. Piehl has a BA from UC Berkeley and her MFA in costume design from CalArts. leahpiehl.com

CARI ANN SHIM SHAM (video artistry) is a wild artist who captures and floats images and reflects light for movers, screens, and musicians between LA and NYC. She is attracted to things that sparkle, is a wild edible mushroom hunter, and a collector of antique doorknobs. She recently directed a music video for Joan Baez's "The Last Leaf," is in beta testing on her interactive inflatable sea anemone *Shimmer*, and in pre-production on her first feature film. Her favorite place to be is underwater and her current movement practice consists of contact improv and free-diving with wild spotted dolphins in the Bahamas. Shim Sham is grateful to have her work seen in notable venues around the world and for it to receive accolades, yet relishes the precious process of making the art and the longtime collaborations the process fosters. She is honored to serve as a guide to young artists at NYU Tisch as an Associate Arts Professor of Dance & Technology and feels extremely lucky to walk the creative path for so long with David Rousseve. carianhshimsham.com

KATELAN BRAYMER (tour management, technical direction) is a lighting designer and technical director for theater, dance, and opera. Recent designs: *You in Midair* (Danna Schaeffer); *Underneath, Silent, Forgotten, Kiss, A Taste of Honey, The Hairy Ape* (Odyssey Theatre); *MEAT* (Emma Zakes Green); *TIM* (Brandon Baruch); *Jocasta Project* (Ghost Road); *Free Outgoing* (East West Players); *K-A-D-VER* (LAPP); *ROSEWOOD* (Michaela Taylor); *Berlin Diary, Psychic Utopia* (Hand2Mouth Theatre); *Excerpts* (Samantha Goodman); and *Bi, Lydia, El Payaso* (Milagro). Technical direction on tour: *Stardust* (David Roussève); *Inflatable Trio, Ruth Doesn't Live Here Anymore* (Lionel Popkin); *PANG!* (Dan Froot); *Object Lesson* (Geffe Sobelle); and *Half Life* (Cloud Eye Control). Selected venues: Jacob's Pillow, Kirk Douglas Theatre, 59E59, MCA Chicago, On the Boards, SFMoMA, and Bootleg Theater. Braymer is the director of production and lighting for the upcoming Live Arts Exchange Festival (LAX) and has been a lighting assistant at the LA Opera since 2011. KatelanBraymer.com

PERFORMERS

BERNARD BROWN, a Lester Horton Award and Westfield Emerging Artist Award recipient, has performed with David Roussève/REALITY, Lula Washington Dance Theatre, Doug Elkins Dance Company, Shapiro and Smith Dance, and was a founding member of TU Dance. He was invited to perform with Mikhail Baryshnikov in Robert Wilson's *Letter to a Man* (BAM, 2016) with choreography by Lucinda Childs. He has had the pleasure of working with Donald McKayle, Rennie Harris, Rudy Perez, Louis Johnson, Ann

Carlson, and Tamica Washington-Miller. Brown received his MFA in choreography from UCLA's Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance and his BFA from SUNY Purchase. Brown's choreography has been presented at Royce Hall, REDCAT, ODC Theater, Highways Performance Space, University of Chicago, Southern Methodist University, and he choreographed Scott Joplin's opera, *Treemonisha*, for Skylark Opera. Brown is an assistant professor of dance at Sacramento State University and a Certified Dunham Technique Instructor candidate. The *LA Times* has called him "...the incomparable Bernard Brown..."

RAYMOND EJIJOFOR, a Gates Millennium Fellow, earned a Masters of Public Health Policy from USC and his BS in Decision Science from Carnegie Mellon University. He began his training under Judith Rhodes Calgario in Arlington, VA and the Dance Theater of Harlem. Ejifor has danced and created works with Daniel Ezralow, Ryan Heffington, Azure Barton, Lula Washington, Bryan Arias, Danielle Agami, Sidra Bell, Kyle Abraham, and Robert Battle. Ejifor currently collaborates with various companies including Ezralow Dance, Ate9 Dance Company, Lula Washington Dance Theatre, Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre, Post:Ballet, and David Roussève/REALITY. Some of his credits include the 59th Annual Grammy Awards, MTV VMAs, Audi, Toshiba, Hermès, Samsung, Apple, Beijing Dance Festival, Springboard Danse Montréal, Israeli Opera House, and Lincoln Center's David H. Koch Theater. He has performed with artists such as Sia, Katy Perry, Pharrell, 30 Seconds to Mars, Little Boots, Fitz and the Tantrums, and Daft Punk. raymondejiofor.com





DEZARÉ FOSTER is native to Cleveland, OH where she began her dance studies at Newton D. Baker School of the Arts and Cleveland School of the Arts before joining Cleveland Contemporary Dance Theatre (CCDT). CCDT made a guest appearance in *The Wild Party*, which led her to becoming a musical theater choreographer. In 2007, Foster joined the Dancing Wheels Company, performing and touring for over seven years in collaboration with various choreographers. She has also performed in Dianne McIntyre's *why I had to dance*; Cleveland Cavaliers' Scream Team; and multiple years at Cleveland Public Theatre's *Pandemonium*. In 2015, Foster moved to Ga'aton, Israel for the Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company's MASA Program. After returning home, she choreographed *Labyrinth: A Tribute* on the Dancing Wheels Company and performed in Northwest Dance Project's LAUNCH Program in Portland, OR. Dezaré Foster is starting her third season as a company member with David Roussève/REALITY in Los Angeles.

JASMINE JAWATO, born and raised in El Segundo, CA, studied dance at the Studio Art of Dance in her hometown before receiving her undergraduate degree from the Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance at UCLA. Jawato has performed both nationally and abroad for Michel Kouakou, David Roussève, and Kevin Williamson and continues to teach dance and yoga in El Segundo. She is currently pursuing her multiple subject teaching credential to integrate her performing arts education into the classroom curriculum. Jawato is excited to be dancing in her second piece for Roussève and with this wonderful cast.

KEVIN LE is native of Los Angeles and graduate of UCLA's Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance. He began his dance training at the age of 12 under Jessie Riley's Westside Dance Project. There he studied and performed with choreographers Jessie Riley, Peter Chu, and Sonya Tayeh. During his undergraduate studies at UCLA, he had the privilege of performing with David Roussève/REALITY in venues throughout the US that include Jacob's Pillow, Krannert Center, and REDCAT. Since 2013, he has been touring with Kevin Williamson's *The Lost Boys* and *Trophy*, performing in Beijing, San Francisco, Austin, and NYC. Currently, Le is a dance instructor and choreographer working in the South Bay of Los Angeles.

JULIO MEDINA is an artist from Los Angeles. His work draws from various movement styles such as breaking, Latin social dances, and modern dance, engaging mediums such as movement, film, and text. Medina studied hip-hop on the concert stage and earned his MFA at UCLA's Department of World Arts & Cultures/Dance. Beforehand, Medina completed his BA in Dance and Movement Studies at Emory University as a Quest Bridge Scholar. While there, he was a member of StaibDance Company until 2013. In 2009, Medina founded TrickaNomeTry (TNT) Dance Crew, a hip-hop crew that continues to perform in the Atlanta community. Medina is delighted to be an assistant professor of dance at California State University, Long Beach where he teaches hip-hop and modern dance.

SAMANTHA MOHR, a California native, is a body-based artist, choreographer, and certified yoga instructor. When in Los Angeles, she collaborated as a performer with David Roussève, Laurel Jenkins, Jay Carlon, Rebecca Bruno, Nina Waisman, and Flora Wiegmann | LEI , No)One. Art House, Lionel Popkin, Julien Prévieux, Victoria Marks, Elizabeth Leister, Maria Garcia, and Alexx Shilling. Currently based in New York, she was honored to join Elkhannah Pulitzer in her new production of Bernstein's *MASS* with Maestro Gustavo Dudamel at Walt Disney Concert Hall and with Louis Langrée for Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival. Mohr has also performed and presented shared works at REDCAT, Annenberg Community Beach House, Highways Performance Space, LACE Gallery, Los Angeles Municipal Gallery, Hammer Museum, Honor Fraser Gallery, Pieter Performance Space, and the Women's Center for Creative Work. She holds a BA in World Arts and Cultures/Dance from the University of California, Los Angeles.

LEANNE IACOVETTA POIRIER, originally from Columbus, OH, moved to Los Angeles in 2008 to attend UCLA, where she graduated magna cum laude with BA degrees in World Arts and Cultures/Dance and Communications. Upon graduation, Poirier was invited to join David Roussève/REALITY and toured the states with

Stardust (2014). Besides dancing professionally, Poirier works actively in arts administration, assisting select artists, non-profit organizations, and dance companies, including David Roussève/REALITY, with administrative needs. She also served as program director for the Flourish Foundation for three years. Poirier has taught dance for 10 years and is the co-director of the UCLA Dance/Performing Arts Summer Institute. She currently resides in Charlotte, NC with her husband. Leanneiacovetta.com

KEVIN WILLIAMSON is an LA-based movement artist and assistant professor of dance at Scripps College. A Lester Horton Award recipient, Bates Educators Fellow, and Center Theatre Group Sherwood Award Finalist, Williamson's dance works have been presented at venues including Danspace Project, REDCAT's New Original Works Festival, Dixon Place, CounterPulse, LACMA, Austin's OUTsider Festival, and the Beijing Dance Festival. Williamson has created original works for LA Contemporary Dance Company and Loyola Marymount University and choreographed opera/theater projects for The Juilliard School, Yale Repertory Theater, Opera UCLA, Atlantic Theatre Company, Washington National Opera, and Geffen Playhouse. Williamson received his MFA in choreography from UCLA's Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance and is a certified Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analyst.