



PRESENTS

## **URBAN BUSH WOMEN**

**Doris Duke Theatre**

**August 21-25, 2019**

FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR  
& VISIONING PARTNER

Jawole Willa Jo Zollar

CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

Chanon Judson-Johnson  
Samantha Speis

THE COMPANY

Du'Bois A'Keen\*  
Courtney J. Cook\*  
Chanon Judson-Johnson  
Tendayi Kuumba\*  
Stephanie Mas\*  
Love Muwwakkil  
Samantha Speis

\*Alumni of The School at Jacob's Pillow

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## PROGRAM

### ***WALKING WITH 'TRANE* (2015)**

CHOREOGRAPHERS Jawole Willa Jo Zollar and Samantha Speis in collaboration with the Company

DRAMATURG Talvin Wilks

THE COMPANY Du'Bois A'Keen  
Courtney J. Cook  
Chanon Judson-Johnson  
Tendayi Kuumba  
Stephanie Mas  
Love Muwakkil  
Samantha Speis

LIGHTING DESIGNER &  
PRODUCTION MANAGER Russell Sandifer

PROJECTION DESIGNER Wendall K. Harrington

ASSOCIATE PROJECTION  
DESIGNER Shawn Boyle

COSTUME DESIGNER Helen Lucille Collen

ASSISTANT COSTUME  
DESIGNER Troy Blackwell

***Side A***  
COMPOSER Philip White

MUSICIANS Courtney Cook, Vocals  
Max Johnson, Bass  
Chris Pitsiokos, Saxophone  
Kevin Shea, Drums

***Side B***  
COMPOSER & MUSICIAN George Caldwell, Piano

Images of John Coltrane and his compositions licensed courtesy of Jowcol Music.

**Jacob's Pillow is committed to providing an inclusive environment that cultivates the celebration of the art of dance and its positive impact on communities.**

We are dedicated to fostering a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable experience for everyone on our beautiful campus. You, as patrons and visitors of Jacob's Pillow, are expected to contribute to our mutually respectful and welcoming community, supporting the world of dance and its citizens for generations to come.

If you have any suggestions, comments, or incidents to report, please direct them to Deputy Director A.J. Pietrantone at [apietrantone@jacobspillow.org](mailto:apietrantone@jacobspillow.org).

#### **HOUSE RULES:**

While in our theaters, please refrain from behavior that could disturb other patrons and performers during the performance. Thank you for observing these House Rules so that everyone can have an enjoyable experience. Silence cell phones • Photography & recording are prohibited • Other than water, food & beverages are prohibited • Keep your ticket with you at all times • Let a staff member know if you need help

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## **SIDE A: JUST A CLOSER WALK WITH 'TRANE**

*JUST A CLOSER WALK WITH 'TRANE* is a conjuring of Coltrane's essence, based in rooted understandings of his music and "known" traditions pushed into heightened performance "states," from cool to hot, from ancient field hollers to gospel cadences, strange reed riffs drive a spiraling physical journey through echoes of the blues, bebop, hard bop, free jazz, scored in a dazzling array by Philip White.

## **- INTERMISSION -**

## **SIDE B: FREED(OM)**

*FREED(OM)* is a free-fall suite of "states," exploring the artistic imprint of Coltrane's *A Love Supreme*, a riff on pursuance, plunging into the depths of Coltrane's formidable legacy with diagonal pulls, suspended silences, chaotic spirals, and ultimately, transcendence, inside of a masterful musical composition by George O. Caldwell played live.

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## **ABOUT URBAN BUSH WOMEN**

Urban Bush Women (UBW) burst onto the dance scene in 1984 with bold, innovative, demanding, and exciting works that brought under-told stories to life through the art and vision of its award-winning founder, Jawole Willa Jo Zollar. The company weaves contemporary dance, music, and text with the history, culture, and spiritual traditions of the African Diaspora. Under Zollar's artistic direction, Urban Bush Women performs regularly in New York City and tours nationally and internationally. The Company has been commissioned by presenters nationwide, and includes among its honors a New York Dance and Performance Award ("Bessie"), the Capezio Award for Outstanding Achievement in Dance, a Black Theater Alliance Award, and two Doris Duke Awards for New Work from the American Dance Festival. In recent years, Zollar has been awarded the 2014 Southern Methodist University Meadows Prize, the 2015 *Dance Magazine* Award and the 2016 Dance/USA Honors Award. In 2017, Zollar received a Bessie Award for Lifetime Achievement in Dance. Off the concert stage, UBW has

developed an extensive community engagement program called BOLD (Builders, Organizers, and Leaders through Dance). UBW's largest community engagement project is its Summer Leadership Institute (SLI), established in 1997. This 10-day intensive training program serves as the foundation for all of the company's community engagement activities. Ultimately the SLI program connects dance professionals and community-based artists/activists in a learning experience to leverage the arts as a vehicle for civic engagement. UBW launched the Urban Bush Women Choreographic Center Initiative (CCI) in January 2016. The CCI supports the development of women choreographers of color and other underheard voices.

**JAWOLE WILLA JO ZOLLAR** (Founding Artistic Director & Visioning Partner) earned her B.A. in Dance from the University of Missouri at Kansas City, and received her M.F.A. in dance from Florida State University. In 1984, Zollar founded Urban Bush Women (UBW) as a performance ensemble dedicated to

exploring the use of cultural expression as a catalyst for social change. Zollar developed a unique approach to enable artists to strengthen effective involvement in cultural organizing and civic engagement, which evolved into UBW's acclaimed Summer Leadership Institute. She serves as director of the Institute, founding artistic director, and visioning partner of UBW and currently holds the position of the Nancy Smith Fichter Professor of Dance and Robert O. Lawton Distinguished Professor at Florida State University.

Awards: 2008 United States Artists Wynn fellowship, 2009 fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial, 2013 Arthur L. Johnson Memorial award by Sphinx Organization, 2013 Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, 2014 Meadows Prize from Southern Methodist University, 2015 *Dance Magazine* Award, 2016 Dance/USA Honor Award, 2016 Black Theater Alliance Award, 2017 Bessie Award for Lifetime Achievement in Dance, 2018 American Conference on Diversity Performing Arts Humanitarian Award.

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**CHANON JUDSON-JOHNSON** (Co-Artistic Director/Performer) began her relationship with UBW in 2001. She has had the privilege of serving the company as rehearsal director, Director for UB2—Urban Bush Women’s performing apprentice ensemble, and now furthers her work with UBW as Artistic Director and Co-Director of BOLD (Builders, Organizers, and Leaders through Dance). Judson-Johnson was a participant in the APAP Leadership Fellows Program (Cohort III), and DirectorsLabChicago (2018). Additional credits include Taylor Mac’s 24-Hour Spectacular, *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music*; Prophecy Dance Company (Kwame Ross); Cotton Club Parade (Warren Carlyle); and the Tony Award winning musical *Fela!* (Bill T. Jones). Her commercial credits include Victoria’s Secret Live, L’Oreal Live, *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, Apple Watch, and the Michael Jackson 30th Anniversary Concert. Judson-Johnson is an avid arts educator and has served as faculty with Urban Assembly of Music and Arts High School; Ailey Camp Kansas City, MO (Site Director); Alvin Ailey Arts in Education; Brooklyn Academy of Music; and Earl Mosley’s Institute of the Arts. Additionally, Judson-Johnson is the proud founder of Cumbe Center for Diasporic Arts’ Dance Drum and Imagination Camp for Children and Family Arts Movement LLC, offering creative movement and art making for children.

**SAMANTHA SPEIS** (Co-Artistic Director & Choreographer) is a movement improviser based in New York City and the mother of Aminata and Aicha. She has worked with Gesel Mason, The Dance Exchange, Jumatatu Poe, Deborah Hay (as part of *Some Sweet Day* curated by Ralph Lemon at MoMA), Marjani Forte, and Liz Lerman. Speis was the 2012 recipient of the

Alvin Ailey New Directions Choreography Lab and recently was awarded a Bessie for Outstanding Performer. Her work has been featured at the Kennedy Center (Millennium Stage), Long Island University, BAAD, Joyce SoHo, Hollins University, Danspace Project, Dixon Place, Dance Place, and The Kelly Strayhorn Theater. Speis’ solo, *The Way it Was, and Now*, was commissioned by the Jerome Foundation to be performed at Danspace Project for the Parallels Platform Series, and was later invited to the Kaay Fecc Dance Festival in Dakar, Senegal. She has developed a movement and teaching practice that explores pelvic mobility as the root of powerful locomotion and as a point of connection to the stories, experiences, and lineages that reside in each of us. She has been a guest artist and taught workshops throughout the United States, South America, Senegal, and Europe. Recent projects include *Walking with ‘Trane* co-choreographed with Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, and her collaboration with Chanon Judson-Johnson and Raelle Myrick-Hodges, *Hair and Other Stories*.

**DU’BOIS A’KEEN** (Performer) is a true renaissance spirit. A Georgia native residing in New York City, A’Keen began his formal dance training at age 19. After receiving his B.F.A. in Dance from Florida State University, he was accepted as an M.F.A. candidate. While studying in NYC, A’Keen joined UBW in December 2014. Aside from working with UBW, A’Keen has produced and premiered his own work as a choreographer and filmmaker at the Kennedy Center, and has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Opera Wire*, and *Dance Magazine*. In 2018, A’Keen made his operatic debut as Choreographer and Guest Artist of Charlie Parker’s *YardBird*

with the Arizona Opera. When he is not performing, A’Keen works as the CEO and Creative Director of A’KEEN BRAND, LLC a Creative Agency and Production Company. He has had much success working across the industries of film, fashion, and dance. A’Keen is an IFP Screen Forward Lab Fellow for the 2017 cohort and 2018 NYTV Featured Artist. While he works across many genres and industries as a producer, director, and artist, one of his main passions is dance. This is his fifth year with UBW as a touring company member and second year as Branding & Marketing Strategist. A’Keen looks forward to continued growth and success nationally and internationally, alongside his beautiful wife and life partner Camry Vonyae’ A’Keen.

**COURTNEY J. COOK** (Performer) is a Virginia native now residing in Brooklyn, NY. She began her formal movement training at family reunions and her home church. She later shifted to training in European-centered dance forms at Virginia Governor’s School for the Arts. Furthering her studies, she attended and graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University, receiving her B.F.A. in Dance and Choreography. As an independent artist, she has had the privilege of performing her solo work titled *PoolPITT* as a featured artist in ModArts Dance Collective’s *Collective Thread ‘17*; as a featured artist in the EstroGenious Festival ‘17; and as a part of Betty’s Daughter Arts Collaborative’s *Experiments in Creative Emancipation* project, under the curation of Ebony Noelle Golden. She is also involved in creative projects and works by other innovative Black women choreographers such as Maria Bauman (MBDance) and Marguerite Hemmings (we free). In 2018, she received

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a New York Dance and Performance “Bessie” Award for Outstanding Performer and sustained achievement with Urban Bush Women, MBDance, and Marguerite Hemmings. In addition to collaborating on a current project with artists Tendayi Kuumba and Greg Purnell (*FLUXX*), she continues learning, living, and developing her own creative voice through various forms of collaboration, movement, sound, and visual arts. She is here, in the NOW, and she is beyond grateful.

**TENDAYI KUUMBA** (Performer) is an international dancer, singer, songwriter, and touring company member of Urban Bush Women. Kuumba is a graduate of North Atlanta High School of Performing Arts and Spelman College. Past choreographic works include *Prague-New York Effects*, *First Effects*; *Heroin’e*; and *FLUXX* with collaborators Courtney Cook, Greg Purnell, and Manchildblack. She has worked with ASE Dance Theatre Collective, Marjani Forté Saunders, Jim Findlay's Electric Lucifer workshop, and Philadelphia Opera's *We Shall Not be Moved*, directed by Bill T. Jones. She has received accolades for music releases of Jazz EP *Just A Matter of Time*, and single *Incog-negro*. Recently she toured as one of two back-up singer-dancers on the American *Utopia* World Tour for Grammy-nominated artist David Byrne. Presently, she is generating and co-creating an artistic space, The Golden Ratio, in Brooklyn, NY, alongside partner Greg Purnell. She gives thanks and blessings for life, love, breath, and the pursuit of happiness through creativity.

**STEPHANIE MAS** (Performer) is a Miami native and has been a performer with Urban Bush Women since her entry into the company in June 2013. Throughout her time with

Urban Bush Women, she has had the opportunity to tour worldwide, performing and co-facilitating workshops/master classes in the different communities they have been invited to visit. She also works as a freelance performing artist and has had the opportunity to collaborate and create with artists such as Paloma McGregor, Millicent Johnnie, Megan Bascom, Megan Kendzior, Kate Weare, BODYART, and Kirstin Kapustik. Mas received her 200-hour yoga certification in 2013.

**LOVE MUWWAKKIL** (Performer) received a B.F.A. in Dance Performance and Choreography from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She performed as a company member with Urban Bush Women for two seasons. Thereafter, Muwwakkil went on to perform in *Hairspray* on the largest cruise ship in the world, as well as perform in several Off-Broadway productions. She has been a member of contemporary pole dance company, The Pulse Project, and had the pleasure of working with Taylor Mac in *The 24-Decade History of Popular Music*. Currently, she is a freelance performer, teacher, choreographer, and UBW BOLD Facilitator. You can follow her dance adventures on Instagram @lovemeonce.

**TALVIN WILKS** (Dramaturg) is a playwright, director, and dramaturg. His plays include *Tod, the boy, Tod*; *The Trial of Uncle S&M*; *Bread of Heaven*; *An American Triptych*; *Jimmy & Lorraine*; and *As I Remember It* with Carmen de Lavallade. Directorial projects include the world and regional premiere productions of *UDU* by Sekou Sundiata, *The Love Space Demands* by Ntozake Shange, the Obie Award/AUDELCO Award-winning *The Shanneequa Chronicles* by Stephanie Berry, *The Ballad of Emmett Till* by

Ifa Bayeza, *The Peculiar Patriot* by Liza Jessie Peterson, and most recently *This Bitter Earth* by Harrison David Rivers. He has served as co-writer/co-director/dramaturg for ten productions in Ping Chong's ongoing series of *Undesirable Elements* and three productions of *Collidescope: Adventures in Pre- and Post-Racial America*. He has also served as dramaturg for six collaborations with the Bebe Miller Company, including *Going to the Wall*; *Verge*; and *Landing/Place*, for which he received a 2006 Bessie Award; *Necessary Beauty*; *A History*; and *The Making Room*. Recent dramaturgical collaborations include work with Camille A. Brown and Dancers (*Mr. TOL E. RAnCE*, *BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play*, and *ink*), Urban Bush Women (*Hep Hep Sweet Sweet*, *Walking with 'Trane*, and *SCAT!*), Baba Israel (*The Spinning Wheel*), Ain Gordon (*Radicals in Miniature*), and the recent stage production of Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Between the World and Me* at the Apollo Theater. He is currently an Assistant Professor in the Theatre Arts and Dance Department at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.

**GEORGE CALDWELL** (Composer) has conducted shows on Broadway (*Black & Blue*, *Play On!*), played piano and keyboards for others (*Bring In 'Da Noise*, *The Full Monty*), conducted tours in Europe (*Body & Soul*, *Black & Blue*), and served as musical director for U.S. regional tours of original musicals (*Ella*, *Thunder Knocking On The Door*, *Cookin' At The Cookery*, and *Golden Boy* at the Long Wharf Theatre). He toured in the Count Basie Orchestra for seven years, and in the Duke Ellington Orchestra for three years. He has performed with diverse artists, including George Benson, Dianne McIntyre, Savion Glover, the Nicholas



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Brothers, Bobby McFerrin, Brenda Lee, Elvis Costello, and Dizzy Gillespie.

**PHILIP WHITE** (Composer) is a composer, performer, and improviser who works with electronics at the intersection of noise, jazz, and contemporary concert music. In addition to his solo practice, current and recent projects include "R WE WHO R WE" with Ted Hearne, duos with Chris Pitsiokos, Paula Matthusen, Brandon Seabrook, and cross media collaborations with Jim Findlay, Ralph Lemon, Jimena Paz, Daniel Fish, Nora Chipaumire, and Urban Bush Women. Recent presentations of his work have taken place at Carnegie Hall, BAM Harvey Theater (Brooklyn), The Kitchen (NYC), Fylkingen (Stockholm), American Academy (Rome), ISSUE Project Room (NYC), and countless other venues nationally and internationally. His music has been released on Anticausal Systems, Carrier Records, New Focus Recordings, Infrequent Seams, Contour Editions, and Tape Drift Records. It has been described as "utterly gripping" (*Time Out Chicago*), "bona fide evocative music" (*Brooklyn Rail*), and a "vibrant textural tapestry" (*Wall Street Journal*).

**RUSSELL SANDIFER** (Lighting Designer & Production Manager) is a Professor and Director of Production for the School of Dance at Florida State University. In his career, Sandifer has designed lighting for almost 2,000 dance works, including several Urban Bush Women projects since 1998. These include *Hands Singing Song*, *Soul Deep*, and *Les écaillés de la mémoire*. Sandifer also designed for the Suzanne Farrell Ballet from its inception through its closing in 2017. He has also designed over 100 musicals and operas, including 24 years with Seaside Music Theater. Sandifer is

a member of United Scenic Artists and is a lifetime and board member of the American College Dance Festival Association.

**SHAWN BOYLE** (Associate Projection Designer) recent credits include *ELEVADA* (Yale Repertory Theater); *The Nutcracker* (Grand Rapids Ballet); *The Witches of Eastwick* (Ogunquit Playhouse); *Bird Fire Fly* and *THUNDERBODIES* (Yale School of Drama); *Pierrot Lunaire* (Yale Cabaret); *La Boite a Jouxoux*, *Spiegel im Spiegel* (Yale School of Music); *City of Angels* (Goodspeed Musicals); *Lover's Tale*, *The Who's Tommy*, *K2*, *Red Remembers* (Berkshire Theatre Festival); *Singin' in the Rain*, and *My Mother's Lesbian Jewish Wiccan Wedding* (Merry Go Round Playhouse). Boyle received a B.F.A. from Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University and a M.F.A. from Yale School of Drama. Boyle is a member of United Scenic Artists 829, Projection and Lighting.

**WENDALL K. HARRINGTON** (Projection Designer) received the Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, and American Theatre Wing awards for *The Who's Tommy*. Her Broadway credits include *All The Way*, *Grey Gardens*, *Putting It Together*, *The Capeman*, *Ragtime*, *Company*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *The Will Rogers Follies*, *The Heidi Chronicles*, *My One and Only*, and *They're Playing Our Song*. Her work in opera and ballet includes *Werther*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Nixon In China*, *A View from the Bridge*, *The Photographer*, *The Magic Flute*, *Firebird*, *Anna Karenina*, *Seranata Ratmansky*, *Othello*, and *Ballet Mecanique*. She is the head of the projection design concentration at the Yale School of Drama.

**HELEN LUCILLE COLLEN** (Costume Designer) hails from Brooklyn, NY, and resides in

Laguna Hills, CA. This is her 18th year as The Billie Holiday Theatre's resident costume designer. Collen received her B.F.A. in costume design from Purchase College at SUNY's renowned Professional Conservatory Program of Theatrical/Film Design Technology in 1996. In 1999, she received the Vivian Robinson Audelco-'Judy Dearing Costume Design Recognition Award for Excellence in Black Theatre' for her costume designs in *The Trial Of One Short Sighted Black Woman VS. Mammy Louise and Safreeta Mae*, directed by Paul Harrison Carter at the New Federal Theatre. Collen has been nominated for a total of seven Audelco Awards. Aside from designing costumes, Collen is fully credited as a wardrobe supervisor and professional photographer. She worked wardrobe for legendary talents such as Wynton Marsalis, Nona Hendryx, David Letterman, John Mellencamp, Sting, Babyface, Billy Joel, Ginuwine, Tyra Banks, Beyoncé Knowles, Tony Danza, Def Leppard, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, The Roots, Bill T. Jones, Brian McKnight, the Radio City Music Hall Rockettes, Jennifer Hudson, Robin Thicke, Earth Wind & Fire, and many others.

**TROY BLACKWELL** (Assistant Costume Designer) is a native New Yorker and holds a B.F.A. from NYU. Some of the companies he was privileged to be a part of are Second Avenue Dance Company, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, and Riverdance on Broadway and tour, to name a few. He is a choreographer as well. Blackwell's film credits include *Be Yourself* with Malcolm-Jamal Warner, *Scent of a Woman* with Al Pacino, *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, and *Good Day New York*. You can see a young Blackwell in *Scotts and*

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*Foreman's Geography and Our World*. Behind the scenes he has worked with *Moms Mabley and her Ladies*, *Dancing with the Stars Live in Vegas* as Head Wardrobe Supervisor, and the rock group Def Leppard. Blackwell thanks God and Family for their unending love and support.

#### **URBAN BUSH WOMEN STAFF**

Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, *Founder & Visioning Partner*

Michelle Coe, *Producer*

Chanon Judson-Johnson & Samantha Speis, *Co-Artistic Directors/BOLD Directors*

Renee Taylor-Foles, *Organizational Advancement Partner*

Tahniah Belle, *Manager of Operations & Special Projects*

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John Alexander, *Technical Director/Lighting Supervisor*

Bennaladra Williams, *Movement Specialist*

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*Walking with 'Trane* was co-commissioned by the Opening Nights Performing Arts at Florida State University where the work had its world premiere. It was made possible in part by the Meadows Prize from Southern Methodist University's School of the Arts. *Walking with 'Trane* was supported by New Music USA, made possible by annual program support and/or

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Special thanks to Jonathan D. Secor and Lai-Lin Robinson for shepherding *Walking with 'Trane* during their tenure at Urban Bush Women.

UBW, Inc., dba Urban Bush Women, is a not-for-profit organization:  
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#### **Learn more about UBW and its programs:**

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Booking: Michelle Coe  
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## PILLOWNOTES

by Melanie George

*The PillowNotes series comprises essays commissioned from our Scholars-in-Residence to provide audiences with a broader context for viewing dance.*

Modern dance is often concerned with making statements. Whether it be social commentary or critique, one of its earliest functions was to reflect upon the times in which it exists. That is, in part, what made it modern. Dance artists may make pieces that purely showcase their aesthetic values. Alternately, they may make work in which the primary function is to speak on the state of the world. What does it mean for a dance company's name and mission to be a manifesto? Urban. Bush. Women. Any of those words in a company name is a statement unto itself about who gets to dance, how they will dance, and what they will dance about. Collectively, those words are a social movement, centered on inclusivity in art and artists, and an intent to shift the landscape of the dance field.

The work of Urban Bush Women and its founder, Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, has always been progressive and provocative, lively and luscious, human and heartfelt. Black culture, lineage, and its dividends are the foundation of the work. From *Batty Moves* (1995) to *Hair Stories* (2001) to *Walking With 'Trane* (2015), the powerful, wide-reaching tentacles of personal narrative and identity are the bedrock of inspiration for the repertoire. Steeped in the African diaspora, and grounded in community, this is art that revels in its influences, giving voice and visuals to the underrepresented on the concert stage. Like Dianne McIntyre and Pearl Primus before her, Zollar's work functions as chronicle and celebration of American blackness, and black womanhood.

Founded in 1984 as an all-black, all-female dance company, over its 35-year 'herstory' the company's repertoire has explored a wide range of themes. Never shying away from topical work, the sociopolitical and deeply personal are not at odds. Chiefly, the Urban Bush Women aesthetic prizes visceral humanity, grounded in storytelling, through articulate, multi-unit dancing. When the members of Urban Bush Women perform, all parts of the body are used, including the voice. The movement is rhythmic, weighted, and percussive, showcasing the human form in its many shapes, sizes, and shades. In their movement, we see the tapestry of black concert dance, woven from West African movement and dances of the Caribbean. The fabric is stitched with black vernacular social dance and the influence of jazz music, and reinforced with the praise dancing of the black church. There are threads of abstraction, postmodernism, and dance-theatre. The collective product is complex and varied. Therein lies its strength and beauty.

Zollar has always resisted the model of the individual choreographer as the sole vessel of knowledge for a dance company. As a result, the company's creative processes are highly collaborative. Members are composers and performers in the work, workshoping ideas as a collective. In addition to the company's repertoire, Urban Bush Women has also been a vessel for the works of other black female choreographers, most recently performing Nora Chipaumire's *Dark Swan*. Listed among their core values is a belief in the worth of individual contributions. "Our individual histories are authentic in and of themselves. Collectively, our histories and identities create a rich and diverse palette from which to do our work. Each individual has a unique and powerful contribution to make." Through the many, they are one.

Urban Bush Women has a long history with Jacob's Pillow, first performing a repertory concert in 1988 that included their now seminal work, *Shelter*. For their current engagement, they are performing *Walking With 'Trane*, an evening length work, inspired by the history and discography of jazz great John Coltrane, most notably his 1964 masterpiece, *A Love Supreme*. Co-choreographed by Zollar and Samantha Speis, *Walking With 'Trane* is emblematic of the Urban Bush Women ethos: Form through collective art making, blending the spiritual and corporeal, and deeply tied to black American history. The title of the work is also worth noting. *Walking With 'Trane* is the third evening length work by the company that begins with the phrase "Walking With...". *Walking With Pearl... Africa Diaries* was the first, premiering in 2004. An homage to the artistry and activism of dance pioneer Dr. Pearl Primus, *Walking With Pearl* asserts through title and content that the mission and vision of Primus's work and art lives on. Like Dr. Primus, Coltrane, and the three-decade history of Urban Bush Women, there is much to examine and celebrate from the roots and fruits of what has come before. Rather than confine these artists within a museum, this art can live and breathe as we walk alongside it, embarking on our own journey through their art.

Having recently celebrated a milestone 35th anniversary, Urban Bush Women is as rooted as ever, but not fixed. Embracing change as the path forward is embedded into their process. As one example, Urban Bush Women now includes men. In 2014, Du'Bois A'Keen joined as a full-time company member. In addition to the performing company, the organization now produces an annual Summer Leadership Institute and Choreographic Center, both dedicated to empowering future generations in art and citizenship. In July 2019, the company announced the appointment of longtime company members Samantha Speis and Chanon Judson as Co-Artistic Directors of Urban Bush Women. Zollar will continue in her role as Chief Visioning Partner, providing overall direction for the organization and its programs. As roles shift and company members transition, the foundation remains solid. Relationships may change but they do not sever, as past members maintain active and integral relationships to the organization. Above all, the company functions as a community, an ever-growing series of concentric circles connecting past, present, and future.

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