

RELENTLESS EXCELLENCE



# AWARENESS

Portrays the Emotional Struggles of Social Inequity

## REBROADCAST

VIRTUAL February 26-28, 2021

## CULTURAL AWARENESS

Portrays the Emotional Struggles of Social Inequity

#### **REBROADCAST**

#### VIRTUAL

February 26, 2021, 7:00pm CST through February 28, 2021, 11:59pm CST

## Presented by



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# Storytelling, one arabesque at a time

Dance has captivated audiences for centuries. It tells our stories in ways that everyone understands, helping us connect with each other.

Dallas Black Dance Theatre, we applaud your performance.

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#### **CHOREOGRAPHERS**

## TALLEY BEATTY

Choreographer TALLEY BEATTY's work is known for its energetic intensity, technical brilliance, and unapologetic passion. So demanding are his works that they sometimes seem to test dancer's abilities to turn on a dime and leap into the abyss. Beatty's career began on a high note when, at 14, he started studying with Katherine Dunham, later joining her company and dancing in the historic 1937 Negro Dance Evening at New York's 92nd Street YMHA. Dubbed by Dunham her "Black Adonis", he also appeared with her in the Broadway production *Cabin in the Sky* and the film *Stormy Weather*. Beatty choreographed works for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Stockholm's Birgit Cullberg Ballet, the Boston Ballet, the Inner City Dance Company of Los Angeles, Ballet Hispanico of New York City, and the Bat-Sheva Company of Israel. Mr. Beatty transitioned on April 29, 1995.

## MATTHEW RUSHING

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater
Associate Artistic Director

MR. MATTHEW RUSHING was born in Los Angeles, California. He began his dance training with Kashmir Blake in Inglewood, California, and later continued his training at the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts. He is the recipient of a Spotlight Award and a Dance Magazine Award and was named a Presidential Scholar in the Arts. He was a scholarship student at The Ailey School and later became a member of Ailey II. During his career Mr. Rushing has performed as a quest artist for galas in Vail, Colorado, as well as in Austria, Canada, France, Italy, and Russia. He has performed for Presidents George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama, as well as at the 2010 White House Dance Series. During his time with the Company, he has choreographed three ballets: Acceptance In Surrender (2005), a collaboration with Hope Boykin and Abdur-Rahim Jackson; Uptown (2009), a tribute to the Harlem Renaissance; and ODETTA (2014), a celebration of "the gueen of American folk music." In 2012 he created Moan, which was set on Philadanco and premiered at The Joyce Theater. Mr. Rushing joined Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 1992 and became rehearsal director 2010, and he became the associate artistic director in January 2020.

## DALLAS BLACK DANCE THEATRE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

## MELISSA M. YOUNG

MELISSA M. YOUNG is a Honduran-American raised in Santa Ana, California. She attended Orange Coast College with a focus in Business Administration. She is a graduate of The Ailey School in New York City. She trained in three of their programs: Summer Intensive, Certificate Program and Fellowship. During her Fellowship studies,



she was selected to train as an exchange student at Amsterdam School of the Arts (de Theaterschool) in Amsterdam, Netherlands. Overall, her professional training includes: Ballet, Modern (Horton and Graham), and Jazz techniques, as well as West African dance.

This marks Melissa's 27th season with Dallas Black Dance Theatre. Young started her career at DBDT as a dancer for 11 years, then Rehearsal Director, Academy Director, Associate Artistic Director, Interim Artistic Director, and was appointed as Artistic Director on September 25, 2018. Her most notable performances include: The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors in New York City, and for the U.S. Ambassadors to Ireland and Zimbabwe. She has restaged and rehearsed the diverse repertoire of DBDT, which spans over 80 ballets. She was an Assistant to the Choreographers, Hope Clarke for the Dallas Opera's *Porgy and Bess* (2009) and Christopher L. Huggins for Dallas Theater Center's production of *The Wiz* (2011).

Teaching master classes both nationally and internationally, Melissa specializes in the Dance Technique of Lester Horton. She was the primary Horton Technique Instructor for Dallas Black Dance Theatre from 1998–2017. As an Adjunct Instructor, she taught the Horton Technique at Dallas' Southern Methodist University in 2004 and Texas Woman's University in Denton from 2005–2008. She was on faculty (Horton Technique) at Ballet Center for Fort Worth and Dallas Youth Repertory Project, and continues to serve as a guest teacher at both schools. In 2014, Melissa was the Visiting Dance Artist for Abilene Christian University's Department of Theatre. She taught ballet, modern and lyrical jazz techniques.

Melissa currently serves on the Next Generation Leadership Committee for the International Association of Blacks in Dance, Inc. She has served as an advisory panelist for City of Dallas/Office of Cultural Affairs, Young Audiences of Dallas, Texas Commission on the Arts and Arkansas Arts Council, as well as serving as a board member for the Dance Council of North Texas from 2010–2013. In 2000, she was presented with The Dancer's Award for her artistic excellence and dedication to Dallas Black Dance Theatre. She was chosen as one of "The Talented Tenth" by The Dallas Weekly in 2010, for being a Young and Emerging Leader. In 2014, she received an Award of Recognition from the South Dallas Dance Festival for her service to dance and in 2016, the Natalie Skelton Award for Artistic Excellence. In November 2017, Melissa received the Shining Star Award from the Texas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance for her significant contributions to dance in Texas and beyond. During the 57th Annual South Central District Conference of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. in March 2019, Melissa was honored with the "We Speak Your Name" Career Achievement Award.

#### SATURDAY-SUNDAY • FEBRUARY 26-28, 2021

# CULTURAL AWARENESS

Portrays the Emotional Struggles of Social Inequity

## **Mourner's Bench**

Choreographer: Talley Beatty (1947)

Music: There Is A Balm in Gilead, Traditional Spiritual

Live vocals performed by: Andrea Wallace, Garry Williams

Costume: Beth Thomason–Designs Unique

Dancer: Claude Alexander III

This emotional solo portrays spiritual struggle through muscular interplay between a male dancer and a bench. The work was inspired by Howard Fast's novel *Southern Landscape*, and refers to the tragic influence of the Ku Klux Klan on a mixed-race community in the rural South after the Civil War. The soloist asserts himself within and against the themes of oppression and transcendence in the highly stylized, gestural vocabulary of the piece.

## **ODETTA**

Choreographer: Matthew Rushing

(World Premiere 2014—DBDT Premiere 2019—Reimagined 2021)

Assistants to the Choreographer:

Renee Robinson and Michael Jackson, Jr.

Music: Various Artists

Performed by: Odetta

Sound Design: Russel J. Cowans IV

Costumes: Dante Baylor
Original Lighting Design: Andre Vazquez
Scenic Design: Travis George
Original Artwork: Stephen Alcorn

This Little Light of Mine Lailah Duke & The Company

Ox Driver Song Hana Delong & The Company

John Henry Xavier Mack

There's a Hole In The Bucket

Vocals performed with Harry Belafonte

De'Anthony Vaughan & Jasmine White-Killins

Motherless Children

Lailah Duke & The Company

Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child Claude Alexander III

**Cool Water** Sierra Noelle Jones & Zion Pradier

**Masters of War** Charles Michael Patterson, Renee Walters

The Company

Glory, Glory McKinley Willis

Freedom Trilogy

Vocals performed by Ysaye M. Barnwell

Lailah Duke with Hana Delong, Sierra Noelle Jones, Xavier Mack, Charles Michael Patterson, Zion Pradier,

De'Anthony Vaughan, Renee Walters, Jasmine White-Killins and Sean J. Smith

Quote from Marianne Williamson's book A Return To Love, read by Odetta F. Gordon, "This Little Light of Mine."\* "Prettiest Train." "Last Word: Odetta." ^"Ox Driver Song." "John Henry." Audio clip of Odetta interviewed by Camille Cosby; audio interview from archival materials courtesy of The National Visionary Leadership Project; www.visionaryproject. org. "There's a Hole In The Bucket" by Harry Belafonte and Odetta Felious Gordon. Published by Clara Music Publishing Corp. (ASCAP). Administered by Next Decade Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Used by Permission.\* "Last Word: Odetta." ^ "Motherless Children." \* "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child." \* "Last Word: Odetta." ^ "Cool Water" by Bob Nolan. "Masters of War" by Bob Dylan. "Glory, Glory." \* "Freedom Trilogy," musical arrangement by Ysaye M. Barnwell and Seth Farbell; vocal performance by Ysaye M. Barnwell and piano performance by Seth Farber.\*

<sup>\*</sup> Words and Music by Odetta F. Gordon. Pookie Tree Publishing Co. (ASCAP). Odetta's name, voice, likeness, and biographical information provided courtesy of the Estate of Odetta, www.odettamusic.com

<sup>^</sup> Audio from "Last Word: Odetta" interview. Audio provided by T3Media from the interview: "Last Word: Odetta"

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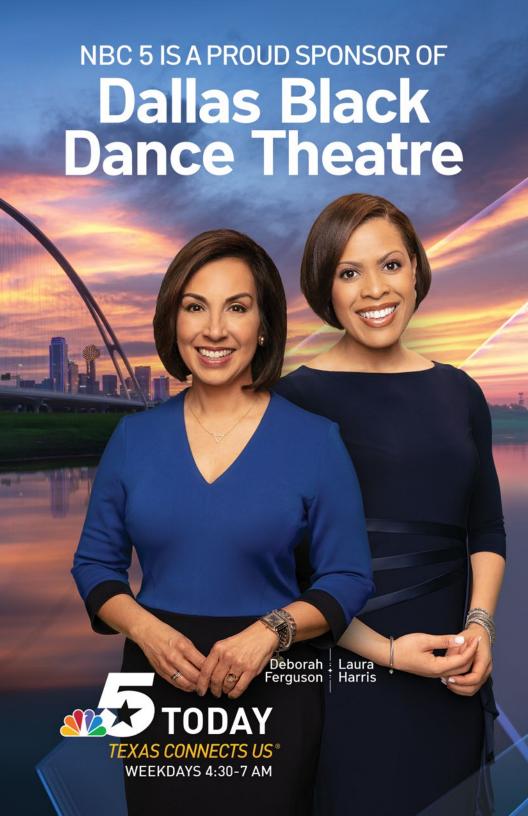
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Xavier Mack Charles Michael Patterson Zion Pradier Sean J. Smith

De'Anthony Vaughan Renee Walters Jasmine White-Killins McKinley Willis

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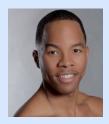
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# DALLAS BLACK DANCE THEATRE DANCERS



#### **CLAUDE ALEXANDER III** (Rehearsal Assistant)

A native of Washington D.C., Claude comes to Dallas Black Dance Theatre after graduating from Towson University. He began his training with Spirit Wings Dance Co. and additionally with The Ailey School, Parsons Dance and DBDT's Professional Summer Intensive on full scholarship. Claude has had the opportunity to guest with Dishibem, Dance RINK, Ballet Frontier of Texas, Tuzer Ballet, and Dance Iquail. Notably, Claude performed in the 2017 Command Performance Gala by TITAS/DANCE UNBOUND. He has choreographed two ballets for Dallas Black Dance Theatre, Face what's facing you! (2018) and A Tender Pardon (2019). This is his 11th season.



#### HANA DELONG

Hana Delong, began her dance training in Orlando, FL. She studied dance at the Dr. Phillips High School Dance Magnet and the Orlando Ballet. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance from Adelphi University and was a scholarship student at The Ailey School. She has performed with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in *Memoria* and *Revelations Cast of 50* and has performed pieces by choreographers such as Ulysses Dove, Matthew Rushing, Darrell Grand Moultrie, Margo Sappington, and Ray Mercer. She was a member of DBDT: *Encore!* and this is her sixth season with the company.



#### LAILAH LAROSE

San Francisco native Lailah LaRose is a 2015 graduate of Howard University where she holds a BFA in Dance Arts. She owes her first experiences in dance to Destined 2 Dance Studio and Performing Arts of Oakland, CA. She has had the privilege to perform several works by many esteemed artists, notably, principal dancer, and mentor, Hope Boykin, of The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Lailah has had the opportunity to perform alongside legendary Operatic Soprano, Kathleen Battle, at the Winspear Opera House (Dallas, Texas) in 2018. She was a 2-year member of DBDT: *Encore!* where she was able to guest with the main company in various works, and is now overjoyed to be in her fourth season with Dallas Black Dance Theatre.



#### SIERRA NOELLE JONES

Sierra Noelle Jones, from Fort Washington, MD is a 2015 honors graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University where she earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance & Choreography. She graduated from Baltimore School for the Arts (2011) and received her training through Donna's Dance A Company, The Dance Institute of Washington, and Dance Theatre of Harlem's Pre-Professional Residency program. Sierra has performed in works by Dianne McIntyre, Elisa Monte, Ulysses Dove, Matthew Rushing and Darrell Grand Moultrie. She also performed two seasons with DBDT: Encore! and is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. Sierra is ecstatic to be entering her fourth season with DBDT.



#### XAVIER MACK

Xavier Mack joins the company from Washington, D.C. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Modern Language & Linguistics from the University of Maryland-Baltimore County (UMBC). Before dance, Xavier trained in gymnastics and received national and regional awards. He began his dance training at Divine Dance Institute, in Capitol Heights, Maryland. Xavier received summer intensive scholarships from Dance Theatre of Harlem and Dallas Black Dance Theatre. Mack has performed works by Talley Beatty, Darrell Grand Moultrie, Dianne McIntyre, and Matthew Rushing. He is a former member of DBDT: *Encore!* and this is his fourth season with Dallas Black Dance Theatre.



#### CHARLES MICHAEL PATTERSON

Born and raised in Trinidad & Tobago, Charles moved to the United States at the age of ten. He began his dance training at the Boston Arts Academy and after-school program Jeannette Neill studio. Charles received his Bachelor of Fine Art in Ballet Pedagogy from The Boston Conservatory on full scholarship. Mr. Patterson has been awarded scholarships to summer intensives such as American Ballet Theatre, Dance Theatre of Harlem, and The Juilliard School. Charles accepted his first company contract dancing with Complexions Contemporary Ballet 2016–2017 season as an apprentice. This is Charles' third season performing with Dallas Black Dance Theatre.



#### ZION PRADIER

A native of Lafayette, Louisiana, Zion is an alumni of The Certificate Program at The Ailey School in New York City, New York. He received additional training from Dance Theatre of Harlem as a Merit Scholarship student, Complexions Contemporary Ballet Winter Intensive, and The Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis School at American Ballet Theatre as a scholarship student in the Collegiate Program. Zion has performed works such as *Sinatra Suite* by Twyla Tharp, *Absolute Rule* by Elisa Monte and David Brown, *Awassa Astrige/Ostrich* by Asadata Dafora, and other works by Darrell Grand Moultrie, Ray Mercer, and Juel D. Lane. This is Zion's fifth season with Dallas Black Dance Theatre.



**SEAN J. SMITH** (Rehearsal Assistant)

A proud Canadian, Sean trained with Goh Ballet Academy, Ballet British Columbia's Mentor Program and The Ailey School. He has performed with Bruce Wood Dance Project, Rhythmic Souls Tap Company and African American Repertory Theater. Sean has performed with Dallas Theater Center in *The Wiz* (2011) and *Hairspray* (2018). Sean has taught the Lester Horton technique for Ailey Athletic Boys (AAB), Dallas Black Dance Academy, and Southern Methodist University. Sean has choreographed two works for Dallas Black Dance Theatre: *Monologues* (2013) and *Interpretations* (2017) and one work for DBDT: *Encore!*, *Dollhouse* (2015). This is Sean's 11th season with DBDT.



#### **DE'ANTHONY VAUGHAN**

Born in Kansas City, MO, De'Anthony was drawn into dance by his grandmother at the age of three. She ran a performing arts school and introduced him to all forms of dance. He attended Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey and the Kansas City Ballet School. He continued his training in New York City at The Ailey School on scholarship. Prior to joining Dallas Black Dance Theatre, he was a member of the Von Howard Project. This is Mr. Vaughan's seventh season with the company.



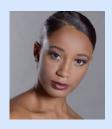
#### **RENEE WALTERS**

Renee began her journey in dance through a variety of styles within the competitive dance genre. She later went on to purse her studies with a more classical concentration at Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and Houston Ballet's Pre-Professional program. Renee received additional training from the summer intensive programs at Miami City Ballet, Boston Ballet, as well as summer and winter intensives at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. Renee graduated from University of Texas at Arlington with a Bachelor in Human Behavior and Intercultural Communications in May 2018. During the latter part of her college years, she danced with 6 O'Clock Dance Theatre and was a founding member of Zion Dance Project. Renee is extremely grateful to be returning for her third season.



#### JASMINE WHITE-KILLINS

A native of Cincinnati, OH, Jasmine began her dance training at the Cincinnati School for Creative and Performing Arts. In addition to earning her Bachelors of Fine Arts in Dance Performance from Southern Methodist University and minor in Arts Management, Jasmine has studied on scholarship at The Ailey School, Martha Graham School, Cincinnati Ballet Academy and other intensives across the country. Jasmine performed two seasons with DBDT: Encore! and is an instructor at both Dallas Black Dance Academy and Texas Ballet Theater. She is currently the director of the Senior Performing Ensemble within DBDA. This is Jasmine's sixth season with DBDT.



#### McKINLEY WILLIS

Ms. Willis is a Dallas native, and began her training with the Dallas Black Dance Academy and Özsoy's School of Ballet. She is a graduate of Booker T. Washington HSPVA, and in the midst of her time there she received the Texas Commission on the Arts Young Masters scholarship. In 2015 she received her Bachelor of Fine Art in Modern Dance Performance with a minor in Health and Exercise Science from the University of Oklahoma. She made her debut with the Bruce Wood Dance Project in 2011 as an apprentice, and again as a performing member in 2015. This is her sixth season with Dallas Black Dance Theatre.



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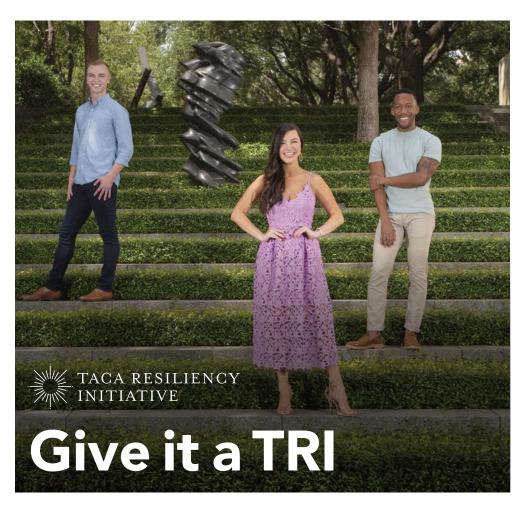
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**Photo:** TACA board members Ryne Young, PwC (left) and Cameron Kirkpatrick, Baylor Scott & White (right) flank TACA staff member Leah Hammett at the Nasher Sculpture Center. **Photo Credit:** Gittings