



**For Immediate Release**

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**Press photos available at [dancemission.com](http://dancemission.com) (as of December 17, 2015) and by request**

*Dance Brigade's Dance Mission Theater presents*

## D.I.R.T. Festival 2016

### Dance In Revolt(ing) Times

*Eighteen choreographers, three distinct programs.*

*What happens when artists revolt?*

January 23-February 7, 2016

Dance Mission Theater, 3316 24<sup>th</sup> St., SF CA 94110

Tickets: \$22-\$25 / Package rates for multiple programs available

For tickets and information: 415-826-4441 or [www.dancemission.com](http://www.dancemission.com)

**(San Francisco, CA)** *Dance Brigade's Dance Mission Theater* returns with its second annual D.I.R.T. Festival and all new programming. Dance In Revolt(ing) Times features eighteen cutting-edge dance makers that will come together to examine the social-political issues troubling our tumultuous times through choreography and performance. Reflecting the diversity of the Bay Area's dance scene, the fresh and fascinating voices include **Portsha Jefferson, Rainy Demerson, Latanya d. Tigner, Delina Patrice Brooks, Patricia Bulitt, My-Linh Le, Laura Larry Arrington, Rashad Pridgen, Vanessa Sanchez, Gregory Dawson, Zoë Klein, Yayoi Kambara, Sammay Dizon, Harper Addison, Todd Thomas Brown, JoAnna M Ursal, Amara Tabor-Smith, and Krissy Keefer**. Each weekend features a unique program, the first presented in collaboration with the **Black Choreographers Festival**.

Artists are presenting work on a social political issue for this is what Dance Brigade does best: combining artistic excellence with art activism. When asked about the theme, Dance In Revolt, Festival co-curator and Dance Brigade Artistic Director, Krissy Keefer responded, "*It is the duty of the artist to hold up a mirror to society and also imagine a world that could be.*"

There is a long tradition of the artist in the role of activist and this is needed today more than ever. Says Dance Mission's Theater Director, Stella Adelman, "*Vladimir Nabokov summed it up best when he said, anything outstanding and original in the way of creative thought is a stride toward Revolution. The dancing body, the way it demands to be seen and take up space, is itself an act of rebellion. Because there is such gross injustice in today's world, the artist has no choice but to look at that (injustice) starkly in the face.*" The works in the festival range from pieces about Sandra Bland and the lack attention given to Black women who are victims of



police, to the current treatment of Haitians by Dominicans, to the gentrification of Oakland, to the affects of war on Iraqi women.

Dance Brigade is known for known for nurturing artists. Many of Dance Mission's artists-in-residence and Choreographer's Showcase presenters have gone on to be GOLDIE winners including Ramon Ramos Alayo, Nol Simonse, and Sean Dorsey.

**D.I.R.T.** will run for three weekends and feature three distinct programs **January 23-February 7, 2016** at **Dance Mission Theater** in **San Francisco** (3316 24<sup>th</sup> Street at Mission). **Tickets are \$22 in advance at [dancemission.com](http://dancemission.com) and \$25 at the door.** For patrons interested in attending more than one program, festival passes are available by calling **415-826-4441**.

In addition to performances, there will be a free panel discussion titled *"The Matters of Our Lives,"* organized in collaboration with Delina Dreams Productions and held at Dance Mission **January 23**, as well as a series of free site-specific works titled *"Stories of Revolt,"* presented with MAPP – Mission Arts Performance Project held at various locations throughout the Mission **February 6**.

For more information, patrons may visit [dancemission.com](http://dancemission.com).

**Program A: January 23 & 24**

**Sat 8pm / Sun 7pm**

*Curated in collaboration with The Black Choreographers Festival*

Portsha Jefferson

Rainy Demerson

Latanya d. Tigner

Delina Patrice Brooks

**Program B: January 30 & 31**

**Sat 8pm / Sun 7pm**

Patricia Bulitt

My-Linh Le

Laura Larry Arrington

Rashad Pridgen

Vanessa Sanchez

Gregory Dawson

Zoë Klein

**Program C: February 6 & 7**

**Sat 8pm / Sun 7pm**

Yayoi Kambara

Sammy Dizon

Harper Addison

Todd Thomas Brown

JoAnna M Ursal

Amara Tabor-Smith

Krissy Keefer



*Calendar Editors please note:*

## PERFORMANCE CALENDAR LISTING

### WHAT:

#### ***D.I.R.T. - Dance In Revolt(ing) Times***

*Dance Mission Theater presents sixteen choreographers in three distinct programs over two riveting weekends. What happens when artists revolt?*

### WHEN:

January 23-February 1, 2015

*Program A:* January 23, 8pm and January 24, 7pm

*Program B:* January 30, 8pm and January 31, 7pm

*Program C:* February 6, 8pm and February 7, 7pm

#### **PROGRAM A: January 23 at 8pm January 24 at 7pm**

*Curated in collaboration with The Black Choreographers Festival*

Featuring Portsha Jefferson, Rainy Demerson, Latanya d. Tigner, Delina Patrice Brooks

#### **PROGRAM B: January 30 at 8pm / January 31 at 7pm**

Featuring work by Patricia Bulitt, My-Linh Le, Laura Larry Arrington, Rashad Pridgen, Vanessa Sanchez, Gregory Dawson, Zoë Klein

#### **PROGRAM C: Saturday, January 31 at 8pm / Sunday, February 1 at 7pm**

Featuring work by Yayoi Kambara, Sammay Dizon, Harper Addison, Todd Thomas Brown, JoAnna M Ursal, Amara Tabor-Smith, Krissy Keefer

### WHERE:

Dance Mission Theater, 3316 24<sup>th</sup> St, SF CA 94110

### TICKETS:

\$22 in advance at [dancemission.com](http://dancemission.com) or \$25 at the door.

Festival packages available for patrons interested in attending more than one program available.

Please call 415-826-4441 to purchase festival packages: \$35 for two programs, \$50 for three programs.



## **ADDITIONAL SPECIAL FREE EVENTS**

### **The Matters of Our Lives**

*Presented in collaboration with Delina Dreams Productions*

A panel discussion on what self-preservation means to Black Women

Saturday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> / 4pm

Dance Mission Theater, 3316 24<sup>th</sup> St, SF CA 94110

FREE

### **Stories of Revolt**

*Presented in collaboration with MAPP*

A series of site-specific works held throughout the Mission District

Saturday, February 6

Times and locations TBA (will be posted online at [dancemission.com](http://dancemission.com))

FREE

### **INFORMATION:**

[Dancemission.com](http://dancemission.com) or 415-826-4441

### **PRESS PHOTOS:**

Available by request at [dancemissiontheater@yahoo.com](mailto:dancemissiontheater@yahoo.com) and online at

[http://dancemission.com/press/press\\_releases.html](http://dancemission.com/press/press_releases.html)



## **ABOUT DANCE BRIGADE'S DANCE MISSION THEATER**

In 1975 Dance Brigade Artistic Director Krissy Keefer co-founded the Wallflower Order, the nation's first feminist dance company. Wallflower toured the nation for almost a decade, and staged many of Keefer's original pieces before large, enthusiastic and predominantly feminist audiences. Keefer developed a new kind of modern dance theater that was stylistically rooted in the martial arts, in female athleticism, and in social justice issues. Keefer co-founded **Dance Brigade** in 1984 as a feminist dance company to carry forward her activist feminist vision. Her original works continue to explore social issues such as war, poverty, breast cancer, women's history, and spirituality from a feminist perspective.

In 1998, Dance Brigade began to operate **Dance Mission Theater** at 24th and Mission Streets in San Francisco and added significant presenting, affordable theater and rehearsal space rental, artist development, and adult/youth dance instruction programs. Dance Mission Theater is an 8,400-square-foot dance center, with a 140-seat black box theater with professional lighting and sound capabilities. The facility also contains three dance studios. Major artistic accomplishments include: creation and production of 15 evening-length works of Keefer's original feminist dance/theater for sold-out crowds; presentation of the pioneering CubaCaribe, SkyDancers, ManiFestival, and Women on the Drum festivals; management of a welcoming, affordable, artist-led professional theater that presents more than 110 choreographers each year and helps emerging artists launch their professional careers through programs such as the Choreographers Showcase; and creating Grrrl Brigade, an intensive dance/leadership development program for hundreds of local girls age 9 to 18. Dance Brigade also operates the Dos Rios Artist Retreat Center in Mendocino County, which offers space for performance, dance, drum, and yoga intensives, and artist residencies, serving both the Bay Area and the local rural Mendocino communities.

Dance Brigade has created a foundation of mutual support based on its mission, which values building community through arts. The organization has a long history of activism and community engagement. Its women identified feminist values hold social justice and inclusion as highest priority and has nurtured many artists both seasoned and emerging, working with diverse populations. Dance Mission is the preeminent Hip Hop and Caribbean dance school in San Francisco and the welcoming atmosphere encourages seemingly disparate communities to overlap and cross-pollinate. By being financially accessible, the theater, school and company is able to serve the widest possible clientele.

### **About Selected Artists**

#### **Amara Tabor-Smith (choreographer)**

Amara Tabor-Smith is a San Francisco born and Oakland based dancer and choreographer. She was a member The Ed Mock Dance Company and has worked with other choreographers and Theater artists such as Anne Bluethenthal, Priscilla Regalado, Pearl Ubungen, Jacinta Vlach/Liberation Dance Theater, Ronald K. Brown/Evidence, Ase Dance Theater Collective,



Joanna Haigood, Anna Deveare Smith, Herbert Siquenza, The SF Mime Troupe, Make A Circus, Aya de Leon, and Marc Bamuthi Joseph. Amara is the former Associate Artistic Director and dancer with The Urban Bush Women Dance Company of New York City (1996-2006). Amara Choreographed Shakti Butler's documentary film, "Making Whiteness Visible" in which she also appears as a dancer. She has taught at Naropa University in Boulder, CO., University of Omaha, NE., Columbia College in Chicago, The Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, NM, Berkeley High School and is currently a Lecturer at UC Berkeley in the Department of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies.

### **Laura Larry Arrington (choreographer)**

Laura "Larry" Arrington recently premiered ADULT, a collaborative duet with Jesse Hewitt. The piece was workshopped through residencies at Headlands Center for the Arts, Kunst STOFF Arts, and Ponderosa Tanzland. It previewed at Berlin's Doc 11 and Cork's Firkin Crane in July. Adult premiered at PICA's TBA festival in 2013. Her work has been seen at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Z Space, The Lab, CounterPULSE, ODC, American Realness, and Fusebox. She has been an artist in residence at Headlands Center for the Arts, CounterPULSE, Kunst STOFF Arts, the Garage, and through ODC's Sandbox. She created/curates SQUART, a show that gathers artists to create spontaneous performance works. SQUART had over 200 participants. Including guest judges Deborah Hay, Big Art Group, Meg Stuart, Keith Hennessy, and Annie Sprinkle. She is a core member of Keith Hennessy's Turbulence. She has collaborated with Big Art Group, Erika Chong Shuch, Axis Dance/David Dorfman, Jess Curtis, Keith Hennessy, Amara Tabor Smith, and with many others in contexts that range from drag to video art. Her work has been supported by The MAP Fund, Rainin Foundation, Zellerbach Family Foundation, New Stages, Dancer's Group Lighting Artist Grant, and Theatre Bay Area's CA\$H grant.

### **Todd Brown (choreographer)**

Todd Brown is a painter, musician, choreographer, and cultural innovator/activist. Brown's background represents an eighteen-year process of integrating the artistic initiatives within intercultural context of community development. His academic and artistic training spans a degree in fine arts, intensive studies (both in the U.S. and abroad) in flamenco and folkloric music and dance of the African Diaspora, with additional studies in political history. He has trained and worked as a facilitator in human resilience, with three years teaching in correctional facilities and centers for domestic violence education. In 2003, Brown synergized his diverse talents into founding the Red Poppy Art House in San Francisco, of which he remains the artistic director. Later that year, Brown initiated the MAPP (Mission Arts & Performance Project), a non-centralized bi-monthly intercultural neighborhood arts festival that has featured over 700 artists since its inception. Musically, Brown is a central composer and guitarist for Nefasha Ayer, the ensemble he founded with Meklit Hadero in 2007.

### **Yayoi Kambara (choreographer)**

Kambara was born in Tokyo Japan, raised in the Bay Area and Surrey, England. She holds a B.A. in East Asian Studies from Lawrence University and a B.F.A in Dance Performance from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. In the Bay Area she has danced for STEAMROLLER





Dance Company, Flyaway Productions, Project Bandaloop, Sara Shelton Mann and Scott Wells. She was a company member of ODC/Dance from 2003-2015 and is currently the Rehearsal Director for AXIS Dance Company. Kambara has taught for ODC/Dance, AXIS Dance Company, Summer Dance Lab, and the Youth Program at Dance Mission. Kambara has presented work at ODC Dance Commons, ZSpace, Levy Dance Salon, RAW Dance Salon, and Summer Dance Lab at Whitman College.

### **Portsha Jefferson (choreographer)**

Ms. Jefferson is the founder and artistic director of Rara Tou Limen (RTL), an arts organization that presents Haitian music, dance and culture through classes, workshops, and performances. Ms. Jefferson was a principle dancer and vocalist with Group Petit La Croix (1996-2003) under the leadership of veteran dancer and educator Blanche Brown and has also danced with Ase Dance Theater Collective, Feet of Rhythm, and El Wah Movement. In Haiti, she has had the privilege to perform with Compagnie Culturelle Des Arts and Ayiti Dans Ansanm (ADA).

Ms. Jefferson's dedication and exploration of Haitian culture have brought her to Haiti, where she has traveled throughout the country to research regional dance, rhythms and musical traditions since 2003. Specific interest and concentration of study took place in Gonaives at Lakou Badjo, where Nago (Yoruba) traditions are preserved, and at Tanp Souvenance Mistik, a Vodou community that celebrates its Rada (ancient kingdom of Dahomey) heritage. Further studies at Ecole Nationale des Arts (ENARTS), Vivian Gauthier's School of Dance and Artcho Danse, the official dance school of internationally renowned dance troupe Ayikodans, provided a rich foundation into the Folkloric aspect of Haitian culture. Currently, Ms. Jefferson is an Adjunct Professor at the University of California at Berkeley, Conservatory for Contemporary Dance Arts (CCD) and is an artist in residence for Oakland, Berkeley, Richmond and SF Unified School District.

### **Samantha SAMMAY Dizon (choreographer)**

Born and raised in Carson, CA, Sammay is an LA native turned Bay Area transplant. After four years of competing and directing UC Berkeley's Main Stacks Dance Team, she has gone on to pursue a beautiful life full of love, light, and unapologetic art. During the day, Sammay leads the first-ever Performing Arts program for Boys & Girls Clubs of San Francisco; she is a deep believer of using arts for social activism and has committed her life to community and cultural arts advocacy. Sammay's style is a fusion of her urban upbringing and personal journey to find meaningful movement that speaks to the soul. Her most recent performance credits include **BIRTHRIGHT?** by Rhodessa Jones and **She, Who Can See** by Alleluia Panis. Sammay was a featured artist for the 18th Annual United States of Asian America Festival where she produced, curated, and created for URBAN x INDIGENOUS: Spirits of the Streets - a two-day, multi-disciplinary, inter-generational community arts event that gathered 40+ artists to explore the indigenous spirit in the urban jungle of our present day.

### **Rashad Pridgen (choreographer)**



Rashad Pridgen is a dance artist, somatic educator (CMT-SE), and teaching practitioner and performer. His recent works include: selected artist with The Future Soul Think Tank: "What Will Soul Look Like in 2038?" presented at Yerba Buena Center For The Arts as the creative director of Translating Global Street Dance: A Media & Dance Presentation, performer in The Ed Mock Project conceptualized by Amara Tabor-Smith, choreographer for singer Sila (2010 NAACP Winner of The Outstanding World Music Award) music video "Super African," theatrical dance work with Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company "Chapel Chapter" San Francisco, Ronald Brown/EVIDENCE and Nick Caves "Soundsuites," teaching artist and performer with The Rennie Harris Illadelph Legends Festival, appearance at The Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival 2010 with Jacinta Vlach/Liberation Dance Theater and commissioned choreographer with The Question Bridge Project: Black Males to create a dance installation at the Oakland Museum 2012. Rashad teaches AfroHouse Hop throughout the Bay.

#### **Vanessa Sanchez (choreographer)**

Vanessa Sanchez is a dancer, educator, and choreographer. She has performed with several Bay Area dance companies including Bomberas de la Bahia, Arenas Dance Company, Alafia, Duniya Dance and Drum, and Aguas. She has presented rhythmically based work in San Francisco and throughout Veracruz, Mexico. While studying Son Jarocho in Mexico, she presented tap solo choreography at multiple festivals including El Festival de las Brujas in Catemaco, Veracruz and Festival Raices in Xalapa, Veracruz. After collaborating with zapateado dancers in Mexico, she returned to San Francisco and created a piece exploring the rhythmic connection between a tap dancer and a Son Jarocho dancer (presented at Choreographer's Showcase, September 2013). In 2015, she worked with traditional Son Jarocho musicians and dancers to choreograph a piece that explored the traditions of Son Jarocho from Veracruz, highlighting the traditional instruments and the footwork of the dancers as a musical element. This was presented in CubaCaribe 2015.

#### **Zoe Klein (choreographer)**

Zoë Klein is an international performer, teacher, acrobat, aerialist, production manager, and light designer from Brooklyn, NY. Zoë has toured 28 countries over 6 continents striving to inspire audiences through seemingly impossible athletic movement and personal expression. Eight years co-directing Paradizo Dance brought: NBA NY Knicks halftime shows, International Salsa Congresses, 1st place titles in national cabaret competitions, *So You Think You Can Dance*, and Top Semi-Finals on *America's Got Talent*. Zoë has performed for Circus Bella, SweetCan, Bindlestiff Family Circus, and dances for Epiphany Dance Productions, Ramon Alayo, Amara Tabor-Smith, and Zaccho Dance Theater. She is currently the Producing Director at CounterPulse.

#### **Latanya Tigner (choreographer)**

Latanya d. Tigner performs professionally with Dimensions Dance Theater, traveling nationally and internationally. Tigner holds a BA in PE/dance and a MA in arts administration, coordinates Dimensions' Rites of Passage program for youth, directs Dimensions Extensions Performance Ensemble, and teaches dance at Contra Costa College. She has participated in Urban Bush Women's acclaimed Summer Leadership Conference in New Orleans since 2009. In 2010,





Tigner represented Dimensions in Congo-Brazzaville's Mabina Festival; and in February 2012, she premiered *Ndozi: Ancient Truths Revealed* with master ngoma player Kiazi Malonga. Tigner is one of four choreographers commissioned for Dimensions' *Down the Congo Line*, the culmination of which premiered on October 5, 2013 in San Francisco. Tigner has presented works in Black Choreographer's Festival 2005, 2012, and 2013, and her New Orleans contribution to *Down the Congo Line* appeared in the internationally acclaimed San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival in June 2013.

### **Delina Patrice Brooks (choreographer)**

Delina Patrice Brooks is a dancer, songwriter, poet and actress based in Oakland. As a first time playwright, Brooks earned a 2008 Isadora Duncan "Izzie" Award nomination for "Beauty, The Beast: A Dance-Theater Production," which she coins as a breathing self-portrait. Brooks has studied and performed across the U.S., Western Europe, and Guinea, West Africa, where she participated in several intensive dance workshop series' with Les Ballets Africains. She has received funding from the Zellerbach Family Foundation, City of Oakland's Cultural Funding Program, Alliance for California Traditional Arts, and the East Bay Community Foundation, and has been presented by Yerba Buena for the Arts, Youth Speaks, The Black Choreographers Festival, and La Peña Cultural Center. She has performed with The Living Word Project's touring project "SCOURGE," Deep Waters Dance Theater, ASE Dance Theater Collective (NYC), Faustin Linyekula, and Robert Henry Johnson, among others. Favorite roles include Hubert/Tribe Member in "HAIR" with Willows Theater (Concord, CA) and the title role in "CINDERELLA" with San Francisco's African American Shakespeare Company. Brooks has a Bachelor's Degree in Kinesiology (SFSU) and a second Bachelor's in Ethnic Studies (CSU EB). She was the Operations Manager for Zaccho Dance and is currently working on her film, *My Bare Soles Bare Soul*, which looks at African Dance in Oakland.

### **Patricia Bulitt (choreographer)**

Patricia Bulitt is a solo dancer combining set and improvisational movement whose work has been presented throughout US, Japan, Canada, and New Zealand. A maker of site specific solo dances in and around nature, she has worked at the United States' oldest bird refuge in Oakland, New Zealand's sanctuary for endangered birds, around a tree at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and in Joquin Miller Park in Oakland, and in an acorn grove in Southern California. She also makes dances in the water of creeks in Berkeley. She has also toured throughout Alaska, teaching and performing creative dance as well as documenting traditional native dance.

### **Rainy Demerson (choreographer)**

Rainy Demerson is currently a candidate in the low-residence MFA Dance Program at Hollins University where she is working on her thesis that investigates issues surrounding displacement and gentrification in Brazil and Brooklyn. In 2012 Demerson earned an MA in Dance Education from NYU and she holds a BA in World Arts and Cultures with a Dance Concentration from UCLA. She has performed contemporary dance with Rebollar Dance Theater and Mezclado Movement in New York, as well as founding her own company, Sacred Space Dance. She taught



Dance and Yoga throughout New York City public schools in after-school programs and residencies for five years before earning a NY State teaching license and spearheading an Intercultural Dance program at MS 267 in Brooklyn. She taught at Lindenwood University and as an Assistant Professor at El Paso Community College in Texas. In 2013 her article, "Beginner's Mind: Applying the Zen Practice of Soshin to Best Practices in Dance Education," was published in the Journal of Dance Education. "Teaching Dances of the African Diaspora: an Emancipatory Intercultural Approach," appears in the Journal of Emerging Dance Scholarship by the World Dance Alliance. Dedicated to gaining a first-hand understanding of culture in context, she studied dance in Indonesia, Cuba, Brazil, Belize, and Senegal. In Senegal she participated in a seven-week African Contemporary Dance Intensive at L'ecole des Sables. In 2010 she returned to Senegal to choreograph and produce a concert with local dancers and musicians of Jant-Bi. The following year she produced an evening-length concert, Uneath, which debuted at the Kumble Theater in Brooklyn.

#### **My-Linh Le (choreographer)**

My-Linh Le holds a BA from UCLA's World Arts and Cultures program with a focus in Dance. She is well versed in urban street dance styles and has been Turfing and Popping for the past ten years, performing at festivals throughout the Bay Area. In 2014 she made a documentary short on the history of the martial art tradition known as WingChu.

#### **Joanna Ursal (choreographer)**

JoAnna Ursal is an American choreographer of Filipino decent born in Guyana. She possesses over 20 years of cumulative dance as a performing artist, educator, researcher and choreographer. She received an MA from UCLA and her MFA in Choreography from Jacksonville University and is trained in the sacred and social dances of the AfroCuban folkloric tradition, Filipino traditional dance (Pangalay), and Modern and Contemporary dance from the United States, Israel and Europe. During her graduate studies at UCLA she co-founded of Omo Ashe Performance Ensemble, creating choreography informed her formal training in the Yoruban sacred dances of the AfroCuban tradition and studied and performed the works of Persian American choreographer Banafsheh Sayaad of Los Angeles, who introduced her to the mystical sacred dances of the Sufi culture within a contemporary dance context. In 2013 Ursal participated in the MDC Live Arts Residency Lab and studied under renowned choreographer Nora Chipaumire. Ursal is most compelled by questions of identity and how our attachments to these identities and can either enhance or destroy relationships on a personal, cultural, and global level. Fear of 'Other,' exploitation, violence, and war ignites her to take action by creating dances that are burning with questions.