

THE AFRICAN & AFRICAN AMERICAN PERFORMING ARTS COALITION & K\*STAR\*PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

BCF: HERE & NOW 2026

# BCF 2026



**NEW VOICES / NEW WORKS**

**SAT. & SUN.  
FEB. 21 & FEB. 22  
FEB. 28 & MAR. 01**

**@ 7:30**

**DANCE MISSION THEATER  
3316 - 24<sup>TH</sup> ST., SAN FRANCISCO**

FOR TIX & MORE BCF INFO - [WWW.BCFHEREANDNOW.COM](http://WWW.BCFHEREANDNOW.COM)

**BCF: Here & Now 2026**  
**New Voices/ New Works**  
in association w/ Dance Mission Theater  
Saturday ▪ February 28, 2026  
Sunday ▪ March 1, 2026

**tyTyrone (work in progress)**

Directed by: Clarissa Rivera Dyas  
Choreographers/Performers: Clarissa Rivera Dyas and brooke terry  
Sound Design: jose e. abad  
Notes: yayyy areaaa

~ Welcome ~

BCF co-founders *laura e. ellis* & *Kendra Kimbrough Barnes*

**Divine Timing**

Choreographer: Marianna Hester  
Performers: Zarah Barnes, Ebonie Barnett, Jayde Rose, Mariah Zancanero  
Music: Time is Precious-Sault, Gimme the Rhythm-Mike Nasty, Chameleon-Cavemen, Les Fleurs-Minnie Riperton  
Poetry Written by: Marianna Hester and read by Kristina Torain  
*Note: This work in progress is about a young girl who leaves her family behind to create and find her our journey through life. Along the way she finds her friends which become the family she's always needed.*

**An Act of Trying**

Choreographer: William Brewton Fowler Jr.  
Performer: Eli Shi  
Composer: Alex Kozobolis; Music: Offline (Live at the Church)

**222: divine timing (premiere)**

Choreographer/Performers: dominique lesleyann and Adelf Uti  
Music: Polegnala E Todora (Theodora is Dozing), Stars by Nina Simone (1976 live at the Jazz Montreux), Rainstick by Hannah Barbs, Chuncho by Yma Sumac, Full Moon by Eden Ahbez  
Written Text: dominique lesleyann  
Spoken Word: Adelf Uti  
Costumes: dominique lesleyann, Adelf Uti, and dance mission costume closet.  
First and last costume looks - hand dyed by dominique lesleyann  
*Note: this piece is an earthly premiere for me and adelf. This piece has lived in our dreams, in our prayers, manifestations and beyond. This weekend we are removing the veil and letting this piece quantum leap into the physical plane. If you are interested in our work and would like to commission and/or collaborate with us, feel free to email us below. we are interested in support and feedback, so please email [dominiquelesleyann@dominiquelesleyann.com](mailto:dominiquelesleyann@dominiquelesleyann.com) or [artbyadelf@gmail.com](mailto:artbyadelf@gmail.com) reach via instagram @dominiquethedancer\_ or @adelf.u*

~ Intermission 10 mins ~

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**50leven (Part One)**

Writer/Choreographer/ Performer: Styles Alexander

Music: L.T.D, RAMP, Patrice Rushen, Kool and The Gang, Deniece Williams, Max Roach/Abbey Lincoln

Costumes: Styles Alexander

Note: ...---...

Styles Alexander is a transdisciplinary artist based in Oakland, Ca. Styles primarily works in the mediums of choreography, playwriting and sculpture/scenography. Baddie. Ask me about me. IG:@styles\_\_alexander

~ brief pause ~

**Nova Power: Peons (work-in-progress)**

Choreographers: Raissa Simpson

Performers: Jeremy Brooks, Ethan Dennis, Erik K Raymond Lee

Music/Video: Raissa Simpson

Costumes: Raissa Simpson

~ brief pause ~

**The Crossing: My Trips to the Well (premiere)**

Choreographer/Performer: Olutola Afolayan

Original Text: Olutola Afolayan

Original Music Composition: Olutola Afolayan

Music Production & Additional Percussion: Madiou Diouf

Vocals: Olutola Afolayan, Muisi Kongo Malonga, Jessica Harden Diouf

Rehearsal & Creative Consultant: Muisi Kongo Malonga

Projection & Video Editing: Muisi Kongo Malonga & Khabral Muhammad

Audio engineer Nate Hendrix

Costume: Olutola Afolayan

~ Thank You ~

**may we heal? (work in progress)**

Choreographer: dazaun soleyn

Performers: Claire Fisher-Mendez, Jordon Ellis Dabney, dazaun soleyn

Music: Jordon Ellis Dabney

*Cake and Chat Event in the lobby  
directly following last performance piece*

**Please remember to complete our Audience Survey – thank you!**

## Choreographers' Bios (in order of performance)

**Clarissa Rivera Dyas** is a Black, Filipinx, Bay Area, Ohlone land, based movement artist, choreographer, and arts producer. Her artistic practice flows from the truthfulness of improvisation, is rooted in her communities, and centered around movement as a spiritual practice and a conduit of change. They have been a company member of Zaccho Dance Theatre, Robert Moses' Kin, and Flyaway Productions and have performed with Keith Hennessy, Lenora Lee Dance, Megan Lowe Dances, OYSTERKNIFE, GRAVITY, Sarah Crowell, and many others. Clarissa is a co-conspirator with black, queer artists in *RUPTURE* (2021) who premiered *DIASPORADICA* at Fort Mason Center August 2025. She is currently in collaboration with *Sara Shelton Mann* (2020) and *Embodiment Project* (2023). They have presented work in REYES Dance, Dance Thrill Fest (2021), Dresher Ensemble Artist Residency (2022), Queering Dance Festival's FROLIC! (2023), KH FRESH Festival (2024), Dance Up Close East Bay (2025), PUSHfest (2025) and in the Black Choreographers Festival in 2020 /2025 and was awarded Dance Magazine's "25 to Watch" in 2024. They are a member of Queering Dance Festival's Steering Committee and is a Co-Director of ROT Festival.

**Marianna Hester** began her dance career here with the Rites of Passage program at the age of 16. She has danced with the pre-professional dance company Dimensions Extensions Performing Ensemble (DEPE). She began dancing with the adult company (DDT) in 2014 during "The Town On Notice." She has also danced with Kendra Kimbrough Dance Ensemble during "In The Meantime." Marianna received her bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Development from Cal State University at East Bay in 2016. She is now the assistant director for DEPE and the Jazz instructor for Rites of Passage. For the past five years she has been working with youth from all over the Bay Area including Burkhalter Elementary School, Oakland School of the Arts and West Oakland Middle School.

**William Brewton Fowler Jr.** is a Christian freelance dancer and emerging choreographer from Augusta, Georgia. In New York, he worked with Gallim Dance and Stephanie Batten Bland's Company, SBB. In the Bay Area, he was a member of the OBC and worked with Tinypistol, dawsondancesf and SFBATCO. He also began aerial work with Joanna Haigood and worked with Mia Chong for the first season of Eight/Moves.

**dominique lesleyann** is a movement-based artist working at the intersection of memory, body, and lived experience. Their practice listens closely—to breath, to lineage, to what the body carries and refuses to release. Through performance, they create spaces of witnessing and return, inviting tenderness, rigor, and truth to coexist.

**Adelf Uti** (Aka, Elfleda Utiaruk) is a queer Nigerian artist, grief alchemist, and energy worker whose practice resides at the threshold between the seen and the felt. Her work is a form of living altar—a ceremonial weaving of the spiritual, ancestral, and creative dimensions of healing. Her work serves as a call to courage, inviting viewers to meet grief not as an enemy, but as a portal to deeper living, honoring the cycles of birth, death, unraveling, and return. Each piece is an offering, a reminder of the beauty inherent in our own becoming. As a Reiki practitioner and birth worker in training, she extends this ethos of sacred holding from the womb to the beyond.

## Choreographers' Bios (in order of performance)

**Styles Alexander** is a transdisciplinary artist based in, Oakland, Ca. Styles primarily works in the mediums of choreography, playwriting and sculpture/scenography. Baddie. Ask me about me. IG:@styles\_\_alexander

**Raissa Simpson** is a post-disciplinary artist, choreographer, and scholar-practitioner who moves fluidly between embodied practice and academic inquiry to interrogate complex racial and cultural identities through movement. As Artistic Director and founder of San Francisco's award-winning PUSH Dance Company, she has cultivated a two-decade multicultural network of artists and presented work at over 50 venues nationwide, including Joyce SoHo, Aspen Fringe Festival, and Ferst Center for the Arts. Her scholarly work includes the chapter "Writings On Dance: Artistic Reframing for Celestial Black Bodies" (Palgrave Macmillan), which explores how Afrofuturism can be staged in contemporary theater to reimagine Black futures and identities. As a Stanford Core Lecturer, she brings her expertise in contemporary dance, hip hop studies, and movement arts integration to undergraduate education. In 2023, she opened the Sanctuary, a downtown San Francisco dance space dedicated to centering the lived experiences of BIPOC and global majority artists, embodying her commitment to creating what she calls "sacred spaces where diverse communities converge." Dance Magazine has praised her work for having both "Substance & Form," a recognition of her ability to merge rigorous conceptual frameworks with deeply moving artistic expression.

**Olutola Afolayan** is an interdisciplinary artist, choreographer, and founder of *The Belonging Arc*<sup>™</sup>, a creative practice exploring faith, rest, and embodied belonging through movement, story, and sound. With over ten years of professional dance experience, she bridges African diasporic movement, contemporary performance, and ritual storytelling. Olutola has performed as a company member with **Fua Dia Kongo**, **Dana Lawton Dances**, and **Diamano Coura West African Dance Company**. Her process centers the body as an archive—a vessel of migration, memory, and transformation. Rooted in Christian faith expressed through culture, her current work explores breath, water, and the crossings between the spiritual and the human search for home

**Dazaun Soleyn** (he/she/they), creates art with an intention that aims to illuminate the human soul. Dazaun has presented work in the Bay Area since 2013. He received a BFA in Modern Dance Performance and Choreography from the University of South Florida and continued his dance education at the Alonzo King LINES Ballet Training Program. Recently, Dazaun graduated from California College of the Arts with a Masters in Architecture (MArch). Dazaun is an adjunct professor at the University of San Francisco, a Gyrotonic Instructor, Reiki Master and Apprentice Herbalists. His mediums include dance, architecture, sculpture and interactive installations. Dazaunsoleyn.org

Dance Mission Theater's Liberation Academy 4.0 presents  
**SOUL STORIES 3**

**Saturday, March 7 @ 7pm & Sunday, March 8 @ 3pm**

Tickets: \$20 @ [dancemissiontheater.org](http://dancemissiontheater.org)

Dance Mission Theater, 3316 24th St, SF

*Final performances of the Liberation Academy Intensive, featuring 19 talented dancer/choreographers who participated in the 6-month intensive program.*

**Liberation Academy Intensive Members – Dancers & Choreographers**

Crystal Abasolo \* Jessica Bailey \* Sundu Caulker \* Marc Cunanan Chappelle \* Amber Goring \* Janessa Jones \* Soazig Kaam  
Nnenna Loveth \* Rama Mahesh Hall \* Erica Mitchell \* Maya Nixon \* Beatriz Parra \* Terrence Paschal \* Lilla Pittman (AKA Coach)  
Mehgan Sierra \* Tylee Styne \* Shauna Taradesh \* Vivien Terrell \* Eddie Whitfield

**Liberation Academy Leaders**

Sarah Crowell \* Kara Mack \* Bongo Sidibe

**Liberation Academy Mentors**

Ray Archie, Sound Design \* Kanukai Chigamba, AfroUrban \* Rennie Harris, Hip Hop & House \* Stephanie Johnson, Lighting Design  
\* Mandjou Koné, West African Dance \* Chi Chi Okonmah, Stage Management \* Latanya Tigner, Ring Shout & Talawa Technique \* Adia  
Whitaker, Dancer/Choreographer/Dance Historian \* Jocquese Whitfield, Vogue



**BCF: Here & Now**  
**New Voices/New Works**  
February 28 & March 1, 2026

BCF @ DMT Tech Team

Lighting Designer/Board Operator: Harry Rubeck  
Audio Sound Engineer: Jabari Tawiah  
Stage Manager: Chi Chi Oknomah  
Assistant Stage Manager (ASM): Justin Sharlman  
Admin. Assistant/ASM: Jazara Metcalf  
Tech Crew: \*Emewodesh Eshete  
DMT Theater Director: Stella Adelman  
DMT House Manager: Janesta Edmonds  
DMT Box Office: Elif Baskalayci, Tessa Nebrida  
BCF In Studio/DMT Studio Manager: Fredrika Keefer  
*\*BCF Tech Training Program*

Public Relations & Social Media

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Festival Archival Documentation

Photographers: Greg Bridges, Isabella Mae O'Brien  
Videographer: RAPT Productions

Festival Co-Directors

laura elaine ellis  
Kendra Kimbrough Barnes

About Dance Mission Theater

Dance Mission Theater is a non-profit, multicultural dance center located in the heart of San Francisco's Mission District. We offer a full range of adult and youth dance classes, from hip hop to salsa to Afro-Brazilian to modern dance. For a complete schedule please visit [www.dancemission.com](http://www.dancemission.com). In addition to a full season featuring the work of the Bay Area's best and most diverse dance artists, Dance Mission Theater is available to rent for performances, workshops and other events. It is also the home of Krissy Keefer's Dance Brigade, San Francisco's groundbreaking, social-change oriented modern dance company. Dance Brigade's Dance Mission Theater is supported in part by San Francisco Grants for the Arts, the San Francisco Arts Commission and the San Francisco Foundation

**BCF acknowledges the following for their tremendous**

**support and generosity:** Krissy Keefer, Stella Adelman and the staff at Dance Mission Theater. Fiscal Sponsors: Dance Brigade for AAAPAC, SADC for K\* Star\* Productions; Jill Randall/SADC; Michael Dabney, Nate Barnes; Whole Foods, Trader Joe's - SF, Costco; Nirvana Soul, La Farine, Fleurt Flowers; Liberation Academy, Zaccho Studios, SFIAF, SFDF; BCF Artists, Festival Committee and Advisory Committee.

Black Choreographers Festival: Here & Now (BCF) 21 years of presenting the festival in the San Francisco, Bay Area highlighting award-winning Choreographers and companies - featuring unique and dynamic performances!

**Saturday, February 21 & February 22**

Featuring the works of:

**Alaja Badalich ♦ Isha Tobis Clarke**  
**Gabriele Christian ♦ Gregory P Dawson**  
**Ja'Moon Jones ♦ William L. Miller**  
**Aja Randall, Patricia West, Damara Vita Ganley – DAP**  
**Natalya Shoaf**

**Saturday, February 28 & Sunday, March 1**

Featuring the works of:

**Olutola Afolayan ♦ Styles Alexander ♦ Clarissa Dias**  
**William Brewton Fowler Jr. ♦ Marianna Hester**  
**dominique lesleyann**  
**Raissa Simpson ♦ Dazaun Soleyn**

For Tix and More Info: [bcfhereandnow.com](http://bcfhereandnow.com)

*\*Programming subject to change*

**BCF: Here & Now**

The Black Choreographers Festival: Here & Now presents programming and events annually, celebrating African American Dance and Culture. We are in our 21<sup>st</sup> year of service to artists and community – co-directors laura elaine ellis (AAAPAC) and Kendra Kimbrough Barnes (K\*Star\*Productions) have been recognized by the State of California, Alameda County, the Bay Area's Spirit Awards and Isadora Duncan Dance Awards for sustained achievement and dedication to the preservation and progress of African American arts & culture.

**The Black Choreographers Festival – SF is made possible, in part, by the constant support of:**

SF Arts Commission, Dream Keeper Initiative  
Kenneth Rainin Foundation – NEW, Zellerbach Family Foundation, small businesses and individual contributions.

For updates on BCF Performances and Special Events:  
[bcfhereandnow.com](http://bcfhereandnow.com)

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