

APOLLO



**The Apollo & The Joyce Theater Celebrate
Camille A. Brown & Dancers' *THE TRILOGY***

**A Trio of Dance Theater Works on Race and Identity Together for the First Time
October 25 – November 5, 2022**



Camille A. Brown, Photo by Whitney Browne

Award-winning Choreographer & Director Camille A. Brown to Dance
Her Last Performances in this Repertory on Stage

New York, NY – August 3, 2022 — The Apollo and The Joyce Theater announce today that they are partnering together to present a cross-town celebration of three dance and theater works, known collectively as *The Trilogy*, by award-winning choreographer & director **Camille A. Brown**, October 25 through November 5, 2022. Brown and her company, **Camille A. Brown & Dancers**, will stage, for the first time, back-to-back performances of *The Trilogy* works: *Mr. TOL E. RancE* (2012), *BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play* (2015), and *ink* (2017) in a NYC celebration at two iconic New York cultural destinations, The Joyce Theater, and the Apollo Theater.

This presentation marks the first partnership between the Apollo—which has long been a partner, producer, and collaborator with artists and other cultural organizations, creating and presenting work that centers Black artists and voices from the African Diaspora—and The Joyce Theater, which has long championed Brown's work and is committed to sustaining dance by supporting artists and educating audiences. Tickets for all performances are now on sale. Event details follow below.

Using her signature blend of live music, dance, theatrical, and visual elements, these acclaimed works weave together African-American social dance—which Brown has intentionally made a staple of her practice to elevate a Black form of expression—tap, jazz, African, and, modern, to reclaim and reaffirm

Black identity within the evolving cultural landscape of American culture. For these performances, Brown will perform alongside her company, marking her last performances on the New York stage in this repertory as she moves into choreographing and directing for her Company, theater, opera, and film full-time.

Performed back-to-back and in conversation with one another, *The Trilogy* is Black history, storytelling, memory, and cultural dialogue at its finest, examining aspects of Black life that are often appropriated, rewritten, or silenced. The first two dances in the series, *Mr. TOL E. RAnCE* and *BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play*, return to The Joyce Theater October 25-30. The Bessie Award-winning *Mr. TOL E. RAnCE* (2012,), which celebrates the humor and genius of African American performers, is also a comic, yet searing interrogation of minstrelsy and “the mask of survival” – asking us to ponder what happens to the human spirit behind the mask. The Bessie-nominated *BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play*, which premiered at The Joyce Theater in 2015, draws on the rhythmic play of Black girl games, rhyming chants, and social dances to lift-up Black girl creativity, magic, and maternal and sororal affection. *ink*, which premiered at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in 2017 and will have its Apollo Theater debut on November 4-5, 2022, elevates the day-to-day experience of Black people—Black love, brotherhood, community—revealing the tender, loving, vulnerable, and supportive, side of Black culture and the resiliency that keeps Black people rising, like superheroes.

“The Apollo is thrilled to partner with The Joyce Theater to bring these major contemporary dance works together as Camille A. Brown envisioned, and to finally bring her work to the Apollo,” said Apollo Executive Producer **Kamilah Forbes**. “The Apollo has a strong history of championing pioneering Black artists, including some amazing dancers, from the 1950s duo the Nicholas Brothers to our annual Kwanzaa celebration featuring Abdel R. Salaam’s Forces of Nature Dance Theatre. We’re excited to welcome the rigor, fun, and brilliance of Camille’s contemporary choreography to our audiences.”

Executive Director of The Joyce Theater Foundation **Linda Shelton** said, “I am always left inspired and profoundly moved by Camille’s work. Her brilliant artistry and beautiful voice have made her a Joyce Theater favorite since her debut at Joyce Soho in 2004. We are delighted to be a part of presenting this transcendent trio of pieces celebrating Blackness back-to-back with the iconic Apollo Theater in an unprecedented partnership.”

“I am extremely honored that the Apollo and The Joyce have joined together to support these three works. *Mr. TOL E. RAnCE* signaled a change in how I wanted to make work as an artist. It also marks the time when I started working in theater, which inspired and challenged my perspective even more. Kamilah Forbes, Aaron Mattocks, and Linda Shelton have been fierce champions of my work and have encouraged me to lean into who I am as a creator. I’m excited to share that journey and these stories in 2022,” said **Camille A. Brown**.

About Camille A. Brown

Brown is a prolific Black female choreographer who brilliantly combines multiple genres to create a theatrical, filmic, pulsing experience that reclaims, and elevates African-American cultural identity to new and important levels of presentation. She founded Camille A. Brown & Dancers in 2006, following her passion to empower Black bodies to tell their own stories.

Ms. Brown has received numerous honors for her powerful body of work. She is the recipient of the 2021 ISPA/International Society for the Performing Arts’ Distinguished Artist Award, a 2020 Dance Magazine Award, and the 2020 Obie Award for Sustained Excellence in Choreography. She is a Ford Foundation Art of Change Fellow and a 2020 Emerson Fellow and the recipient of a Jacob’s Pillow Dance Award & Doris Duke Artist Award. Most recently she was named one of The Kennedy Center’s Next 50 artists. Her work has been commissioned by renowned dance organizations such as Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Urban Bush Women, and Complexions, to name a few. Her work, *City of Rain*, originally

created on her Company in 2010, entered the repertory of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in December 2019.

Her Broadway and Off-Broadway theater, film & television choreography credits include: Tony Award-Winning Broadway revival, *Once On This Island* (Drama Desk, Outer Critics, and Chita Rivera nominations), *Toni Stone* (Drama Desk, Lortel nominee), Emmy Award-winning *Jesus Christ Superstar Live* on NBC, Broadway's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Fortress of Solitude* (Lortel nomination), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Broadcast live on PBS) for The Public Theater's Shakespeare in the Park, and *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (Netflix).

Brown made history this past year as the first Black director of a mainstage production at the Metropolitan Opera for her work as co-director, with James Robinson, of Terence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, fall of 2021, and as the first Black female to be nominated for a Tony Award as both director and choreographer of a play on Broadway, with the 2022 revival of Ntozake Shange's *for colored girls who have considered suicide / when the rainbow is enuf*.

Camille A. Brown & Dancers is a Bessie award-winning, NYC-based dance company that soars through history like a whirlwind. The Company's riveting, thought-provoking repertory tells bold, authentic stories about Black lives through movement and music rooted in the African diaspora. The Company has toured its repertory with live music to 70 cities in the US and internationally, performs for 20,000+ people annually, and serves 4,000 to 5,000+ engagement participants each year through free community programs that elevate African diaspora aesthetics. The Company returned to touring in 2022 with upcoming performances in New Hampshire, California, Nebraska, Texas, Washington, and Connecticut, and creative residencies at Jacob's Pillow, MA and the Pocantico Center, NY. The Trilogy: *Mr. TOL E. RANcE*, *BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play*, and *ink* will be revived (in part) during a residency at Kaatsbaan Cultural Park.

Camille A. Brown & Dancers' performances of *The Trilogy* are supported, in part, with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, The New York State Council on the Arts, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. Major support for the revival of *The Trilogy* has been provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Additional support for the Company's New York City Season at the Apollo Theater and The Joyce Theater has been provided by the Harkness Foundation for Dance and Jody and John Arnhold.

Camille A. Brown & Dancers is pleased to announce and wishes to express its gratitude to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for its one-million-dollar grant, over three-years, in support of the Company's SOCIAL DANCE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE (SDSC) efforts. SOCIAL DANCE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE provides the framework for Brown's vision for the Company. It drives her creative work, which embraces social dance and movement and music from the African diaspora and challenges preconceived ideas on race, and encompasses the Company's touring and performances and our free community engagement initiatives at home and on tour—Every Body Move Coast to Coast (our adult dance education program based on social dance), Mentorship programs for emerging artists, convenings for Black women, and SDSC's Virtual School, an online series of free social dance classes and lectures on the history of social dance by notable artists/scholars, launched in May 2020, which to date has 95,000 views. SDSC engages the African American dance community and all those seeking deeper knowledge of Black and Afro-Caribbean aesthetic culture through an exploration of the history and practice of movement and music originating from the African diaspora. Andrew W. Mellon Foundation funds also support the expansion of the Company, the addition of artistic associates and the creation of new works.

CABD's 2022 performances, creative residencies and community engagement activities are supported, in part, by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Tides Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Howard Gilman Foundation, Grantmakers for Girls of Color, the Shubert Foundation,

the Harkness Foundation for Dance, and with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

PERFORMANCE DETAILS

BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play

October 25-27, 2022

Tuesday and Wednesday at 7:30, Thursday at 8pm EST

Mr. TOL E. RAnCE

October 29-30, 2022

Saturday at 8pm; Sunday at 2 & 7:30pm EST

The Joyce Theater

Camille A. Brown & Dancers return to The Joyce to present the Bessie-nominated *BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play*, an ode to Black girl creativity that draws on the ingenious rhythmic play of Black girl games, rhyming chants, and social dances and the Bessie Award-winning *Mr. TOL E. RAnCE*, which celebrates the humor and genius of African-American performers, while boldly examining stereotypes that have dominated Black popular culture. *BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play* premiered at The Joyce Theater in 2015 and *Mr. TOL E. RAnCE* was presented at The Joyce in 2019.

ink

Friday, November 4 and Saturday, November 5 at 8pm EST

Apollo's Historic Theater

Camille A. Brown & Dancers makes its Apollo debut with the uptown premiere of *ink* - an exploration of self-empowerment, Black love, brotherhood, and resilience. A mix of tap, jazz, African, modern, hip-hop and social dance moves is performed to riveting live music that ranges from jazz and funk to afrobeat and gogo. Each section of *ink* celebrates a superpower of Black people, represented through spirit, culture, Black love and Brotherhood. *ink*, Camille Brown says “lifts up real life superheroes who paved the way for us to fly and ‘be fly.’ In flight, we see the superpower of Black people in America.”

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

Professional Learning Workshop for Educators

Tuesday, October 18

5:00 – 6:30pm EST

Apollo Soundstage

Hybrid (in-person and via Zoom); interactive

Price: \$25 per person; \$15 per person for NYCDOE Educators

Led by artists from Camille A. Brown & Dancers, and building on the company's vision of fostering learning, creativity, cultural pride, and joy through the art of social dance, this professional development workshop for educators is based on CABD's Social Dance for Social Change initiative, which reclaims Black narratives and gives African Diaspora dance its rightful place in American culture. For this event, CABD teaching artists will facilitate a workshop modeling the Company's student-centered pedagogical approach to dance training, delving into social dance's historical context and demonstrating its efficacy as a tool to help students develop essential life skills—critical thinking, self-expression, empathy, teamwork, and self-confidence. A conversation with CABD Company dancers via Zoom will follow, with a focus on the cultural and community importance of social dance, while demonstrating how it is incorporated into Brown's Trilogy of works on race, culture, and identity. The in-person workshop is appropriate for grades 3-12. The Zoom meeting with dance company members is appropriate for educators in high school and

post-secondary education but open to all workshop attendees. Presented by the Apollo's Education Department.

Every Body Move & Groove

Sunday, October 30

3:45pm – 5:00pm EST

New York Live Arts, 219 W. 19th Street, 10011

Free

[RSVP required](#)

This intergenerational, inclusive, and upbeat workshop celebrating Camille A. Brown & Dancers' three-part series at The Joyce Theater and the Apollo Theater is a way for audience members to experience history and gain insight into social dance styles born from African American culture. Based on moves found in Camille A. Brown's *Trilogy* dances, this dance party led by Camille A. Brown & Dancers' experienced facilitators will take participants on a dance journey through time. Groove to dances from the Frug to the Electric Slide, from the Kid-n-Play to the Running Man and more.

Additional Camille A. Brown & Dancers talks and panels to be scheduled.

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TICKETS

Tickets for all performances are now on sale. For the Apollo productions, the Apollo will offer its Half Off for Harlem initiative, which grants half-priced tickets for Harlem residents, workers and students.

Tickets for the Apollo's presentation of *ink* are \$30 (Balcony), \$45 (Mezzanine), \$70 (Orchestra). For more information, please visit apollotheater.org

Tickets for The Joyce's presentation of *Mr. TOL E. RAnCE* and *BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play* are \$10-\$65 and can be purchased at www.Joyce.org, or by calling JoyceCharge at 212-242-0800. Please note: ticket prices are subject to change. For more information, please visit www.Joyce.org.

Ticket holders from the Camille A. Brown & Dancers performances at The Joyce will receive a 15% discount to see *ink* at the Apollo. A ticketholder who has purchased a ticket to *ink* at the Apollo will receive 15% off of a ticket to either presentation at The Joyce.

Apollo Covid-19 Protocols

Attendees are encouraged to wear masks inside the theater. For a complete list of the Apollo's COVID-19 safety protocols, please visit www.ApolloTheater.org.

The Joyce Theater Covid-19 Protocols

For more information and to read about The Joyce Theater's detailed [health and safety protocols](#), including required face-coverings and proof of vaccination policies, please visit www.Joyce.org.

About the Joyce Theater

The Joyce Theater Foundation, a non-profit organization, has proudly served the dance community for almost four decades. Under the direction of founders Cora Cahan and Eliot Feld, Ballet Tech Foundation acquired and renovated the Elgin Theater in Chelsea. Opening as The Joyce Theater in 1982, it was named in honor of Joyce Mertz, beloved daughter of LuEsther T. Mertz. It was LuEsther's clear, undaunted vision and abundant generosity that made it imaginable and ultimately possible to build the theater. Ownership was secured by The Joyce in 2015. The theater is one of the only theaters built by dancers for dance and has provided an intimate and elegant home for over 400 U.S.-based and international companies. The Joyce has also expanded its reach beyond its Chelsea home through off-site

presentations at venues ranging in scope from Lincoln Center’s David H. Koch Theater, to Brooklyn’s Invisible Dog Art Center, and to outdoor programming in spaces such as Hudson River Park. To further support the creation of new work, The Joyce maintains longstanding commissioning and residency programs. Local students and teachers (K–12th grade) benefit from its school program, and family and adult audiences get closer to dance with access to artists. The Joyce’s annual season of about 48 weeks of dance now includes over 340 performances – both digital and in-person – for audiences in excess of 150,000. For more information, please visit www.joyce.org.

About the Apollo

The legendary Apollo Theater—the soul of American culture—plays a vital role in cultivating emerging artists and launching legends. Since its founding, the Apollo has served as a center of innovation and a creative catalyst for Harlem, the city of New York, and the world.

With music at its core, the Apollo’s programming extends to dance, theater, spoken word, and more. This includes the world premiere of the theatrical adaptation of Ta-Nehisi Coates’s *Between the World and Me* and the New York premiere of the opera *We Shall Not Be Moved*; special programs such as the blockbuster concert *Bruno Mars Live at the Apollo; 100: The Apollo Celebrates Ella*; and the annual *Africa Now!* Festival. The non-profit Apollo Theater is a performing arts presenter, commissioner, and collaborator that also produces festivals and large-scale dance and musical works organized around a set of core initiatives that celebrate and extend the Apollo’s legacy through a contemporary lens, including the *Women of the World (WOW)* Festival as well as other multidisciplinary collaborations with partner organizations.

Since introducing the first *Amateur Night* contests in 1934, the Apollo has served as a testing ground for new artists working across a variety of art forms and has ushered in the emergence of many new musical genres—including jazz, swing, bebop, R&B, gospel, blues, soul, and hip-hop. Among the countless legendary performers who launched their careers at the Apollo are James Brown, Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, H.E.R., D’Angelo, Lauryn Hill, Machine Gun Kelly, and Miri Ben-Ari; and the Apollo’s forward-looking artistic vision continues to build on this legacy. For more information about the Apollo, visit www.ApolloTheater.org.

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