

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

URBAN BUSH WOMEN

Artistic Director: Jawole Willa Jo Zollar
Choreographer: Jawole Willa Jo Zollar and the Company

The Company

Terri Cousar
Maia Claire Garrison
Christine King
Treva Offutt
E. Gaynell Sherrod
Valerie Winborne
Jawole Willa Jo Zollar

Percussionist: Junior "Gabu" Wedderburn

Saturday Evening, January 16, 1993 at 8:00
Sunday Afternoon, January 17, 1993 at 3:00
Power Center, Ann Arbor, Michigan

PROGRAM

LifeDance III...The Empress (Womb Wars)

INTERMISSION

Shelter

Working for Free

*I Don't Know, But I've Been Told,
If You Keep On Dancin' You'll Never Grow Old*

Lighting Director: Kristabelle Munson
Managing Director: Laurie Uprichard
Administrative Director: Rhoda Cerritelli
Operations: Ain Gordon

The taking of photographs and use of recording devices is strictly prohibited.

Special thanks to Renaissance High School Varsity Singers, conductor Nina Scott; Ypsilanti High School Concert Choir, conductor William Boggs; and Ann Arbor Pioneer and Huron High School Choirs, conductors Ken Westerman and Ruth Datz; and members of the Urban Bush Women for the Free Community Sings.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

LifeDance III . . . The Empress
(*Womb Wars*)

Lighting Design: Phil Sandstrom
Set Design: Helen Oji
Text: Jawole Willa Jo Zollar
Performers: The Company

"LifeDance III . . . The Empress (Womb Wars)" is the fourth in a series of works that represent a personal odyssey realized through images from various spiritual traditions.

"LifeDance III . . . The Empress (Womb Wars)" was commissioned by Penn State University, Center for the Performing Arts for performance by Urban Bush Women.

INTERMISSION

Shelter

Original Lighting Design: Leni Schwendinger
Composer: Junior "Gabu" Wedderburn
Texts: "Between a Rock and a Hard Place at the Intersection of Reduced Resources and Reverberating Rage" by Hattie Gossett
"Belongo" by Laurie Carlos
"Endangered Species" drawn from various news sources.
Performers: The Company

"Shelter" is an excerpt from "Heat."

Hattie Gossett is the author of a collection of poems, *Presenting . . . Sister NoBlues* (Firebrand Books)

Working for Free

A structured improvisation by Jawole Willa Jo Zollar.

I Don't Know, But I've Been Told
If You Keep On Dancin' You'll Never Grow Old

Music: Junior "Gabu" Wedderburn
Costumes: Gabriel Berry
Original Lighting Design: David Moore
Performers: The Company

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Acknowledgments

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Urban Bush Women was established in 1984 by Artistic Director Jawole Willa Jo Zollar. Using contemporary idioms and interdisciplinary forms, the company has created many dance-theater works rooted in the folklore and spiritual traditions of African-Americans. Through movement, live music, and the drama and wit of the spoken word, Urban Bush Women explores the struggle, growth, transformation, and survival of the human spirit and creates a powerful sense of community on stage that reaches a broad audience. Urban Bush Women also seeks to foster cross-cultural exchange through educational seminars and workshops as well as developmental residencies.



Jawole Willa Jo Zollar (Artistic Director) was born and raised in Kansas City, Missouri, and was steeped from childhood in both sacred and secular aspects of popular black culture. She began her dance training with Joseph Stevenson, a student of the legendary Katherine Dunham. She received a B.A. in Dance from the University of Missouri at Kansas City and an M.F.A. in Dance from Florida State University, where she subsequently taught. In 1980 she moved to New York City to study with Dianne McIntyre at Sounds in Motion. Zollar has toured internationally, and her work with Urban Bush Women has earned her three Choreographer's Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and another from the New York Foundation for the Arts. *Shelter*, created by Ms. Zollar in 1987, has recently been set on the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and received its

premiere in Kansas City in November 1992 and in New York at City Center in December. She received a 1992 New York Dance & Performance (a.k.a. "Bessie") award for her collective work from *River Songs* through *Praise House*.

Terri Cousar has been with the company since its inception in 1984. Originally from Columbus, Ohio, she attended Ohio State University and received a B.F.A. in Dance. Her studies in New York include Afro-Haitian dance with Pat Hall-Smith and West African dance with Yousouff Kombassa.

Maia Claire Garrison began performing with the Big Apple Circus as an acrobat at the age of ten. Her family then moved to Rome, Italy. Maia was given years of training and inspiration from her mother, Roberta, who is also a dancer and choreographer. She has also presented her own choreography in Dance Theater Workshop's "Kuumba," created by Janine Williams, as well as in the 1992 California festival "Black Choreographers Moving Toward the Twenty-First Century." Maia received her B.A. from Sarah Lawrence College.

Christine King joined the company in 1989. Originally from Michigan, she has been performing in New York City for the past ten years with a number of artists including Claire Porter, Trinket Monsod, Kaleidoscope Dancers, Amy Sue Rosen, and Black Pearl Dance Company. She has studied with Sara Sugihara, William Adair, Nancy Hutchins, and many others. She holds a B.A. in Dance and has studied singing with Diane Barclay, Artie Sheppard and others.

Treva Offutt, a native Clevelander, is a recent graduate of Rhode Island School of Design, and hopes to combine visual art and dance. She would like to thank many people for their support. Above all: her family and "The Women" for their love and support; artist/guru Mahler Ryder for his focus and strength; art critic Szymon Bioko for his eternal youth and cabaret soul; animator Amy Kravitz for her faith and vision; and the people of Karamu and Jacob's Pillow for their patience and spirit.

E. Gaynell Sherrod is a native of Buffalo, New York. Formerly a member of Kariamu & Company in Buffalo as well as of Philadelphia's Philadanco, Ms. Sherrod is currently an Ed.E. candidate at Temple University's Dance Department. She is a future faculty fellowship scholar, teaches in the department, and is working on research in African-derived dance techniques and performance arts.

Junior "Gabu" Wedderburn grew up drumming in Jamaica and started playing professionally at the age of 14. He began touring at an early age with the National Dance Theater Company of Jamaica throughout North and South America. He went on to study folk music in the Research Department of the Jamaican School of Music, and at 19, founded the percussion-based band Dominion Percussion. Gabu has also recorded and toured with internationally recognized reggae artists in Jamaica and New York. Since 1984, he has lived in New York, where he formed Ancient Vibrations with a group of drummers, dancers, and singers.

Valerie Winborne "Otuasina" is a native of Virginia. She remained there until moving north to attend graduate school in New York. During and after completion of her M.A. in Dance/Movement Therapy, Valerie danced with many choreographers, including Ron Brown, Johanna Boyce, and David Rousseve, and has created her own work. To dance with Urban Bush Women is a dream come true, and she thanks her family, especially Wayne, and her friends for their unconditional support.

Helen Oji (Set Designer) is a painter and set designer. She has shown her work in many solo and group exhibitions at such museums and galleries as the Museum of Modern Art, the New Museum of Contemporary Art, Nordjylands Kunstmuseum, Monique Knowlton, Sidney Janis, Artists Space, The Drawing Center, and Pelavin Editions. Her set design work includes *Peachfish*, *Re-Heat*, *Song of Lawino*, and *The Painted Tooth*. Ms. Oji has collaborated with Laurie Carlos, Jessica Hagedorn, Ching Valdes-Aran, and Valeria Vasilevski. *Womb Wars* is her third collaboration with Ms. Zollar.

Phil Sandström (Lighting Designer) is the Production Manager and resident lighting designer at Dance Theater Workshop and a two-time Bessie Award winner for lighting design. He has created the original lighting for hundreds of dance companies including Doug Elkins, Johanna Boyce, David Dorfman, Stephanie Skura, Christopher d'Amboise, Martha Bowers, CoDanceCo, Eric Barsness, Randy Warshaw, Jennifer Sargent, Ken Rinker, Lisa Kraus, Llory Wilson, Clarice Marshall, Danny Ezralow, Cydney Wilkes, Rachel Lampert, Pook Kaye, Peter Anastos, Charlie Moulton, David Gordon, Ralph Lemon, Wendy Perron, Dorothy Jungels, Carol Clements, Gayle Tufts, Alice Kaltman, Roz Newman, Harry Streep, Jim Self, Barbara Allen, Fred Darsow, Molissa Fenley, Stephan Koplowitz, Victoria Marks and, from 1982-90, Mark Morris. His theater work includes *The Flying Karamazov Brothers*, *Fools Fire*, *The Ghost Writer*, *The Harlot's Curse*, *The Watchtower*, *Daniel Stein*, *Michael Smith*, *Mark Anderson*, *Bruce Schwartz*, *Power Boothe*, *Roadside Theater*, and *The Mildred Piece*.

Kristabelle Munson (Lighting Director) is from Manila, the Philippines. She has created the lighting for Elizabeth Swados' *Job: A Circus*, *Sussan Delhim* at the Whitney Museum, Kevin Wynn at St. Clement's Church, Sarah Stackhouse at the Bardavon Opera House. Kristabelle has also designed in New York at Home for Contemporary Theatre and Art, The Kitchen, and the Museum of Natural History. Recent credits include the lighting for the premiere of Jennifer Muller's *Thesaurus* in Europe. Kristabelle has a B.F.A. in Theatrical Design from the State University of New York at Purchase.