



TD IRIE MUSIC FESTIVAL
July 29, 30, 31 & August 1 2011
www.iriemusicfestival.com
FREE! THE FEELING IS IRIE!

Free Dance Workshop
Taught by Harambee Dance Company
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

dance Immersion Summer Showcase: Queen's Park North
Sunday July 31, 2011
4:00 PM - 5: 00 PM

For Immediate Release:
July 12, 2011

The **TD IRIE Music Festival** is a free event that celebrates music, dance, art and culture, providing an opportunity to promote a greater understanding between the diverse cultures and traditions of our world-class city. The **dance Immersion Summer Showcase** returns to the TD IRIE Music Festival with a celebration of dance, presented by some of the nations foremost and up-coming performers. This years performers include the **Caribbean Dance Theatre, Harambee Dance Company** (New York), **Gadfly Dance Company, Jasmyn Fyffe Dance, Matthew Cuff, Tamsir Seck** and **Lua Shayenne**.

For more information about the dance Immersion:

<http://iriemusicfestival.com/category/music-and-arts/dance/>

Company Biographies

Caribbean Dance Theatre

Caribbean Dance Theatre (CDT) is a 10 year old, all female dance group, specializing in an array of African Caribbean based dance styles. The French Caribbean term "Toute Bagha" would be the appropriate phrase to describe what this group has to offer...a little bit of everything. Tamla Matthews is the Artistic Director and the Head choreographer of the company, which exists to celebrate the Caribbean contribution to the Canadian cultural mosaic.

Committed to artistic integrity and professionalism, the company exists to promote and explore different forms of Black Dance and challenge limiting stereotypes of Caribbean dance. CDT is a cultural ambassador that celebrates Canadian culture with Caribbean Flair!

The Irie Music Festival website described the company's work as offering "the opportunity to partake in an artistic Caribbean Canadian experience". In short, the company continues to refine a style that honours the root, celebrates the present and creates possibilities for the future of Black dance!

The Harambee Dance Company

Founded in 1992 by Sandella and Frank Malloy in Charleston, South Carolina and relocated to New York City in 1996.

Harambee is an innovative dance company that explores the roots of African and African - American dance and music from a contemporary perspective. Under the leadership of Artistic Director, Sandella Malloy, the company's repertoire reflects a strong vision that celebrates and also expands traditional uses and vocabulary of African Dance. Consistent with this vision, Sandella creates masterful and high-energy choreography that weaves African- based movement, modern dance forms, live percussion, and vibrant costumes into captivating performances.

Harambee, meaning, "let us pull together" in Swahili, believes in offering audiences enlightening and thought provoking experiences designed to strengthen social connections and social responsibility. In addition, Harambee's unique presentations challenge audiences to expand their vision of dance by presenting a new style of African Dance that incorporates contemporary themes and ideas.

Harambee is a family; the company utilizes each dancer and musician's talent and strength to make the company operate. The result is a company of strong and dedicated individuals working together as a team to present artistic work of the highest standard.

<http://www.harambeedancecompany.com/>

Gadfly Dance Company

Gadfly focuses on studying, researching and creating movement at the junction where urban dance styles (House dancing, Hip Hop, B-Boying) and other praised genres collide and tune together. Ofilio Portillo and Apolonia Velasquez, artistic directors, merge art with entertainment in Contemporary Urban Dancing, which breathes with a spontaneity found only in urban dance culture. Don't settle for less than what you truly are worth, dare to question the established standards and INNOVATE. www.gadfly.ca

Jasmyn Fyffe Dance

Jasmyn Fyffe is a dancer, choreographer and teacher. She began her dance training as a young child in Toronto, Ontario. Upon graduation from the York University Dance Program, Fyffe founded her company Jasmyn Fyffe Dance. To date, she has self-produced one concert as a DanceWorks CoWorks Series Event at Dancemakers. She has also presented work in: Squigg Festival, Junction Arts Festival, The Science Center, Evolution of Gospel Music, Guelph Contemporary Dance Festival, The Rivoli, International Dance Day, CUSO-VSO Dance for the World Benefit, Irie Music Dance Festival, Project Dance Toronto, Fresh Blood 2009 and 2010 (The Chimera Project), Bazaar, THIS IS DANCE, Dance Ontario DanceWeekend and 60 by 60 Dance. Jasmyn was a featured dancer in Nelly Furtado's video "Night is Young", and she has also been featured in the Sway magazine and The Dance Current. In addition she has worked with Linda Garneau, performs annually with Kashedance and was in the touring musical UMOJA.

Matthew Cuff –

With over two years of experience with hip hop dance, Matthew Cuff has performed in numerous shows across the GTA, including Montreal's World Hip Hop Competition. As a dancer, instructor, and choreographer Matthew Cuff takes a lot of pride and is very optimistic with dance. With Vogue coming into the mainstream Matthew found passion for this underground dance style early in his career as well. Mathew Cuff has traveled to New York City to compete and train with some of the best vougers. With his rigorous training from George Brown Commercial Dance Studies and Ballet Creole, Matthew Cuff has excelled as a dancer/choreographer and has become a force not to be reckoned with. Matthew portfolio includes work with recognized Choreographers such as, Tracy Armstrong, Jae Blaze (Blaze Entertainment), and Donyelle Jones (So You Think You Can Dance) on special occasions. Matthew is determined to build an arsenal with various forms of dance, which will make him flexible and able to provide various forms of choreography that reflects his passion for his art. With his determination and passion for dance and performance, one can only expect great things from Matthew Cuff.

Lua Shayenne –

Is an actor, dancer and choreographer. Graduate of RAPA and apprentice with COBA, she frequently travels to Africa to research and learn traditional and contemporary African dance. Her dance mentor is Debbie Wilson. She trained with Ms Kwakwa and Ben Onduro in Ghana, M'ba Coulibaly, Issa Cissoko, and Mamadou Kante in Mali;

Ousmane Ndiaye, Bertrand Saky (Ivory Coast) in Senegal. She has worked with master drummers Amadou Kienou (Burkina Faso), Mohamed Diaby (Guinea); choreographers Kevin Ormsby (Kashedance), De-Napoli Clarke (RJC Dance, UK), Eleo Pomare (NYC); theatre directors Erika Batdorf, Rhoma Spencer and Weyni Mengesha. She has taught several African dance workshops in Italy at Matteo Cigna's School of Drum and Dance and in the GTA (Eastdale High school, Firgrove P.S). She has also facilitated theatre and dance workshops for many organizations such as Art Starts, Recognize the Real (Jane/Finch) and YAG (Youth Advisory Group), sponsored by New Heights Community Health (Action for Neighborhood Change Program/Bathurst-Finch). As a choreographer she has been commissioned twice by Dusk Dances and regularly choreographs for Aya Dance Collective. She is a proud member of Toronto Playback Theatre where she has spent five years performing with the company as well as mentoring and conducting their Youth Playback Company. As a freelance actor, her latest projects include 360 Degree Vision (Vision TV documentary), Anowa (African Theatre Ensemble), Judgment Day Cafe (Hysteria Festival), Building Blocks (Rock Paper Sistahz Festival) and Zigga (Shadowpath Theatre). In 2008, Shayenne was awarded one of 12 spots reserved for outstanding dancers in the Choreographers Lab/ Community Arts Practice at the school of Jacob's Pillow. Shayenne served as board member for Dusk Dances for two years and was invited as judge in the 2009 Ultimate Dance War competition in Ottawa. She is currently co-founder and member of Aya Dance Collective, a collective that performs and creates traditional African and contemporary dance works through constant collaboration with the pool of talented artists residing in and outside of Canada.

Tamsir Seck-

Hometown ties in west central Senegal, Tamsir is descended from a family of musicians (griots). In griot, music is not learned but is passed from father to son for generations. In the African tradition (oral), the musicians were considered the keepers of history. Their music was accompanied by stories about the history of the nation. They are the facilitators of everyday life. Their music contributes in some way to the revival and updating of the African culture. This rich culture, Tamsir specializes in Tam-tam and traditional ballet. He plays the djembe, of Tama, Sabar and Khamala of which are all instruments of traditional African music. Tamsir is also a great dancer and mastering traditional dances of the ten regions of Senegal. www.tamsirseck.tripod.com

PUBLIC INFORMATION: 905-799-1630

The TD IRIE Music Festival is a free event that celebrates music, dance, art, food and culture, providing an opportunity to promote a greater understanding between diverse cultures and traditions of Toronto - the world's most culturally diverse city.

Please add this information to your listings. We are presently confirming interviews. Images are available upon request or by going to the pressroom, located under 'about' tag:
www.iriemusicfestival.com

For media information, please contact:

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