Suite Blackness:
Black Dance in Cinema

Conceived, written, and directed by
Hassan El-Amin*+ &
Dr. Lynnette Young Overby

Feb. 16 – Feb. 18 2023

RESIDENT ENSEMBLE PLAYERS
Delaware's Resident Professional Acting Company

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

Resident Ensemble Players presents

Suite Blackness:
Black Dance in Cinema

Conceived, written, and directed by
Hassan El-Amin*+ &
Dr. Lynnette Young Overby

Costume Coordinators **Heather Coiner+ & Jo Fulmer+**

Light, Sound,Projection Design **Eileen Smitheimer+**

Original Compositions & Select Arrangements **Joe "B.B. Rubble" Lambert & Ralph Anthony Russell**

Stage Manager **Matthew G. Marholin*+**

This performance runs approximately 90 minutes

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.
\+ Member of the Resident Ensemble Players.

Delaware Division of the Arts

REP productions are supported, in part, by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts. The Division promotes Delaware arts events on www.DelawareScene.com.

Choreographers

Ashley SK Davis - Rachel DeLauder - Teresa Emmons
Trish Morris - Tumi Nkomo - Lynnette Young Overby
CJay Philip - Sarah Kim Reiser - Tiana Sanders
Kimberly Schroeder - Tamoya Taylor - Terlene Terry-Todd

Narrator

Hassan El-Amin*+

Performers

Trinity August
Raye Jones Avery
Alyss Ayres
Morgan Boulden
Kennedy Davis
Rachel DeLauder
Kaamilah Diabaté
Kyleigh Dunlap
Chelsea Gbemudu
Nina Gosa
Anne Hoban
Marissa Jackson
Michael McDermott
Aidan Moffa
Russell Myrick
Nadjah Nicole
Jasmine Norwood
Tyler Parke
Ikira Peace
Amber Rance
Evelyn Schloer
Omari Senior
Cree Seunarine
Gabby Shubert
Zoe Singh
Niaya Taylor
Isabella Thiele
Nicodemus Williams-Snow
Katie Work

NOTICE TO AUDIENCE MEMBERS

PHOTOS, VIDEO AND/OR RECORDING OF THIS PERFORMANCE BY ANY MEANS WHATSOEVER IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.
WE REQUEST THAT ALL AUDIENCE MEMBERS TURN OFF ANY ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND CELL PHONES THAT MAY CAUSE A DISTURBANCE DURING THE PRODUCTION. AND PLEASE, NO TEXTING DURING THE PERFORMANCE.

From the Intr. Producing Artistic Director

Here at the REP, we are in the business of telling stories. People need to hear their stories and see their faces on the stages and screens of our country. There isn't much we can do about the screens. But here on our stage, we are committed to sharing the stories of everyone.

With *Suite Blackness: Black Dance in Cinema*, we are excited to share the stories of African Americans and their contributions to the artistic culture of the United States.

As a white man, I have seen my story on stage and film for years and years. I want to see other stories, like that of Josephine Baker, who you will soon learn about in the show. I'd heard her name for years, but sadly knew nothing of the various facets of her life. Now I'm fascinated by her and want to learn more with the hope that her life will affect mine in such a way that I am altered forever.

I believe we learn with every story we are touched by, especially by those that differ from our own. I'm on my way to seeing the world through the eyes of others. It's a lifelong journey, and I hope you'll join me.

I invite you to celebrate these Black artists and their contributions to shaping our culture and lives.

Steve Tague
Intr. Producing Artistic Director
Resident Ensemble Players

From the Director

If you are reading this, we made it. I welcome you because this moment couldn't happen without our audience. You are our final and most important piece.

Suite Blackness: Black Dance in Cinema happened because of timing and new leadership. It began as a thought sparked by a conversation of admission from Dr. Lynnette Young Overby, that the University of Delaware Theatre and Dance Department had never, in the history of the university, collaborated on a joint theatrical production. Never.

Hearing this, my creative sensibilities were stimulated. We had an opportunity to create an original, one-of-a-kind theatrical masterpiece. Something that had never been done before.

I shared my vison with Steve Tague and Dr. Overby, and they both said yes. I was then blessed to work creatively with Dr. Lynnette Young Overby, whose professional accomplishments and prolific academic career is a testament to her years of commitment to excellence in dance and academia. She is a phenomenal woman and loved by those who have shared a creative space with her. The dancers, choreographers, musicians, community artists, spoken word artists – all that you will see on stage tonight, responded to Dr. Overby's call to participate in the creation of this masterpiece.

I must also acknowledge the entire Resident Ensemble Players administration and staff. Each member of this award-winning theatre company has committed to making the vision of *Suite Blackness: Black Dance in Cinema* a reality and of the highest professional quality possible.

Please enjoy *Suite Blackness: Black Dance in Cinema* a unique and exciting theatrical experience that celebrates the powerful social, and historical impact of Black Dance in film.

Peace and Love

Hassan El-Amin

PROGRAMME:

Narrator: Hassan El-Amin*+

From Africa – Parts 1 and 2
Choreography: - Dr. Lynnette Young Overby - Trish Morris
Arrangement: - Ralph Anthony Russell -
Percussionists: - Aubrey Everett - Shannon Fletcher -
Performers: - Nina Gosa - Ikira Peace - Amber Rance -

Old Hollywood Tribute to Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson
Choreography: - Kimberly Schroeder -
Performers: - Chelsea Gbemudu - Anne Hoban -
- Aidan Moffa - Marissa Jackson - Cree Seunarine -

Josephine Baker
Choreography: - CJay Philip -
Vocalist: - Raye Jones Avery -
Performers: - Alyss Ayres - Kennedy Davis - Nina Gosa -
- Marissa Jackson - Cree Seunarine - Evelyn Schloer - Zoe Singh -

Black Social Dances of the 1940's
Choreography: - Terlene Terry Todd -
Performers: - Anne Hoban - Marissa Jackson -
- Michael McDermott - Tyler Parke - Amber Rance -

Escapist Impression
Choreography: - Rachel DeLauder -
Vocalist: - Rachel Delauder -
Performers: - Rachel DeLauder - Ikira Peace -
- Amber Rance - Gabby Shubert -

Stormy Weather
Choreography: - Sarah Kim Reiser -
Arrangement: - Ralph Anthony Russell -
Vocalist: - Raye Jones Avery -
Performers: - Rachel Delauder - Chelsea Gbemudu -
- Marissa Jackson - Ikira Peace - Amber Rance -

Ease On Down the Road
Choreography: - Teresa Emmons - Ashley SK Davis -
Arrangement: - Ralph Anthony Russell -
Performers: - Kennedy Davis - Nicodemus Williams-Snow -

Pas de Deux to "Home" from THE WIZ
Choreography: - Teresa Emmons -
Arrangement: - Ralph Anthony Russell -
Vocalist: - Nadjah Nicole -
Performers: - Trinity August - Russell Myrick -

Brand New Day
Choreography: - Ashley SK Davis -
Performers: - Alyss Ayres - Morgan Boulden -
- Kennedy Davis - Kyleigh Dunlap - Nina Gosa -
- Marissa Jackson - Jasmine Norwood - Amber Rance -
- Omari Senior - Cree Seunarine - Katie Work -

The Color of Class
Choreography: - Tumi Nkomo - Dr. Lynnette Young Overby -
Original Composition: - B.B. Rubble -
Vocalist: - Kaamilah Diabaté -
Performers: - Nina Gosa - Marissa Jackson - Ikira Peace -
-Amber Rance - Gabby Shubert - Zoe Singh -

Beat Street to Rize
Choreography: - Tamoya Taylor - Tiana Sanders -
Performers: - Kennedy Davis - Nina Gosa - Anne Hoban -
- Jasmine Norwood - Ikira Peace - Amber Rance -
- Gabby Shubert - Zoe Singh - Niaya Taylor - Isabella Thiele -

Bios

Hassan El-Amin*+ **-** Writer, Director, Narrator

REP: *Yeah Baby* (Jermaine), *Blue Door* (Lewis), *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express* (Samuel Ratchett), *August: Osage County* (Bill Fordham), *Fences* (Troy), *Inherit the Wind* (Reverend Jeremiah Brown), *Minor Fantastical Kingdoms* (Bernard), *Woman in Mind* (Andy), *Lettice and Lovage* (Mr. Bardolph/Surly Man), *Twelfth Night* (Antonio), *A Flea in Her Ear* (Dr. Finache), *From the Author Of* (Dax Davis), *The Mountaintop* (Martin Luther King, Jr.), *Tartuffe* (Officer of the King), *The Elephant Man* (Dr. Carr Gomm), *The Bells* (Jim), *Clybourne Park* (Albert/Kevin), *God of Carnage* (Michael). Hassan has worked extensively as a regional equity actor theaters include: Westport Playhouse, Dallas Theater Center, The Alley, Kennedy Center, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, The Alliance, The Guthrie, The Goodman, Arena Stage, Mark Taper Forum, Huntington, Portland Center Stage, San Diego Repertory, Milwaukee Repertory, Trinity Repertory, Penumbra, Colorado, Oregon, and Utah Shakespeare Festivals and for eight years he was a company member of the Regional Tony award-winning Brierley Resident Acting Company at the Dallas Theater Center.

Regional Credits: *Dream Girls* (Marty), *The Mountaintop* (M.L.K. Jr.), *All the Way* (Roy Wilkins), *Driving Miss Daisy* (Hoke Colburn), *Les Misérables* (Priest), *A Raisin in the Sun* (Walter Lee), *Clybourne Park* (Kevin/Albert), *A Christmas Carol* (Ebenezer Scrooge), *God of Carnage* (Michael), *The Wiz* (The Wizard), *Dream on Monkey Mountain* (Corporal Lestrade), *Death of a Salesman* (Uncle Ben), *Fences* (Troy Maxson), *Seven Guitars* (Floyd Barton), *Radio Golf* (Harmon Wilks), *Jitney* (Booster), *Two Trains Running* (Hambone), *Blues for an Alabama Sky* (Leland), *Top Dog Under Dog* (Lincoln), *Stick Fly* (Dr. Joseph LeVay), *The Whipping Man* (Simon), *A Soldiers Play*, (Sergeant Waters), *The Lion King* (Mufasa/Scar), *The Tempest* (Prospero), *Julius Caesar* (Marc Antony), *Taming of the Shrew* (Petruchio), *King Lear* (Kent), *Henry IV* (Northumberland), *Othello* (Title Role).

Training: M.F.A. Professional Theatre Training Program (PTTP) University of Delaware.

Dr. Lynette Young Overby- Director
Lynnette Young Overby, a graduate of Hampton University (BS), George Washington University (MA) and The University of Maryland, College Park, (Ph.D.) is the University of Delaware (UD) Director of The Community Engagement Initiative and Founding Director of the Partnership for Arts & Culture. She also serves as Artistic Director of the Sharing our Legacy Dance Theatre. Her publications are included in The Journal of Dance Education, The Journal of Mental Imagery and she has co-edited nine volumes of Dance: Current Selected Research. Leadership roles in Dance Education have included service as President of the National Dance Association, President of the Michigan Dance Council, and President of the Delaware Dance Education Organization. Overby received the 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Dance Education Organization and in 2020, served on the Biden/Harris Agency Review Team in the area of Arts and Humanities. Currently she is a member of the National Council of the Humanities and was recently inducted into the Academy of Community Engagement Scholarship.

Joe "B.B. Rubble" Lambert - Composer
Joe Lambert is a Berklee School of Music Graduate and a multi instrumentalist with over 30 years of experience. Prior to attending Berklee, Joe studied at the prestigious National School Of Music in Havana, Cuba where a lifelong love for the Afro Cuban genre was cultivated. You can hear strong examples of this Cuban influence in his piece tonight entitled "Close Encounters". Over the years, Joe has recorded, produced, composed, and toured as a drummer and percussionist with Slick Rick the Ruler, Big Daddy Kane, Texas Hill, Adam Wakefield, Marieme, Shira Elias, Chase Matthew, Craig Wayne Boyd, Rebel Diaz, Ale Medina, Kid Koi, Lifted Crew, and theSHIFT. When not on the road, Joe works from his home studio in Nashville where he composes, records, and produces under his artist name "B.B. Rubble". "Close Encounters" will be available for presale on all streaming platforms February 23rd with an official release date of March 11th 2023

Ralph Anthony Russell - Composer
Ralph Anthony Russell received his doctorate in Music Composition from the University of California, Santa Barbara where he studied

with Emma Lou Diemer and Peter Racine Fricker. His works include Essay No.1 for Orchestra, Quartet for Oboe, Viola, Cello, and Piano, Crossing (Cello), Spiritual Journey (Flute and Piano), and Two Pieces for Solo Flute. Russell's compositions have been performed at the College Music Society and Society of Composers concerts and at the Iowa Composers and University of Alabama music festivals. He composed pieces for Sharing Our Legacy Dance Theater including Women of Consequence, Dave the Potter, and Mary Ann Shade Cary.

Kimberly Schroeder- Interim Director of Dance
Kimberly Schroeder (Choreographer for Old Hollywood Tribute) is an Assistant Professor of Dance in the Theatre Department at the University of Delaware where she has been teaching since 2009. At UD, Kimberly regularly teaches modern dance, jazz and ballet technique classes in all levels of ability as well as Tap Dance, Musical Theatre Styles, Dance in Culture & Society, Ethnic Dance Styles, Methods of Teaching Dance, Careers in Dance and her very popular course, Dance in Film. She is also a master teacher, choreographer, and performer in a variety of venues and has worked in regional and national theatres, including national tours with Missoula Children's Theatre and international performances in Jamaica, Ireland, and Canada. Kimberly is co-founder of the Delaware Dance Education Organization (DDEO) and serves as their Vice President. She is the artistic director of the modern dance company, Ignite: A Company of Dancing Artists. Kimberly has a Bachelor of Arts in Dance & Vocal Music Performance (2003) from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and an MFA in Dance from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (2012).

REP STAFF

Steve Tague- Interim Producing Artistic Director
Steve has performed in theaters from Seattle to Philadelphia, including The Seattle Repertory Theater, ACT Theatre, The Walnut Street Theater, The Arden, and Baltimore's Center Stage. He was a company member of a small theater in California in which he played Sir Evelyn in *Anything Goes* and Benny Southstreet in *Guys and Dolls.* He has performed the title roles in *Titus Andronicus, Hamlet, Tartuffe, King Lear, Richard the Third, Macbeth* and others. He was a

member of the acting company at The Resident Ensemble Players here in Newark for five years where he played in *Noises Off, Little Foxes*, and the world premiere of two Theresa Rebeck plays, *Fever* and *O' Beautiful*. He has directed *Boeing Boeing* and *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* at The Delaware Theater Company. Here at the REP he has directed *Angels in America, Mousetrap, Anything to Declare, The Patsy, Lettuce and Lovage*, and *Dial "M" for Murder*. His last coaching job was at People's Light for a production of *Pride and Prejudice*. Steve has been on the faculty at The University of Delaware since 1992.

Sandy Ernst- Associate Producing Artistic Director
Prior to joining the REP, Sandy was Associate Artistic Director, Casting Director, Stackner Cabaret Director and Director of the Artistic Intern Program at Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, and Resident Director and Production Stage Manager at American Players Theater. She has also directed for Backbone Theatre Ensemble, Nevada Conservatory Theater, Next Act Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks and Beloit College, conducted classes on Shakespeare and Audition Technique at universities throughout the country, served as adjunct faculty with Carthage College for five years, and ventured into film casting for the independent features *Baraboo* and *Waterwalk*.

Eileen Smitheimer- Light, Sound, Projection Design
REP: Sound Designer: *Arsenic and Old Lace, Blue Door* , +Radio Productions of {*Murders in the Rue, A Scandal in Bohemia, Cornish Mystery, King of Clubs, Arsenic and Old Lace, A Christmas Carol, Are You Now Or Have You Ever Been, Dracula* (5 Episodes)} *Lettice and Lovage, God of Carnage, Waiting for Godot, Red, All in the Timing, Macbeth, Faust, The Mouse Trap, Anything To Declare?, The Weir, Noises Off, The Cripple Of Inishmaan, Cat On A Hot Tin Roof, Of Mice And Men, Imaginary Invalid, The Hostage*; **Lighting Design:** , *Blue Door, Fences, Minor Fantastical Kingdoms*(Assistant LD), *The Mountain Top, God of Carnage, Wait Until Dark, The Millionairess, The Servant of Two Masters, The Three penny Opera, The Little Foxes*; **Video:** *Blue Door, The Skin Of Our Teeth*. As a lighting and sound designer for over 30 years, she has designed for everything from classical theatre to musical comedy. **Regional:** Lyric Theater, The Walnut Street Theatre, The Huntington Theatre Company, The

Arden Theatre Company, Theatre by the Sea, DAST, Surflight Theatre, The Russian Ballet, Drexel Institute, Allentown College, The Delaware Theatre Company, Tennessee Williams Fine Arts Center, The Miniature Theatre of Chester, Hope Summer Repertory, Coastal Carolina University, Music Theatre North, City Theatre, First Stage, Southern Methodist University, Landis & Company's world-touring magic show *A Magical Fantasy,* Drill Hall in England, Trump Plaza Theatre, Tropicana Theatre, The Resorts Theatre and *The Stars of The Bolshoi* American Tour. Ms. Smitheimer is an Associate Professor at The University of Delaware where she is the Resident Lighting and Sound Designer/Supervisor for the Resident Ensemble Players. Eileen is a proud Member of USITT, OISTAT, & TSDCA and received the USITT's 2019 Distinguished Achievement Award in sound design and technology.

Matthew G. Marholin- Stage Manager
REP: *Arsenic and Old Lace, Yeah Baby, Blue Door, The Crucible, Starter Pistol, Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express, August: Osage County, Fences, Inherit the Wind, Minor Fantastical Kingdoms, Woman in Mind, The Seafarer, Twelfth Night, A Flea in Her Ear, Dial M for Murder, From the Author Of, The Mountaintop.* This is Matt's sixth season at the REP, where he serves as Production Stage Manager. Prior to joining the company, he spent eight years as the Production Stage Manager at the Virginia Stage Company in Norfolk. He is a graduate of the University Of South Carolina with a degree in Theatre. Matt worked extensively in New York and on National and International Tours. Among his favorite accomplishments are *Blood Brothers* with Petula Clark and David Cassidy, *A Few Good Men* with Michael O'Keefe and Paul Winfield, *Sound of Music* with Marie Osmond, *King and I* with Rudolf Nureyev, *South Pacific* with Robert Goulet, *The Wiz* with Stephanie Mills and Andre DeShields and international tours of *Sophisticated Ladies, Carmen Jones* and *Porgy and Bess*. Additionally, Matt served as the Artistic Director for Cirque du Soleil's *Allegria*. To date, Matt's work has taken him to 31 countries.

Actors' Equity Association (AEA), founded in 1913, represents more than 49,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO, and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. www.actorsequity.org

Resident Ensemble Players Staff

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Intr. Producing Artistic Director: ..... Steve Tague
Assoc. Producing Artistic Director: ..... Sandy Ernst

REP Acting Company

Hassan El-Amin • Lee E. Ernst • Michael Gotch •
Elizabeth Heflin • Mic Matarrese • Stephen Pelinski •
Kathleen Pirkl Tague • Steve Tague •

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Business Administrator ..... Jessica Dougherty
Production Manager ..... Keith Davis
Costume Shop Manager ..... Joanne Fulmer
Draper ..... Heather Coiner
Wardrobe Coordinator ..... Jean Swalm
Specialty Makeup Artist, Intimacy Coordinator,
and Fight Choreographer ..... Lee E. Ernst
Electrics/Audio Supv ..... Eileen Smitheimer
Head Electrician ..... Joel T. Farley
Asst. Head Electrician and
Audio Engineer ..... Ryan P. McGinty
Properties Supervisor ..... Stefanie Hansen
Props Manager ..... Liz Baehr
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Production Stage Mgr. ..... Matthew G. Marholin
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Stefanie Hansen • Lynette Overby •
Leslie Reidel • Sanford Robbins • Kimberly Schroeder •
Eileen Smitheimer • Steve Tague
Professors Emeritus: Joann Browning • William Browning

The following designers, artisans, and assistants contributed to the production of *Suite Blackness: Black Dance in Cinema*

Production Assistants ..... Kyle Montanez, Kate Orndorff
Youth Supervisor ..... Kate Orndorff
First Hand ..... Amanda Spaanstra
Stitchers ..... Nancy Alejandro, Peggy Keil, Liz Baehr, Lauren Parrow
Costume Shop Assistant ..... Merve Kekik
Dresser ..... Sarah Lachenmeyer
Theatre Technician ..... Ross Dennison
Follow Spot Operator ..... Ross Dennison
Graphic Artists ..... Amir Campbell, Sanjay Pelinski
Projections Content Creators ..... Liz Baehr, Amir Campbell, Sierra Watkins
Box Office ..... Vitoria Birolini, Anisha Boucher, K. Scott Cooper, Anthony Salabarria
House Managers ..... Megan Bittinger, Ed Elder
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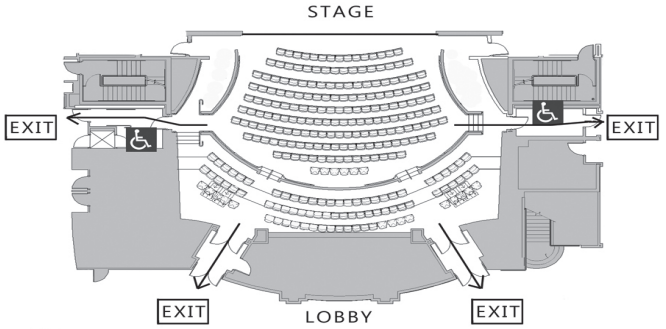

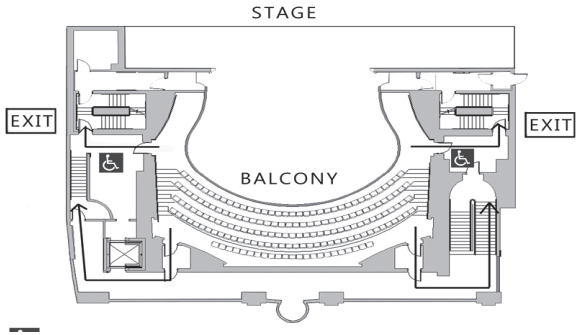

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Directed by Steve Tague

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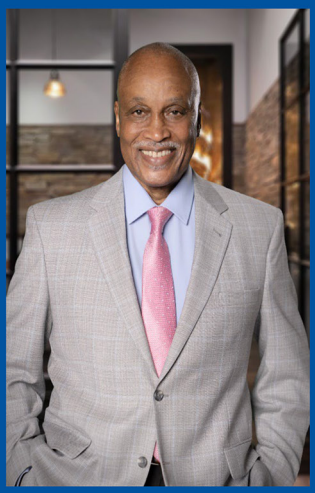
Delaware's Resident Professional Acting Company performing at the University of Delaware

Did you enjoy ***Suite Blackness: Black Dance in Cinema***?
Check out this upcoming event!

Paul R. Jones Annual Distinguished Lecture 2023

African-American Concert Dancers: Activism, Advocacy, and Protest



Lecture AND Q & A WITH
Dr. John O. Perpener III

FEBRUARY 21, 2023

Gore Recital Hall
Roselle Center for the Arts
5:00 PM

John O. Perpener III, dance historian and scholar *will examine* African-American Concert Dancers during the 2023 Paul R. Jones Distinguished Lecture. Perpener authored the book *African-American Concert Dance: The Harlem Renaissance and Beyond* and served as a primary consultant and commentator for the PBS documentary "Free to Dance." He has worked with the Hartford Ballet Company, the D.C. Black Repertory Dance Company and the Maryland Dance Theater *and* served as a primary consultant and commentator for the PBS documentary "Free to Dance."

Registration Required

The Paul R. Jones Distinguished Lecture is sponsored by University of Delaware's College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Arts and Sciences Associate Dean for Arts, the College of Arts and Sciences Associate Dean for Humanities, the Paul R. Jones Initiative, the Interdisciplinary Humanities Research Center and Department of Theatre and Dance Minor.

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The REP is very grateful to the following patrons who have generously given their support over the past twelve months.

The REP is made possible by a generous gift from the Polly Russell Dowling Memorial Fund.

The REP wishes to acknowledge the generosity of the Singleton Estate for the creation of the Rivers and Patricia S. Singleton Fund, which will provide ongoing program support.

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