



Saturday, September 23, 2017, 8pm
Sunday, September 24, 2017, 3pm
Zellerbach Hall

Reggie Wilson/Fist and Heel Performance Group *Moses(es)*

Choreography by Reggie Wilson
Lighting Design by Jonathan Belcher
Costume Design by Naoko Nagata

Performers

Rhett Aleong
Yeman Brown
Paul Hamilton
Lawrence A.W. Harding
Raja Feather Kelly
Clement Mensah
Annie Wang
Reggie Wilson

Susan Manning, *dramaturge*

Music Credits

Louis Armstrong, The Klezmatics, Amahloko, Ngqoko Women's Ensemble, Mazaher,
Aly Us, The Growling Tiger, Bi Kidude, Southern Sons, The Blind Boys of Alabama

Live Vocals

Original music composed by Reggie Wilson
Traditional music arranged by Reggie Wilson
Sound engineered by Dave Synder
Matt Hall, *assistant to engineer*

Phyllis Lamhut, *choreographic advisor*
Jesse Wolfson, *math/fractal symmetry consultant*

*This program will last approximately 70 minutes
and be performed without intermission.*

Cal Performances' 2017–18 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.



About the Name “Fist & Heel”

Denied their drums, enslaved Africans in the Americas reinvented their spiritual dance traditions as a soulful art form that white and black authorities dismissed as merely “fist and heel worshipping.”

Fist & Heel Performance Group

Reggie Wilson/Fist & Heel Performance Group is a Brooklyn-based dance company that investigates the intersections of cultural anthropology and movement practices and believes in the potential of the body as a valid means for knowing. The company’s performance work is a continued manifestation of the rhythm languages of the body provoked by the spiritual and the mundane traditions of Africa and its Diaspora, including the blues, and slave and Gospel idioms. The group has received support from major foundations and corporations and has performed at notable venues in the United States and abroad.

Reggie Wilson (*executive and artistic director, choreographer, performer*) founded Fist & Heel Performance Group in 1989. Wilson draws from the cultures of Africans in the Americas and combines them with post-modern elements and his own personal movement style to create what he often calls “post-African/Neo-HooDoo Modern dances.”

His work has been presented nationally and internationally at venues including the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), New York Live Arts, and Summerstage (NYC), Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival (MA), Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (San Francisco), UCLA Live and RED-CAT (Los Angeles), VSA NM (New Mexico), Myrna Loy (MT), The Flynn (VT), Contemporary Arts Center (LA), Dance Umbrella (TX), Linkfest and Festival e’Nkundleni (Zimbabwe), Dance Factory (South Africa), Danças na Cidade (Portugal), Festival Kaay Fecc (Senegal), and Tanzkongress 2013 (Germany).

Wilson is a graduate of New York University, Tisch School of the Arts (1988, Larry Rhodes, chair). He studied composition and was mentored by Phyllis Lamhut, and performed and toured with Ohad Naharin before forming Fist

and Heel. Wilson has lectured, taught, and conducted workshops and community projects throughout the US, Africa, Europe, and the Caribbean. He has traveled extensively to the Mississippi Delta to research secular and religious aspects of life there; to Trinidad and Tobago to research the Spiritual Baptists and the Shangoists; and to Southern, Central, West, and East Africa to work with dance/performance groups as well as diverse religious communities. He has served as a visiting faculty member at several universities, including Yale, Princeton, and Wesleyan. Wilson is the recipient of the Minnesota Dance Alliance’s McKnight National Fellowship (2000–01). In 2002, he received a New York Dance and Performance (“Bessie”) Award for his *The Tietongued Goat* and the *Lightning Bug Who Tried to Put Her Foot Down* and was named a John Simon Guggenheim Fellow. He has been an artist advisor for the National Dance Project and a board member of Dance Theater Workshop. In recognition of his creative contributions to the field, in 2009 Wilson was named a United States Artists Prudential Fellow; that same year, he received the Herb Alpert Award in Dance. His full-length *The Good Dance-dakar/brooklyn* (2009) received its world premiere at the Walker Art Center and its New York premiere on the Brooklyn Academy of Music’s Next Wave Festival. In 2012 New York Live Arts presented a concert of selected works by Wilson, *theRevisitation*, to critical acclaim; that same year, he was named a Wesleyan University Creative Campus Fellow, received the Joyce Foundation Award for *Moses(es)*, and was named a Doris Duke Performing Artist. In 2013 *Moses(es)* received its New York premiere at BAM’s Next Wave Festival; the work continues to tour.

Jonathan Belcher (*lighting design and technical director*) was born in Rochester, NY, and now lives in Brooklyn. He is a lighting director, set designer, and studio manager for City University of New York Television. Previously, Belcher was resident lighting designer at the Kitchen, the Harkness Dance Festival, the University of Michigan Musical Society, SUNY Purchase

Conservatory of Dance, Dance Theater Workshop, and The Yard. Belcher's career has been distinguished with a Bessie Award-winning performance of Luciana Achugar's *Exhausting Love* at Danspace Project; inclusion as one of three featured lighting designers in a *New York Times* article by Roslyn Sulcas entitled "Lighting Designers Illuminate Ballet"; and designing projects with Amanda Loulaki, Bill Young, Blk/Market Membership, Dean Moss, Maria Hassabi, Jill Sigman, Jeremy Wade, Sara Michelson, and Reggie Wilson. Belcher's guiding principal in lighting design is, "look at things differently, if for no other reason than it's a lot more fun that way."

Naoko Nagata (*costume design*), with no formal training, began her career with costume designs for Jeanine Durning in 1998. Since then, she has been creating without pause for a diverse group of choreographers and dancers. She has collaborated with Kyle Abraham for Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, Amanda Loulaki, Carrie Ahern, Bebe Miller, David Dorfman Dance, David Neumann, Doug Elkins, Ellis Wood, Gina Gibney, Liz Lerman, Nina Winthrop, Nora Chipumire, Reggie Wilson, Tiffany Mills, Urban Bush Women, Zvi Gotheiner, and many others. Working closely with her collaborators, Nagata helps bring to life what she calls "the creation of a shared dream." Her work has been seen on both international and national main stages including the Kennedy Center, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography, PACT Zollverein in Essen, Dance Theater Workshop, The Joyce Theater, and New York City Center.

Susan Manning (*project dramaturge*) is an internationally recognized historian of modern dance. A professor of English, theater, and performance studies at Northwestern, she has authored *Ecstasy and the Demon: the Dances of Mary Wigman* and *Modern Dance, Negro Dance: Race in Motion*; coedited *New German Dance Studies*; and curated *Danses noires/blanche Amérique* at the Centre national de la danse in Paris. She currently serves as principal investigator for the Mellon-funded initiative

"Dance Studies in/and the Humanities." Manning had never worked as a dramaturge until Reggie Wilson invited her to work on *Moses(es)*, and she has greatly enjoyed collaborating on the creative research and documentation for the project. In 2014 she was a fellow at the International Research Center in Berlin, where she worked on a series of essays on Reggie Wilson and *Moses(es)* for publication in *TDR: A Journal of Performance Studies*.

Performers

Rhetta Aleong is from Trinidad and Tobago, where her roots are in community theater, local performance art, and a Catholic all-girls high school. Aleong received her journalism degree from the School of Visual Arts, where she developed a deeper relationship with "the nine Muses." She began working with Reggie Wilson in 1991 and is a proud board member of Fist and Heel Performance Group. Aleong has also worked with Pat Akien, Michael Steele, Helen Camps, Noble Douglas (Trinidad), Anita Gonzalez, Hattie Gossett, Tiyé Giraud, Cynthia Oliver, and Lawrence Goldhuber. Respect to those who go before, after, above, and below.

Yeman Brown was born and raised in Tallahassee, FL. His passion for performing began as a child, when he performed at many local theaters and in his church, Metropolitan Cathedral of Truth. After studying musical theater in middle and high school, Brown went on to receive his BFA from the Florida State University School of Dance. While there, he performed works choreographed by Gerri Houlihan, Jawole Zollar, Dan Wagoner, and Alex Ketley. Brown also served as a soloist for the Tallahassee Ballet Company under the direction of Rick McCullough. In 2011 he studied at the Ailey School as a summer fellowship scholar, performing works by Stephanie Batten Bland and Judine Somerville. In 2012 Brown ventured to the American Dance Festival, where he performed works choreographed by Gerri Houlihan, Mark Dendy, and Reggie Wilson. Soon after, he was invited to join



Aitor Mendilbar

Reggie Wilson

Reggie Wilson/Fist and Heel Performance Group while the company was in residency at the Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography in Tallahassee. As a residential apprentice, Brown participated in the early developmental stages of *Moses(es)*. In 2013 he moved to Brooklyn, NY, and he considers himself blessed to have the opportunity to work with such inspirational artists. Brown hopes that every human being in the entire world knows that they are fearfully and wonderfully made, and anything can happen if they dare to believe.

Paul Hamilton started his dance training in Jamaica at the Jamaica School of Dance. Upon arriving in the United States, he continued his training at SUNY Purchase, where he studied with Kevin Wynn and Neil Greenberg. Hamilton also studied at the Alvin Ailey School, the Martha Graham School, and Dance Theatre of Harlem. He has performed with Elizabeth Streb, the Martha Graham Dance Ensemble, the Barnspace Dance Company, Mauri Cramer Dancers, and Ballet Arts Theatre; apprenticed with Lines Contemporary

Ballet with Alonso King; and worked with Keely Garfield. This is his fourteenth year with the Fist and Heel Performance Group, with whom he has performed, taught, and toured, nationally and internationally. Hamilton is part of the original cast that performed the premiere of *Moses(es)* at BAM's Next Wave Festival. He would like to thank his family and friends for their unending love and support.

Lawrence A.W. Harding was born in Sierra Leone, studied in the UK, and now practices physical therapy in New York. He has been a member of Fist and Heel since 1993 and continues to delight in discovering himself through Reggie Wilson's work. He has been an activist with Creative Gender Workshop, a group that explores, documents, and presents through performance the lives of LGBT Africans living in New York, and was a founding member of Uhuru-Wazobia, a network organization based in the city. Currently he is promoting Spinal Mobility Project, a protocol he has developed for people with spinal cord injuries. Harding continues to give thanks to his parents and all the dead ones.

Raja Feather Kelly (*company manager*) is a performer/choreographer living and working in New York City. He has been a company member of David Dorfman Dance, zoe | juniper, Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion, Christopher Williams Dance, and Colleen Thomas Dance, among others. Currently Kelly creates collaborative projects with Tzveta Kassabova and B.S. Movement. An English and dance major (Connecticut College) with a deep interest in both verbal and nonverbal forms of expression, Kelly founded his dance-theater company the feath3r theory after writing a novel of the same name, and his continuing Warhol-inspired project has garnered him critical acclaim in the US and abroad. Kelly was a 2014 LMCC Workspace Recipient, and a commissioned artist-in-residence at Dixon Place Dance, New York City.

Clement Mensah was born and raised in Ghana, West Africa, and moved to the Netherlands at the age of 11. After graduating from CIOS (sports academy), he attended Amsterdam School of the Arts, graduating in 2008. Mensah received a fellowship to study at the Alvin Ailey School in 2007 and became a member of the Student Performing Group at the Alvin Ailey School while also apprenticing with Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company in 2008. He has also been part of the Francesca Harper Project, and danced with Elisa Monte Dance Company (2008–10), performing nationally and internationally. Mensah joined the Matthew Westerby Company in 2009 and led the hugely successful Project Poetry Live in partnership with Litchfield Performing Arts in Connecticut. He has taught workshops and master classes at institutions and schools such as Dance Wave in Brooklyn, Alvin Ailey School, the Theater School in Amsterdam, Codart in Rotterdam, Dancers' Workshop (WY), and Bennington College (VT), as well as teaching and assisting teachers at the Center for Advance Training (CAT) at Trinity Laban School of Contemporary Music and Dance in London. After receiving his master's degree in dance performance at Trinity Laban, Mensah joined

Reggie Wilson/Fist and Heel Performance Group in the fall of 2011. A former member of Ronald K. Brown/Evidence, A Dance Company, Mensah has also performed with the José Limón Dance Company as a guest artist. He was happy to join Battery Dance Company at the beginning of 2013.

Annie Wang trained at the Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance and the Boitsov School of Classical Ballet. She has worked with Carrie Ellmore-Tallitsch, Nicole Stanton, Pia Vinson, Dance Elixir, MADArt Creative, and Boitsov Classical Ballet Company. Her Hyper-space Dance choreography project has been presented at the 92nd Street Y, the Chocolate Factory Theater, Alvin Ailey Studios, WestFest, Showroom Gowanus Gallery, and Hot Wood Arts Gallery. Wang holds a degree in computer engineering and is searching for non-trivial ways of incorporating technology into dance.

Board of Directors

Ann Marie Joseph (*president*), Rhett Aleong, Carol Bryce-Buchanan, Joshua Sirefman, and Reggie Wilson

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Reggie Wilson/Fist & Heel Performance Group's production of *Moses(es)* is co-commissioned by The Hatchery Project, which is a collaboration of the Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography, RED Arts Philadelphia, Vermont Performance Lab, and the Chocolate Factory Theater; the Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago and a 2012 Joyce Award; BAM for the 2013 Next Wave Festival; LMCC; and by Wesleyan University's Center for the Arts with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

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GOD; Ancestors; Ira Sutton Ewing; Lois J. Wilson, Antie C; Ant Jean, Uncle Rev., Uncle Von, Ant Wilma, Aba, Abba, David Wilson, Jr., Phyllis Lamhut, Martha Sherman, Sam Miller, Bonnie Brooks, Sally Sommer, Mikki Shepard, the cities of Bulawayo and Arima, Ginny Pickett and Anna Glass, Janet Lily, Jennifer Calienes, Sara Coffey, Craig Peterson, Emily Coates and

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Berkeley RADICAL

JOINING GENERATIONS

The 2017/18 Berkeley RADICAL *Joining Generations* programming strand explores the work of four generations of African-American choreographers who have expanded the terrain of contemporary dance, each speaking profoundly, deliberately, and uniquely to issues of identity. *Joining Generations* continues later this season (see pages 7–8) with performances by Camille A. Brown & Dancers in *BLACK GIRL: Linguistic Play* (Dec 8–10); Donald Byrd's Spectrum Dance Theater in *A Rap on Race* (Feb 9–10); and the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (Apr 10–15). For complete details of all performances and related activities, please visit calperformances.org.