

CAMILLE A. BROWN & DANCERS

Present

Mr. TOL E. RAnCE

A Reference and Resource Guide



Choreography by: Camille A. Brown

Pianist and Composer: [Scott Patterson](#)

Featuring

 [Timothy Edwards](#)

 [Juel D. Lane](#)

 [Mayte Natalio](#)

 [Waldean Nelson](#)

 [Mora-Amina Parker](#)

 [Willie "Tre" Smith III](#)

 [Marlena Wolfe](#)

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TO LEARN MORE!



CAMILLE A. BROWN

The Artistic Director of **Camille A. Brown & Dancers** is a prolific choreographer who has achieved multiple accolades and awards for her daring works. Ms. Brown is the 2013 recipient of the International Association of Blacks in Dance Founders Award, and winner of the prestigious Princess Grace Award (Choreography), the Mariam McGlone Emerging Choreographer Award (Wesleyan University), and the City College of New York Women & Culture Award.

Informed by her music background as a clarinetist, she creates choreography that utilizes musical composition as storytelling – investigating the silent space within the measure, and filling it with mesmerizing movement. Camille A. Brown’s choreography and dynamic performances have led her to receive a Bessie nomination for Best Performance in her work, *The Evolution of a Secured Feminine*, and a Best Choreography nomination from the Black Theater Arts Alliance for her debut work set on the Ailey company, *The Groove To Nobody’s Business*, and was among the first cohort of fellows for Ailey’s New Directions Choreography Lab.

Dance companies that have commissioned her work are: Philadanco, Urban Bush Women, Complexions, Ailey II, Ballet Memphis, and Hubbard Street II, to list a few. Camille and her dancers have performed at major dance venues around the country including The Joyce Theater, Jacob’s Pillow, and Bates Dance Festival. Her works have been performed at The Kennedy Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York City Center and the Apollo Theater. In 2008 she was the choreographer for Saverio Patatelli’s line, *Wholegarment 3D*, for New York Fashion Week.

A graduate of the LaGuardia High School of the Performing Arts, Ms. Brown earned a B.F.A. from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. From 2001-2007 she was a member of Ronald K. Brown’s dance company Evidence, and was a guest artist for Rennie Harris’ Puremovement, and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. A career highlight for this New Yorker from Jamaica, Queens, was being named choreographer for the Broadway revival of *A Streetcar Named Desire* in 2012, along with the Off-Broadway musical production, *Soul Doctor*. Ms. Brown is currently choreographing William Shakespeare’s, *The Winter’s Tale*, for the McCarter Theater in Princeton, NJ, and a scheduled run in Washington, D.C. at the Shakespeare Theater in the spring of 2013. A new work, *Fortress of Solitude*, is slated to debut at the Public Theater in 2014.



COMPANY BIO

Known for high theatricality, gutsy moves and virtuosic musicality, **Camille A. Brown & Dancers** soar through history like a whirlwind. The company’s work explores typical, real-life situations ranging from literal relationships to more complex themes with an eye on the past and present. Making a personal claim on history, through the lens of a modern female perspective, Camille A. Brown leads her dancers through dazzling excavations of ancestral stories, both timeless and traditional, as well as immediate contemporary issues. The work is strongly character based, expressing whatever the topic is by building from little moments, modeling a cinematic aesthetic. Theater, poetry, visual arts and music of all genres merge to inject each performance with energy and urgency.

SCOTT PATTERSON

Scott Patterson - The Washington, D.C. resident is a pianist, composer and singer-songwriter known for bringing music to diverse audiences and collaborating with other artists nationally and internationally. He is also the co-owner of Afro House Productions, LLC.

Camille A. Brown, “tell[s] painful stories and recall difficult and even tragic times in history, not just to instruct but to celebrate, and the emergence of this extraordinarily talented young choreographer at this difficult time is cause for celebration indeed.”

- The Winsted Journal



Camille A. Brown, “is a storyteller with many tales to tell.” - The Boston Globe

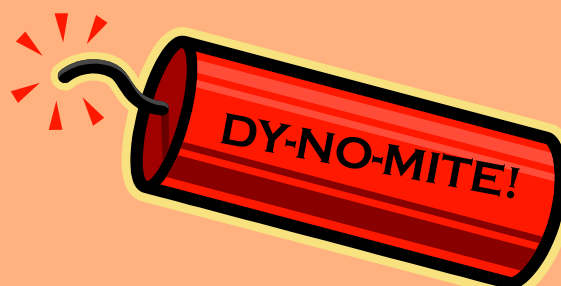
MOVING BEYOND THE STEPS

Pre/Post performance preparation and activities

As implied in the title, Mr. TOL E. RANcE takes an in-depth look into the shaping of racial stereotypes of American blacks in past and recent times. To enrich the understanding of this work, Camille A. Brown & Dancers recommend the following activities and explorations in order to dig deeper into the themes presented.

WARNING!

A portion of Mr. TOL E. RANcE contains profanity, mature language and material not suitable for children under 14.



What you talkin' 'bout Willis?

Prior to the performance, viewers should be familiar with the definitions of the words listed below:

- 👉 Bias
- 👉 Blackface
- 👉 Blackface minstrelsy
- 👉 Buffoon/ery
- 👉 Coon/ cooning
- 👉 Derogatory
- 👉 Mammy
- 👉 Parody
- 👉 Ragtime
- 👉 Satire
- 👉 Stereotype



Click here to learn more about this song

Activity idea 1:

Define and discuss these words, their historical significance and examples that are found throughout American culture.

Activity idea 2: Dance activity: refer to the archetypes in the next column. Create a pose based on that type, then, experiment with movement. How would a Video Vixen walk? A butler creep? A mammy slide? Have them interact in different scenarios.

Activity idea 3:

C.A.B. & D. mix theatricality and multiple dance genres to enhance Mr. TOL E. RANcE. Using these same devices, how would you depict/dance a modern-day issue?

Artistic expression can be the catalyst that ignites conversation and self-reflection, especially regarding controversial material. Ideas to spark pre and post performance conversations are:

- The evolution of the archetypes depicted in the dance:

Mammy

Bad-ass Negro (thug)

Video Vixen (Jezebel)

Steppin' Fetchit (butler)

- The history behind Aunt Jemima's pancake mix, Uncle Ben's rice, and Uncle Tom of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*; and their current day versions.
- What do you consider examples of modern-day minstrelsy? Why?
- White gloves are a deliberate costume choice in this dance. Why?
- What do you think "Change the Joke, Slip the Yoke," means in the context of this dance?
- Describe the significance of the final two solos. What are the dancers movements portraying physically? Emotionally? How does it differ from the dancing in the beginning of the piece?

POST PERFORMANCE Q & A

Now is your chance to question and dialogue with Camille and the dancers about Mr. TOL E. RANcE. Did something leave you wondering? Thinking? Sad? Impressed? Uncomfortable? Let's talk about it.

Teachers: The activities on page 3 and the resources listed below serve as entry points for further investigations on how performing artists and writers use their disciplines to articulate and advance political and topical subject matter. Additionally, the use of profanity plays a pivotal role in Mr. TOL E. RANcE, discussing what purpose it serves in this work would be beneficial before and after viewing.

Resources

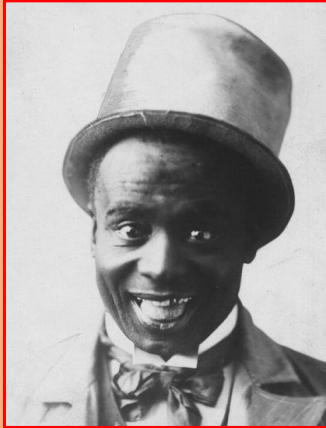
Internet and  Video clips	Movies and Television
<p style="text-align: center;">www.camilleabrown.org www.youtube.com</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beauty and the Beat • Dave Chappelle, Inside the Actor’s Studio • The Colored Museum • Ethnic Notions—Marlon Riggs • Nina Simone —Revolution & Strange Fruit <p>Google Images — <i>minstrel, black minstrel shows</i></p> <p>Bing Images — <i>little black sambo, blackface</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bamboozled — Spike Lee, Director • The Birth of a Nation — D.W. Griffith, Director • That’s Black Entertainment — 1990 documentary • The Jazz Singer — Alan Crosland, Director • Why We Laugh — 2009 documentary • Hollywood Shuffle—Robert Townsend, Director • In Living Color • Chappelle’s Show
Books	Read an excerpt from Mel Watkins’ book, On the Real Side
<p>The Black Book, <i>Middleton Harris, author</i></p> <p>Brainwashed, <i>Tom Burrell, author</i></p> <p>Darkest America, <i>Yuval Taylor & Jake Austen, authors</i></p> <p>On the Real Side —<i>Mel Watkins, author</i></p> <p>Toms, Coons, Mulattoes & Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Film, <i>Donald Bogle, Author</i></p> <p><u>Essays from Ralph Ellison’s Shadow and Act</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shadow and the Act <p>Change the Joke and Slip the Yoke The Minstrel Show — <i>Donald Byrd, choreographer</i></p> <p>The Colored Museum — <i>George C. Wolfe, dramatist</i></p> <p>The Last Supper at Uncle Tom’s Cabin —<i>Bill T. Jones, choreographer</i></p> <p>+++++</p> <p>Excerpt From: Watkins, Mel. “On the Real Side.” Lawrence Hill Books, 1994. iBooks. This material may be protected by copyright. Check out this book on the iBooks Store: https://itunes.apple.com/WebObjects/MZStore.woa/wa/viewBook?id=416250275</p>	<p><i>“The distinctive character of authentic African-American humor—sometimes ironic, evasive, and oblique, sometimes playful and purely entertaining, and sometimes aggressively militant—was well established by the early nineteenth century. Although this humor was most often conspicuously quiescent, confined to isolated black gatherings and concealed by an outer face of passivity and compliance, occasionally it erupted in pointed satire, directing barbs at the pretentiousness of whites or other blacks, or at the injustices and dehumanization of bondage. But even as this private humor developed among blacks, mainstream America was about to introduce a form of entertainment that would codify the public image of blacks as the prototypical Fool or Sambo.” “Minstrelsy had established a fraudulent image of Negro behavior (in both the serious and the comic vein) to which all African-Americans were forced to respond. And early black entertainers—perhaps even more than blacks in less visible occupations—bore the burden of working within the strict confines of that distorted standard. Indeed, they were expected not only to corroborate white minstrels’ illusionary specter but, because they were authentic examples of the type, to heighten it. Those expectations assured that the initial efforts of the pioneer black performers who ventured into the world of commercial entertainment would bear little resemblance to the authentic behavior of blacks. If slavery and the slave/master relationship constrained public black humor—forcing ironic misdirection and obliqueness—then minstrelsy very nearly stifled its genuine expression completely. Early professional black entertainers, most of whom debuted as minstrels after white performers deserted the form for more lucrative vaudeville careers, worked within a virtual straitjacket of distortion.”</i></p>

Did you know...

the author of, *All Coons Look Alike To Me*, was an African-American man? Read more below.

Ernest Reuben Crowder (1865—May 20, 1909)

The Kentucky native born in the Shake Rag district of Bowling Green was the first African-American entertainer to produce and star in a Broadway show (*The Oyster Man* in 1907) and helped create the musical genre of ragtime.



As a teenager, he traveled with a minstrel troupe called the Georgia Graduate, where he performed as a dancer, musician, and comedian. During this time he changed his name to Hogan because "Irish performers were in vogue." Hogan likely performed in blackface during this time, as he sometimes did later in his career.

In 1895 Hogan published several popular songs in a new musical genre, which he named ragtime. These hit songs included "La Pas Ma La" and "All Coons Look Alike to Me". The success of this last song created many derogatory imitations, known as "coon songs" because of their use of racist and stereotypical images of blacks.

It was also during this time that Hogan created a comedy dance called the "Pas Ma La", which consisted of a walk forward with three steps back.

Hogan followed this song with the massive hit "All Coons Look Alike to Me". Hogan was evidently not the originator of the song's lyrics, having appropriated them after hearing a pianist in a Chicago salon playing a song titled "All Pimps Look Alike to Me". Hogan merely changed the words slightly, substituting the word "coon" for "pimp" and added a cakewalk syncopation to the music, which he had heard being played in back rooms and cafes. The song eventually sold over a million copies.

Hogan's use of the racial slur "coon" in the song infuriated many African Americans. Some Black performers made a point of removing the word "coon" from the song whenever they sang it. In addition, the success of this song created many imitations, which became known as "coon songs" because of their use of extremely racist and stereotypical images of blacks. In Hogan's later years he evidently felt shame and a sense of "race betrayal" for the song.

The controversy over the song has, to some degree, caused Hogan to be overlooked as one of the originators of ragtime, which has been called the first truly American musical genre. Hogan's songs were among the first published ragtime songs and the first to use the term "rag" in their sheet music copy. While Hogan made no claims to having exclusively created ragtime, fellow Black musician Tom Fletcher said Hogan was the "first to put on paper the kind of rhythm that was being played by non-reading musicians." When the ragtime championship was held as part of the 1900 World Competition in New York, semifinalists played Hogan's "All Coons Look Alike to Me" to prove their skill.

While Hogan was considered one of the most talented performers and comedians of his day, his contribution to the racist "coon song" craze haunted him. Before his death, he stated that he "regretted" using the racial slur in his song.

As Hogan said shortly before he died:

"(That) song caused a lot of trouble in and out of show business, but it was also good for show business because at the time money was short in all walks of life. With the publication of that song, a new musical rhythm was given to the people. Its popularity grew and it sold like wildfire... That one song opened the way for a lot of colored and white songwriters. Finding the rhythm so great, they stuck to it ... and now you get hit songs without the word 'coon.' Ragtime was the rhythm played in backrooms and cafes and such places. The ragtime players were the boys who played just by ear their own creations of music which would have been lost to the world if I had not put it on paper."

Source: Wikipedia

TIMOTHY EDWARDS

(Dancer, Choreographer and Teacher) is a Hawaii native who received his B.A. in Dance from Hunter College. He currently works with Camille A. Brown and Dancers, David Dorfman Dance Company, Christal Brown as well as other NYC based companies and choreographers. Timothy has worked and performed with Nicole Wolcott, Eva Dean Dance Company, Wendell Cooper, David Capps/ dances, Gerald Otte and Compay, Monica Bill Barnes, Robin Dunn's Middleground Dance Theater and The IndoRican Dance Company. Timothy has had the honor of teaching nationally and internationally. He was chosen to travel abroad and become a Cultural Envoy where he performed and taught in the styles of Hip Hop, Breaking and other street forms. He now teaches for the Joffrey Ballet, Ballet Hispanico and the Brooklyn Ballet.



Photo credit: Rowena M. Husbands





JUEL D. LANE

Photo credit: Shocphoto



JUEL D. LANE

(Assistant to Brown) is originally from Atlanta, GA and received his BFA from The University of North Carolina School of the Arts. He has toured and performed nationally and internationally with such distinguished choreographers and companies as Ronald K. Brown/ Evidence, A Dance Company (2003-2008), Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company (2002-2003), Soulowork's Andrea E. Woods and Dancers (2000-2002). Currently Juel dances with Helen Simoneau Danse, and Camille A. Brown & Dancers. In 2012, Lane choreographed *Moments of Dis* on Atlanta Ballet. This made Lane the first independent Atlanta-based choreographer ever to be commissioned by Atlanta Ballet. Lane recently choreographed *REBIRTH*, the musical in Atlanta, GA starring Lynn Whitfield and was named one of Dance Magazine 2013 "25 to Watch".



Photo credit: Nathalie Delephine

MAYTE NATALIO

was born and raised in Queens, NY. She began dancing at the age of 3 at several neighborhood dance schools. She then attended the LaGuardia High School for the Performing Arts as well as Ballet Hispanico and Dance Theater of Harlem. Mayte received her BFA from SUNY Purchase's Conservatory of Dance. Mayte has toured internationally with the Parsons Dance Company, was a member Ogunquit Playhouse's Production of Elton John's Aida, performed with Roger C. Jeffrey's Subtle Changes Inc., Nathan Trice's Rituals and Kyle Abraham/A.I.M. She toured with the French pop star, Mylene Farmer and has also performed with Kanye West. She has danced the works of choreographers, Jose Limon, Kevin Wynn, Megan Williams, Michael Blake, Margie Gillis and Shawn Hounsell. Mayte first worked with Camille A. Brown around 2004 and has been a member of CAB&D since 2010.



Photo credit Deborah Boardman

MORA-AMINA PARKER

is a native of San Francisco, California, and is a graduate from San Francisco School of the Arts. She has had the fortune of performing with various dance companies, such as Savage Jazz Dance Company, Robert Moses' Kin, Danco' 2, Dallas Black Dance Theater, Jeanne Ruddy Dance, and Philadanco. During her career she has had the express pleasure of working with Alonzo King, Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, Ronald K. Brown, Christopher L. Huggins, Fred Benjamin, and Carmen de Lavallade. Along with her passion for dance, Mora recently became a certified classical Pilates instructor. This is her third year working with Camille A. Brown & Dancers.

Photo credit: Chad Quinn



WALDEAN NELSON

is a Brooklyn native who began his dance training at the age of 13 under the direction of Ms. Carol Lonnie. From there he continued his training at The Dance Theatre of Harlem, Jacob's Pillow - Contemporary Traditions Program, Philadanco, The Ailey School, Bryn Mawr College and Springboard Danse Montreal. In 2009, Waldean graduated from Haverford College with a major in Growth and Structure of Cities and a minor in Dance. He has performed works by Robert Battle, Elisa Monte, Francine E. Ott, Ohad Naharin, Danielle Agami, and Judith Jamison. He has had the privilege to work with Ronald K. Brown's Evidence, A Dance Company and Jose Navas/Compagnie Flak. He joined Camille A. Brown and Dancers in 2011.



Photo credit: Jan Smith

WILLIE “TRE” SMITH III

is a native of Charlotte, NC and began his training at the age of ten at Weir Dancing, Inc. and numerous other intensives such as Debbie Allen Dance Academy, Philadanco, and International Ballet Clas-sique. After graduating with honors from Northwest School of the Arts he continued his education and training at The University of the Arts. Willie graduated in 2009 with a BFA in Ballet Performance. Willie was a member of Eleone Dance Theatre, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, and is currently a member of Camille A. Brown & Dancers. Willie has performed with Penn-sylvania Ballet, Ballet Noir, Waheed Works, Ballet Folkloric Di’Haiti, Collage Dance collective, and on Americas Got Talent.



Photo credit: Tom Caravaglia

MARLENA WOLFE

graduated summa cum laude from Marymount Manhattan College with a B.F.A. in Dance. She has danced the works of Jacquelyn Buglisi, Tammy Colucci, Ann Marie D'Angelo, Mimi Garrard, Martha Graham, Michael Lee Scott, Twyla Tharp, Doug Varone, and Robert Battle. She was a member of Battleworks Dance Company and has performed and staged Battle's works across the States and abroad. She has taught and set work at Juilliard, MMC, NYU, Purchase, Montclair, Princeton, Peridance Capezio Center's Certificate Program, Earl Mosley Institute for the Arts, Young Dancemakers Company, ABT Summer Intensives, Joffrey Summer Intensives and Trainee Divisions, Ailey Pre-Professional Program, Dance Alloy, River North Dance Chicago, and Introdans. Along with being an adjunct faculty member at Montclair State University for the Fall 2013, Marlena serves as Coordinator of the Certificate Program, Teen Summer Intensive, and BLUEPRINT Summer Intensive and is on Faculty with the Open School, Certificate Program, and the children's program, The School at Peridance, at Peridance Capezio Center. Marlena has had the honor of being a member of Camille A. Brown & Dancers since February 2012.

Camille A. Brown
& DANCERS



Photo credit: Francesco Sapienza

SCOTT PATTERSON is a pianist and composer of incomparable talent. In 1997 he won the Ibla Ragusa, Sicily Piano Competition and the St. Petersburg, Russia Piano Competition in 2002. He toured with the Boys Choir of Har-lem under the direction of Dr. Walter Turnbull, has worked with Broadway actress Saycon Sengbloh and composed music for jazz and gospel artists. He studied under Richard Fields at the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music and Phillip Kawin at the Manhattan School of Music (MSM). He attended Tri-Cities High School's Visual and Performing Arts Magnet Program and was part of The Freddie Hendricks Youth Ensemble of Atlanta. As a child he took piano lessons from David E. Morrow, Director of the Morehouse Glee Club. Currently Patterson is touring with Camille A. Brown & Dancers and workshopping a musical with playwright Will Power, composer Justin Ellington and Tony Award winning musician Daryl Waters.