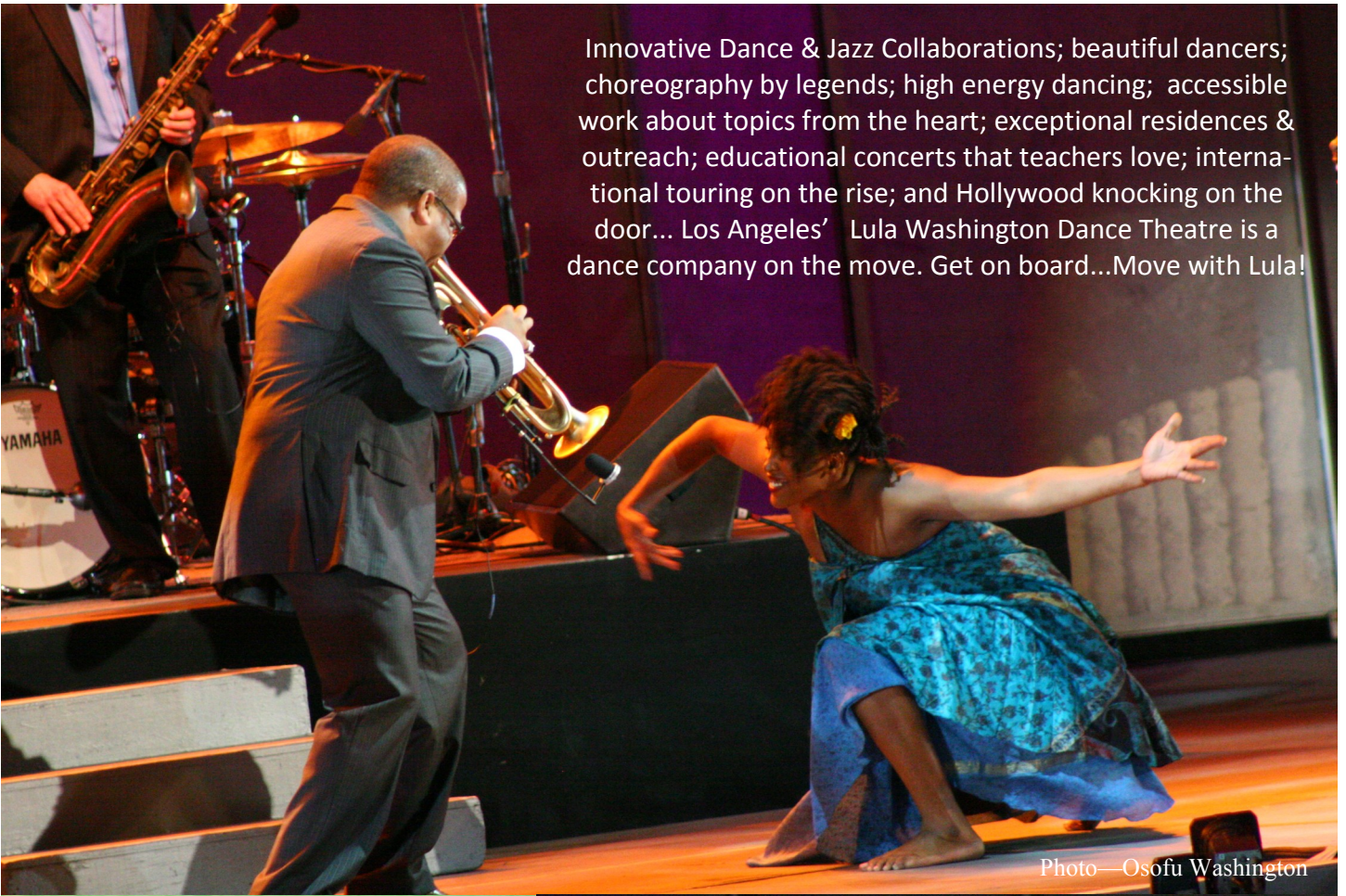


Lula Washington Dance Theatre

Innovative Dance & Jazz Collaborations; beautiful dancers; choreography by legends; high energy dancing; accessible work about topics from the heart; exceptional residences & outreach; educational concerts that teachers love; international touring on the rise; and Hollywood knocking on the door... Los Angeles' Lula Washington Dance Theatre is a dance company on the move. Get on board...Move with Lula!



Photo—Osofu Washington



Photo: Ian Foxx



Photo—Osofu Washington

Lula Washington Dance Theatre

ABOUT THE COMPANY

The Lula Washington Dance Theatre (LWDT) has built an international reputation for exceptional dance concerts coupled with highly effective educational residencies and outreach that brings students and communities together around Lula's approach to dance.

Lula's choreography mixes athleticism, performance art, acting, jazz, ballet and street dance styles to reflect the African-American experience in innovative ways. Lula makes dances about life. Her work explores social issues and calls for global humanism.

The Dance Company was founded in 1980, and is now in its third decade. Over the years, the Company has toured to more than 100 cities in America, Russia, China, Brazil, Mexico, and Germany. LWDT has left ecstatic audiences in each city where it toured.

Lula's focus is on doing work that is meaningful to her own insights on life. Her works include "We Wore The Mask"; "The Little Rock Nine" "The Movement"; "Ode To The Sixties"; "Global Village" "Urban Man"; "Women In The Streets"; "Om"; and "For Those Who Live And Die For Us."

Critics have this to say about Lula's work:

"Ms. Washington is an original in part because of the concern for social issues that informs some of her dances and the gentle but persistent way she addresses those issues."

— Jennifer Dunning, New York Times

"...her dancers show us pain, fear, anger, joy, reliance and the defiance of black American lives...It's been a long time since I literally got shivers at the theater."—Albany, Metroland

"One of the most culturally and politically conscious dance companies in California... modern dance at its best...Exciting technique and challenging repertoire that provide food for the heart and mind." —Honolulu Weekly



Photo: Ian Foxx

Lula's work attracted the attention of the acclaimed film director James Cameron, who hired Lula to choreograph his hit movie "AVATAR". She asked that he hire her entire dance company for the project and he did. The dancers worked on Avatar for more than a year. Lula also choreographed "The Little Mermaid" movie."

LWDT also performs carefully selected choreography by African-American icons. This includes: "Reign" by Rennie Harris; "Songs of the Disinherited" by Donald McKayle; "Love Is..." by Christopher Huggins; "Beautiful Venus and Serena" by Tamica Washington-Miller; and "Communion" by Donald Byrd.

Along with great dancing, this company does fantastic outreach, master dance classes, school shows and residencies. Lula's "Reflections In Black" educational concert is a favorite with teachers. It covers African-American history in a 55 minute. Lula won the National Education Association's Carter G. Woodson Civil Rights Award for this work.

Lula frequently involves live music in her concerts. She has collaborated with Terrence Blanchard; McCoy Tyner; the Pasadena Civic Orchestra and she regularly performs with the Company percussionist Marcus L. Miller and his Freedom Jazz Movement band.

The company is composed of well-trained athletic dancers, many of whom grew up in Lula Washington's dance school. They embrace her style and bring magic to every concert.

A community icon in Los Angeles, Lula Washington has won more than three dozen awards and accolades for her work, including the Minerva Award, which was bestowed by Maria Shriver with Oprah Winfrey present for the event.

Lula Washington Dance Theatre

LULA WASHINGTON—BIO

Lula Washington is the founder and Artistic Director of the Lula Washington Dance Theatre, a 10-member touring dance ensemble from Los Angeles, California.

Lula grew up in the Nickerson Gardens Housing Projects in Watts, CA and did not begin her dance career until she was a 22-year-old newlywed mother with a small child. When she tried to change careers from nursing to dance, she applied to UCLA's Dance Department and was denied. They felt she was too old at 22 to start dance training, especially with a newborn. But Lula persisted.

Always a fighter, Lula appealed her rejection and gave her word that she would work hard to succeed. She was admitted. While a student at UCLA, Lula danced with local dance companies and in television and film, including the Academy Awards telecast; "Cindy", the black Cinderella story; Stg. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band and "Funny Lady" with Barbara Streisand.

As a student Lula's leadership skills emerged. She produced concerts where African-American students showed works that used their own very different creative values. She brought famed African-American choreographers to teach workshops and she organized tours to inner city high schools to encourage students to pursue degrees in dance.

Lula graduated UCLA with a Masters degree in dance and became one of the school's most successful dance department graduates. In 1980, Lula founded her own dance company — one of a few that has become successful in Los Angeles. She supplements her own choreography with work by legends of African-American dance, as well as new emerging choreographic artists.

Photo: Tom Caravaglia



She based her dance company in the inner city and, aided by her husband, Erwin, purchased a dance studio building in Los Angeles's inner city to house the company. She also founded a dance school that offers high quality training for inner-city youth. The school's motto is, "I Do Dance, Not Drugs." She not only trains students to dance, but, to build qualities that will aid them in navigating through life.

Her community engagement and activism has brought her more than three dozen awards, including Maria Shriver's Minerva Award; the Sisters Award from Spelman College; the Carter G. Woodson Civil Rights Award; the LA Women's Theater Festival's Integrity Award; the Accolades Award; and the Ann C. Rosenfield Distinguished Community Partnership Prize. In 2011, Lula received the Community Icon Award from the Los Angeles African American Women Political Action Committee; the National Dance Association Heritage Award; the Artistic Vision Award from The Black Business Association; and the Community Excellence Award from the National Congress of Black Women.

Lula is one of the "Founding Five" of the International Association of Blacks In Dance, which holds a black dance conference annually that draws dance leaders from around the world. Lula hosted the conference in 1992; 2005; and in 2011. Lula and the other "Founding Five" were honored as DANCE WOMEN, LIVING LEGENDS for their work in dance.

Lula Washington Dance Theatre — **Repertory**

We Wore The Mask By Lula Washington

In “We Wore the Mask” Ms. Washington displays a sure theatricality that is captivating.
— Roslyn Sulcras New York Times

Photos - E. Mesiyah McGinnis



A signature work that looks back to where America has been — while celebrating where America is today. It depicts the Masks that African-Americans once had to wear in order to survive.

Performed with live drumming by
Marcus L. Miller

Premiered in 2007 at
Lincoln Center Out of Doors

Lula Washington Dance Theatre — **Repertory**

Love Is...

by Christopher Huggins



An examination of love in four sections

“At First Sight”

“Fleeting”

“Pain”

“The Same Old Story”

“Love Is...” mesmerized audiences
In Russia, China, Brazil and in each
US city where it has been performed.

Commissioned for Lula Washington
Dance Theatre’s 30th Anniversary.

*Funded in part by the
National Endowment for the Arts.*

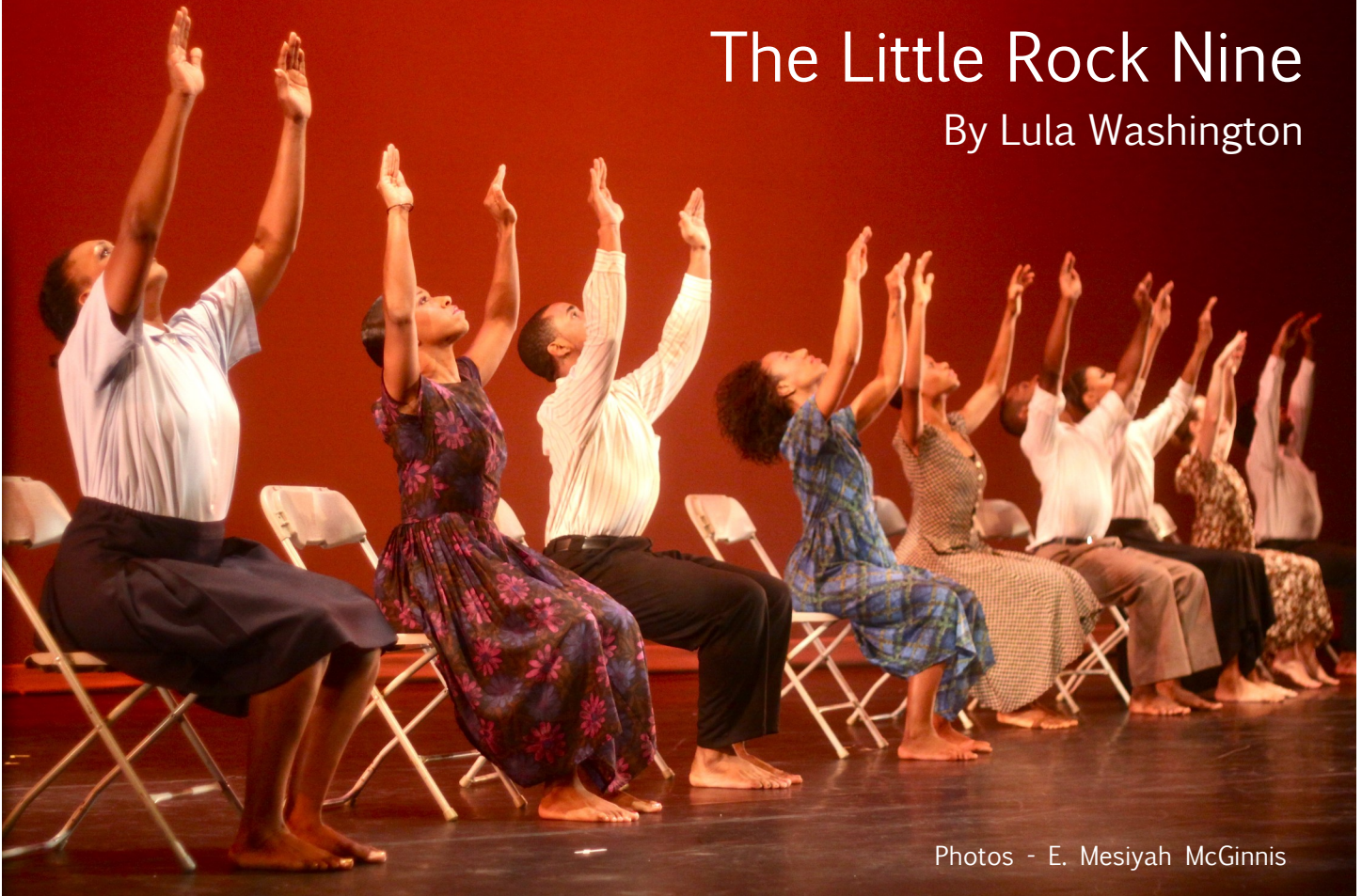


Photos: Djeneba Aduayom

Lula Washington Dance Theatre — Repertory

The Little Rock Nine

By Lula Washington



Photos - E. Mesiyah McGinnis

September 4, 1957

Nine Negro students risks their lives by enrolling in the all white/segregated Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. They changed America
The Little Rock Nine

A hard-hitting work that tells the story of nine students whose courage changed America

Commissioned in 2007 by the University of Arkansas at Conway

Lula Washington was born near Little Rock in 1950



Lula Washington Dance Theatre — **Repertory**

Reign

By Rennie Harris



This blistering master work, *Reign*, choreographed by hip-hop guy Rennie Harris, rained down on Henan Province in June, performed by Lula Washington Dance Theatre during the Los Angeles-based modern dance company's three-week tour of China.

I saw *Reign* perhaps eight times and its syncopated, aerobic body logic never failed to mesmerize. And the Washington dancers -- on whom Harris created the ecstatic piece -- own it, they work it so hard. They kill in this piece.

—Debra Levine, arts * meme

"This is a work that represents my personal struggle with love. I fell from the grace of Heaven and although my heart hurts, I know I will one day return.

So, until then, I will continue to create work about love... The love of family, friends, lovers, husbands, wives, humans.

These relationships are designed to ultimately bring us back to God and the glory of Heaven." — Rennie Harris

Commissioned for the 30th Anniversary of
Lula Washington Dance Theatre



Photos - E. Mesiyah McGinnis

Lula Washington Dance Theatre — **Repertory**

www.connections.2010

By Lula Washington



Photos by Earl Gibson III



a work about cell phones, texting, new
technology & its impact on the world.



Lula Washington Dance Theatre — **Repertory**

Global Village

by Lula Washington



Photos—E. Mesiyah McGinnis



A 16-minute work that premiered in China in 2011, **“Global Village”** pulses to the funky, driving, Afro-beat music of Nigeria’s Fela Kuti.

It draws on African; Chinese; Native American; Brazilian; Russian and African-American movement idioms to celebrate cultural diversity.

Performed by the full company, this 16-minute work is a perennial crowd favorite.

Lula Washington Dance Theatre — Repertory

Choices

By Lula Washington
Performed With Terrence Blanchard



Lula Washington Dance Theatre — Repertory

Angelitos Negros

From

Songs of the Disinherited

By Donald McKayle

Photos - E. Mesiyah McGinnis

“Songs of the Disinherited” has been defined by the Ford Foundation as a “classic” of American modern dance. The full work has four sections

“I’m On My Way”

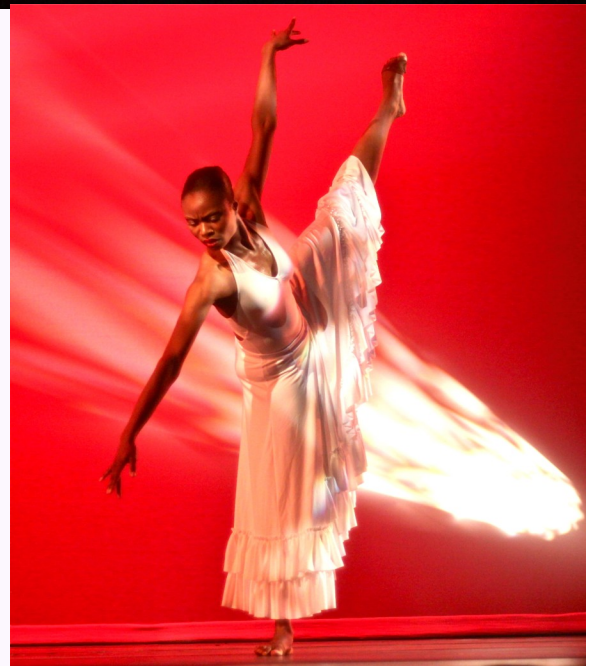
“Up On The Mountain”

“Angelitos Negros”

“Shaker Life”

“Angelitos Negros” asks why there are no black angels painted on the scenes of Heaven on the great church ceilings. The poet asks for a black angel to be painted for her.

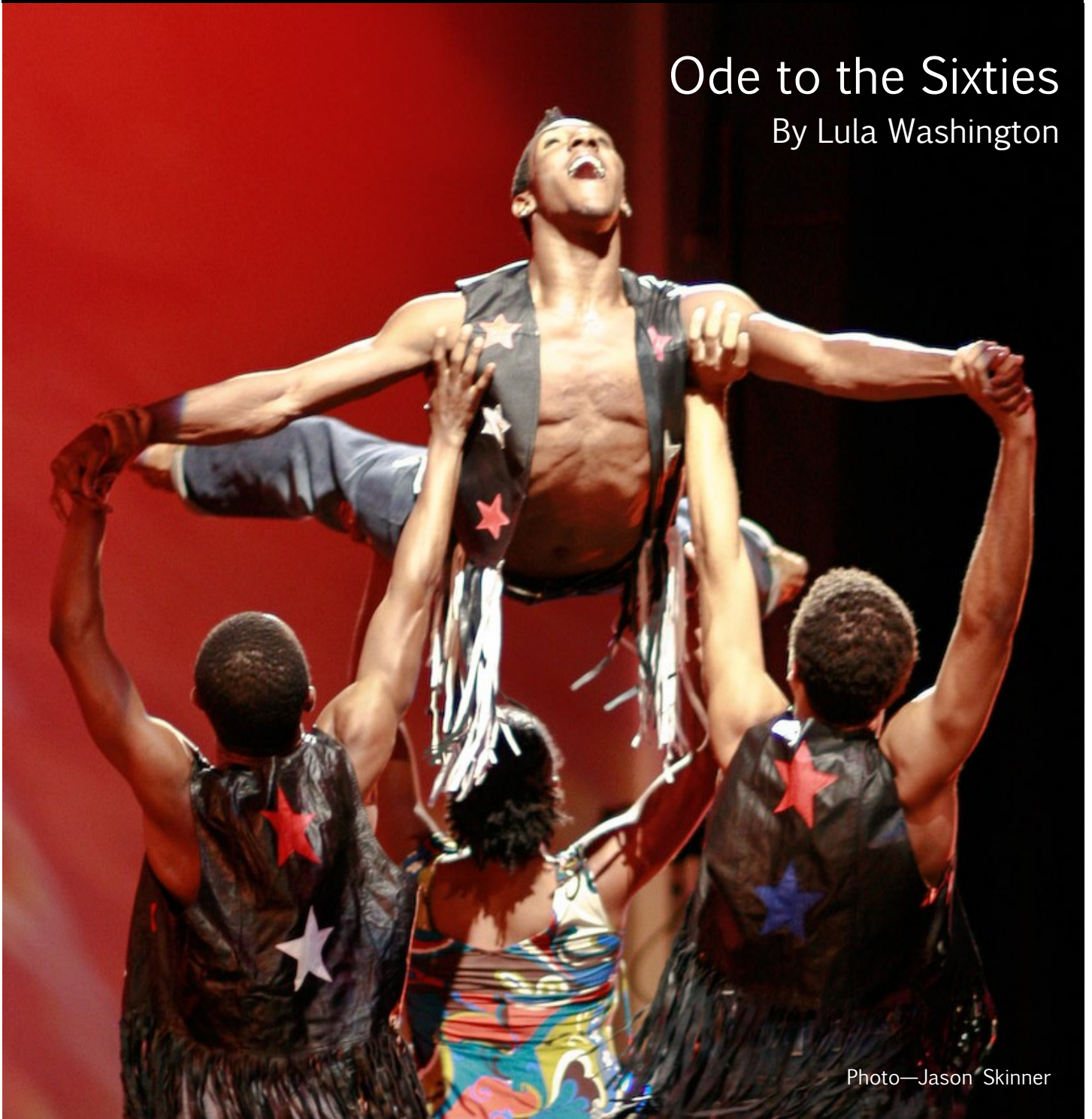
Funded by the California Community Foundation; First Impressions Performances and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Lula Washington Dance Theatre — Repertory

Ode to the Sixties

By Lula Washington



Photo—Jason Skinner

A revisiting of the 1960's to music by James Brown; Jimi Hendrix; the Beatles, Janis Joplin, Chuck Barry, Peter, Paul & Mary, and others. From Free Love to Social Protest—the 1960's Cultural Revolution changed America. Commissioned in 2007 by Lincoln Center Out of Doors under the direction of Jenneth Webster

Lula Washington Dance Theatre — Repertory

Beautiful Venus & Serena

By
Tamica Washington-Miller



Photos—Osofu Washington
WhatIsCreativity.com



Two Sisters
Two Competitors.
One must win.
One must lose.

Where does competition end
And Sisterhood begin?
This work explores what it means for
Venus and Serena Williams
to be sisters/warriors
on and off the court.

Lula Washington Dance Theatre — **Repertory**

The Healers

By Lula Washington



Photos - E. Mesiyah McGinnis

*Set to a score by Phillip Glass and Senegalese drums,
"The Healers"*

*explores rituals of purification. The special souls
in this work purify themselves in a quest for
spiritual healing and purity in pursuit of a
oneness with the earth.*

*It is a reminder that purity and being
rooted in the earth
is the beginning of healing...LIFE.*

—Lula Washington



Lula Washington Dance Theatre-Performances

2012 – Touring Schedule

Feb. 27, 2012

Educational concerts
Carolina Theatre
Durham, NC

Feb. 29, 2012

Residency & Concert
Buckman Performing Arts Center
Memphis, TN

Mar 3-4, 2012

Dance South Touring Initiative
Residency and Concert
Hardin County Performing Arts Center
Elizabethtown, KY

Mar 6 to April 6

Concerts in 14 cities in Russia
Far East & Ural Mountain area

May, 2012 (TBA)

One-week Residency & Concerts
Virginia Arts Festival
Norfolk, VA

May 31, 2012

Concert & Master class
Black Dance USA
St. Louis, MO

June 2, 2012

Dance St. Louis
Spring to Dance
St. Louis, MO

2013 – Touring Schedule

Jan. 21 – 26

Residency & Concert
Galvin Fine Arts Center
With Quad City Arts &
St. Ambrose College
Davenport, IA

Mid-Atlantic Tour

Spring 2013
Being Formed
by Jim Woland

Smith Center
Las Vegas
Spring 2013

SPECIAL PROJECTS—WITH FUNDING

Mid-Atlantic Tour — Spring 2013
Coordinated by Jim Woland
Former staff on the Pennsylvania
State Council on the Arts

Dance South Touring Initiative
Fee support to selected presenters to
book LWDT for residencies

California Central Valleys
and Inland Communities
Supported by grant from the
James Irvine Foundation

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