



dance
IMMERSION

2021-2022 Season



Acknowledgment

dance Immersion's work is centred in Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

We GIVE THANKS for the many blessings that have enabled us to gather here.

We GIVE THANKS to the ancestors for the path they have paved and for the protection and guidance they continue to offer as we journey forward.

We GIVE THANKS to one another knowing that we can only do what we do by working together respectfully and peacefully.

We acknowledge that the land we gather on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. This includes the many peoples, named and unnamed, who have stewarded this land before our arrival.

The territory is the subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably care for and share the resources around the Great Lakes.

We are Treaty Peoples, including those of us who came here as settlers – either in this generation or in generations past – and those of us who came here involuntarily, particularly as a result of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

We are grateful to be able to share this space with so many knowledge-keepers, including the courageous artists with whom *dance* Immersion collaborates every day.

Àse, Aché, Axé

About *dance* Immersion

dance Immersion is a charitable non-profit organization established by Vivine Scarlett in 1994 to produce, promote, and support dancers and dances of the African Diaspora. Vivine witnessed a profound lack of support for Black dance expression and created this organization to help our artists and their work reach communities across Canada. We now offer presentation, skill development, and networking opportunities for Blacks in dance, serving artists who practice contemporary and traditional movement forms from Africa, the Caribbean, North America, South America, and Europe. We provide our services via three interconnected platforms: Education for artists and communities of all ages; Incubation of choreography by emerging and established artists; and Presentation of dance works to the public. With over 26 years in service, *dance* Immersion experiences considerable success in connecting dance artists across Canada and around the world.

Vision: To bring opportunity and inspiration to every dancer of the African Diaspora.

Mission: *dance* Immersion advances and connects intergenerational dance communities through producing, promoting, and supporting dancers and dances of the African Diaspora.

Board of Directors:

Kai ner Maa Pitanta – Chair; Valerie Augustine – Secretary; Solange Fermin; Junior Alexander Francis; Yvonne Francis; Ayanna Lee-Rivears; Samia Lye-Fook

Staff:

Founder / Executive Director: Vivine Scarlett
Curator & Program Director: Timea Wharton-Suri
Administrative Assistant: Zahra Badua
Communications Assistant: Jillian Greyson

Collaborators:

Event Moderator: Nicole Inica Hamilton
Bookkeeper: Dami Okunade, CFA, CPA, CA, LPA
Communications Consultant: Mercedes Findlay / Black Coffee Communications



***dance* Immersion**

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Twitter: **[@danceimmersion](https://twitter.com/danceimmersion)**
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L-R: Timea Wharton-Suri, Vivine Scarlett, Zahra Badua, Jillian Greyson

Greetings From the Staff of *dance* Immersion!

We welcome you with hope and excitement to our 2021-2022 season. Throughout the past year and a half, we have all been through exceptional challenge and change. During this time, we have been listening, grieving, healing, and quietly working on building artistic initiatives, dynamic partnerships, and internal resources to strengthen our work amplifying opportunities for the remarkable artists within our community.

dance Immersion's service as a connector of artistic ideas to opportunities, as a recommender of artists to other presenters at home and around the world, and as a supporter of artists in ways seen and unseen has continued throughout this challenging period.

While the planned dates of the 2021-2022 events remain flexible to support safe public initiatives, we have been meeting with artists, educators, and venue-based presenters to design one of our most robust seasons to date. This season we will connect you with the work of internationally-renowned artists from Calgary, Winnipeg, Brampton, Toronto, and Montréal who are creating Mozambican, Tap Dance, Hip Hop, and experimental works. Our new partnerships with Canadian Stage and Canada's Ballet Jörgen through its George Brown College Dance Program are providing studio and performance spaces, as well as artistic and educational exchanges to impact our community's reach in this season and beyond.

Our staff members are also actively cultivating programming beyond the coming season, including developing a new arts program for youth impacted by the justice system, and preparing to host the International Association of Blacks in Dance Conference & Festival coming to Toronto in 2023.

Sharing Black art across generations, building our legacies, and reclaiming our cultures will continue to be the focal points of our work as we head into a new era.

Please continue to check back in with us at danceimmersion.ca for programming updates.

We cannot wait to share these touching moments of examination, education, and collective joy with you!

With gratitude,

Vivine, Timea, Zahra, and Jillian

In-Person Events @ a Glance

- » Events take place in Toronto and are primarily English language.
- » Venues have accessible seating, and assistive listening devices are available in some locations.
- » Performances have economically-accessible pricing options.

Aug.
2021

MUKUTHÔ at Dream in High Park: Casimiro Nhussi & Pulga Muchochoma

World Premier Commissioned Presentation
Venue: High Park Amphitheatre, Toronto
Curatorial & Presenting Partner: Canadian Stage



Dec.
2021

LEGACY SERIES TAP DANCE: Travis Knights & Lisa La Touche

Symposium + Celebration
Venue: **George Brown College Casa Loma Campus, Toronto**

Free In-Person
and Online



Mar.
2022

IN MY BODY: Crazy Smooth

Toronto Premier Presentation + Dance Workshop
Venue: St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, Toronto
Presenting Partners: Canadian Stage and TO Live
Executive Producer: Centre de Création O Vertigo – CCOV



April
2022

dance Immersion **ARTS MENTORSHIP PROGRAM**

**Intergenerational Mentorship
+ In-Studio Showcase by Emerging Artists**
Venue: George Brown College Casa Loma Campus, Toronto

Free In-Person
and Online



June
2022

LEGACY SERIES TAP DANCE: Travis Knights, Lisa La Touche & Musical Guests

Concert Presentation
Venue: High Park Amphitheatre, Toronto



- » The schedule above is subject to change according to Public Health regulations.

Online Happenings @ a Glance

This season's free access online programming includes:

NAC #Dance Forth: Two World Premier Recorded Performances - one by **Jaz Fairy J** with sound design by **Johnny Spence** and backdrop cinematography by **Francesca Chudnoff**, and another by **Travis Knights** with special guests Juno Award-Winning vocalist **Divine Brown** and **Michael Shand, Amhed Mitchel**, and **Ross Macintyre**. *dance Immersion* curated these works and is co-presenting them in partnership with the National Arts Centre, with the support of Harbourfront Centre. #DanceForth is a National Arts Centre (NAC) Dance series designed to support Canadian dance artists. These innovative, moving new works are not to be missed!

Online Bantaba & Check-In: Three community discussion events on the topic of dance education, the dancing body, and African Diasporic legacy

Versus Dance Battle: An online dance battle where participants share recorded sections of their favourite past dance works in a joyful community exchange

Plus!

- » Continuing arts education discussions on the blog
- » Artist features and dance history notes in our monthly newsletter and on social
- » Community event notices in our monthly e-listings



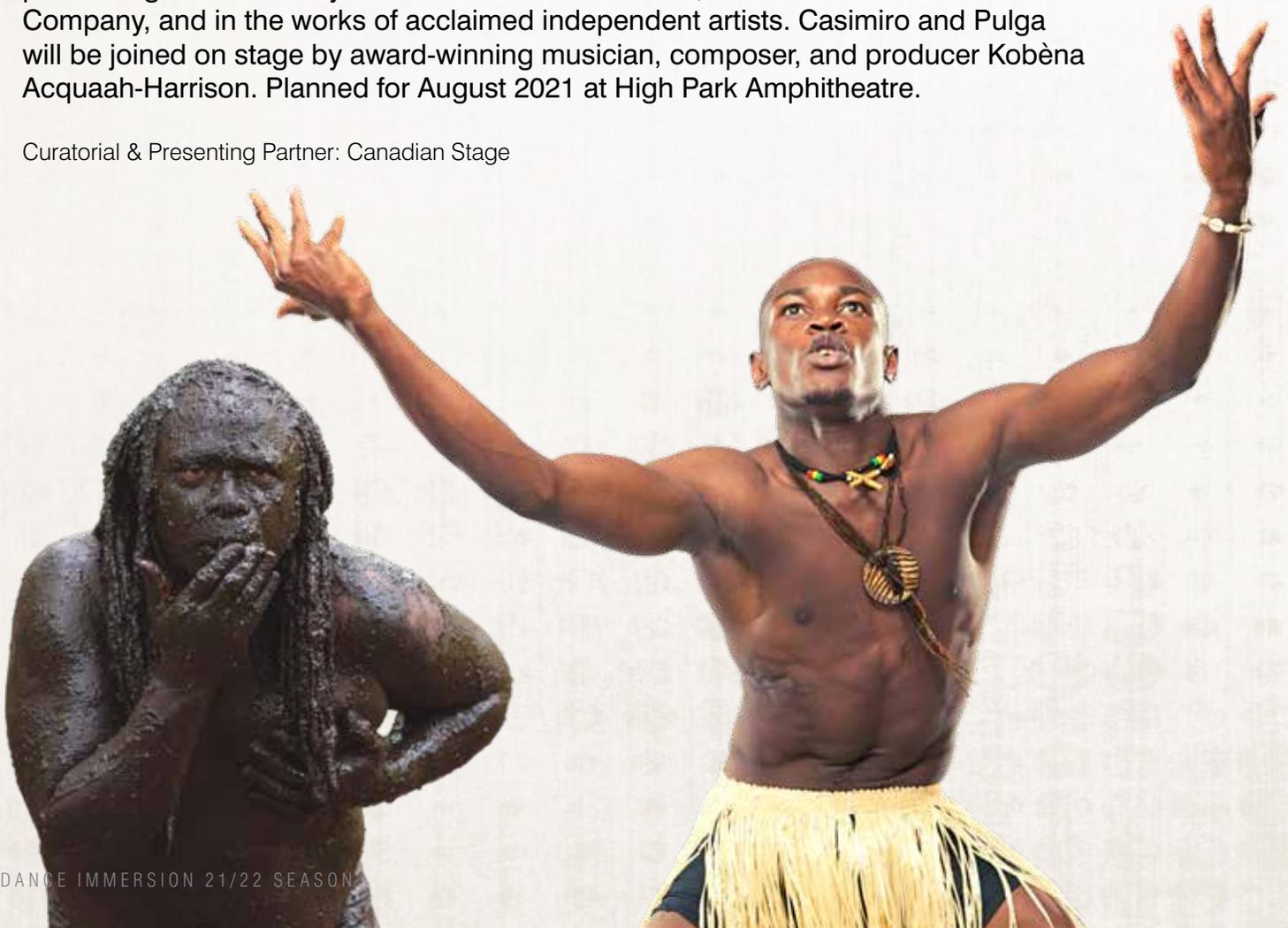
Programming in Detail

MUKUTHÔ at Canadian Stage Dream in High Park **by Casimiro Nhussi & Pulga Muchochoma**

A World Premier commissioned dance and music work by Casimiro Nhussi of NAfro Dance and Pulga Muchchoma, who will be creating and performing together for the first time. MUKUTHÔ is based on a Mozambican ritual from the Chuabo tribe which is performed by elders as a way to communicate with ancestors for guidance, forgiveness, and reconnection to the living. This ritual also serves to welcome new family members, connect different generations within families, and as the method of passing knowledge from elders to younger generations through dance, song, and music. At this moment we need to communicate with our spirits, our ancestors, and Mother Nature. At this moment we need to regain our strength and rejuvenate our souls. At this moment we need to connect with our beliefs so that we can stand up and continue our journeys.

Casimiro and Pulga were both born and raised in Mozambique before emigrating to Canada. Casimiro is an internationally renowned award-winning musician, dancer, and choreographer who founded western Canada's only contemporary African dance company – NAfro Dance Productions – 20 years ago. Pulga Muchochoma is a celebrated performer, choreographer, and educator with wide-ranging experience performing internationally with Toronto Dance Theatre, Montes Namuli Dance Company, and in the works of acclaimed independent artists. Casimiro and Pulga will be joined on stage by award-winning musician, composer, and producer Kobèna Acquaah-Harrison. Planned for August 2021 at High Park Amphitheatre.

Curatorial & Presenting Partner: Canadian Stage





UK/CAN CONNECT INTERNATIONAL YOUTH EXCHANGE

An initiative bringing together youth dance artists from Edify Dance (Toronto, Canada) and ACE Dance and Music Youth (Birmingham, England) to share knowledge and co-develop a new dance work that will be performed at the January 2023 International Association of Blacks in Dance Conference & Festival in Toronto.

Partners: Edify Dance edifydance.com
& ACE Dance and Music acedanceandmusic.com

dance Immersion ARTS MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

An extension of our previous arts administration mentorship programs, this new initiative is developed by staff members Zahra Badua and Jillian Greyson. Youth dance, spoken word, drum, and vocal artists will be paired with established artists in their field for intensive artistic and career mentorship, culminating in an In-Studio Showcase by the youth artists. Planned for January - April 2022 at George Brown College Casa Loma Campus.

LEGACY SERIES: TAP DANCE

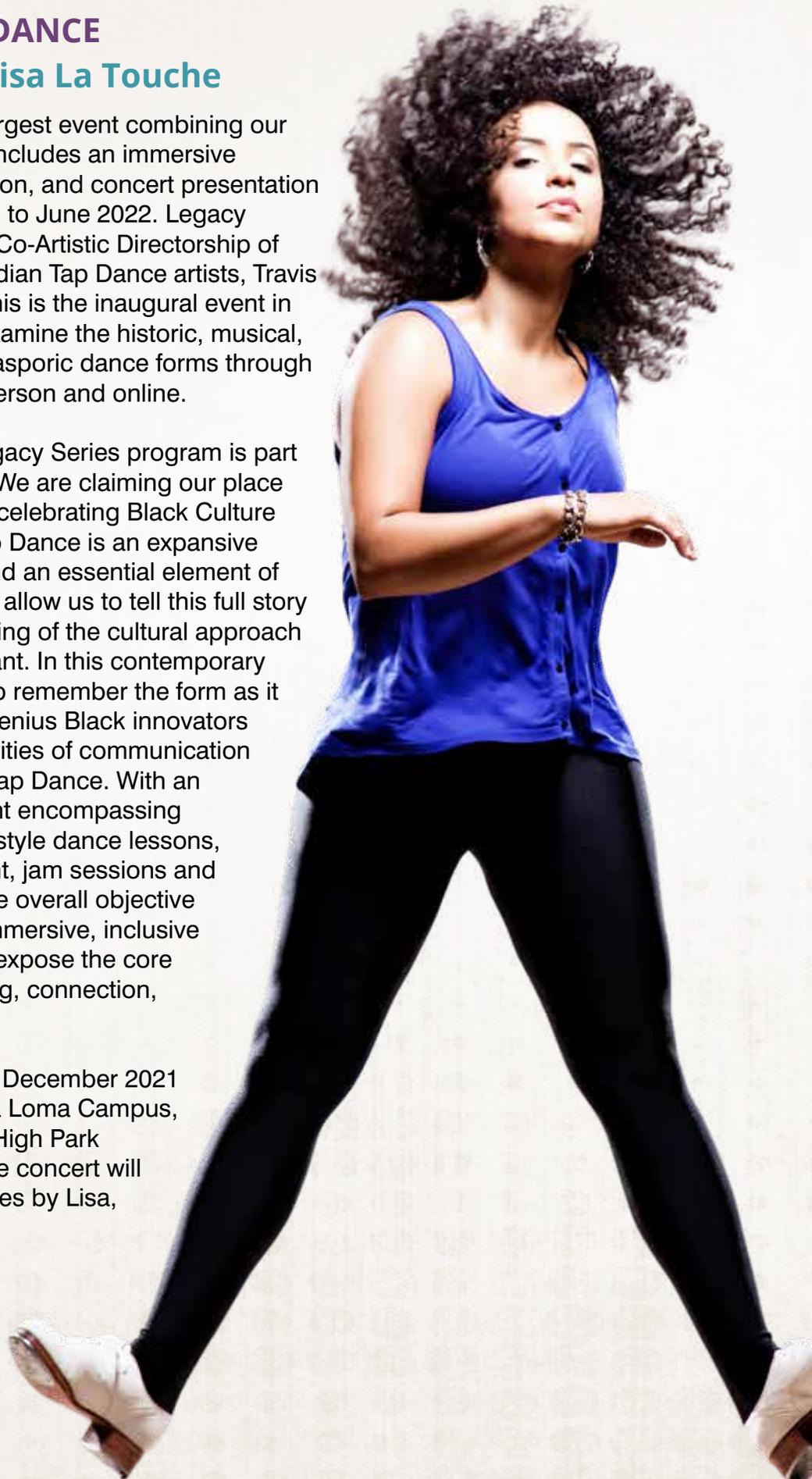
by Travis Knights & Lisa La Touche

dance Immersion's new and largest event combining our three programming platforms includes an immersive symposium, new work incubation, and concert presentation spanning from December 2021 to June 2022. Legacy Series Tap Dance is under the Co-Artistic Directorship of internationally-renowned Canadian Tap Dance artists, Travis Knights and Lisa La Touche. This is the inaugural event in the Legacy Series which will examine the historic, musical, and cultural roots of African Diasporic dance forms through celebratory events offered in-person and online.

From Travis and Lisa: "This Legacy Series program is part of a larger cultural movement. We are claiming our place in the world as Black dancers, celebrating Black Culture and telling our own stories. Tap Dance is an expansive African American folk dance and an essential element of Jazz Culture. This program will allow us to tell this full story and help shape an understanding of the cultural approach to Tap Dance for each participant. In this contemporary moment, we are being called to remember the form as it was when it was conjured by genius Black innovators to express the limitless possibilities of communication through Dance and Rhythm - Tap Dance. With an immersive learning environment encompassing oral history, call and response style dance lessons, live Jazz music accompaniment, jam sessions and celebratory demonstrations, the overall objective of this project is to create an immersive, inclusive cultural experience in order to expose the core values of Jazz Culture - listening, connection, authenticity, and community."

The Symposium is planned for December 2021 at George Brown College Casa Loma Campus, with a concert presentation at High Park Amphitheatre in June 2022. The concert will include electrifying performances by Lisa, Travis, and special guests.

Program Sponsor: TD Bank Group
Symposium Presenting Partner:
Canada's Ballet Jörgen through the
George Brown College
Dance Program
Concert Presentation Partner:
Canadian Stage





IN MY BODY by Crazy Smooth

Toronto-Premier: It is said that the bravest thing a dancer can do is grow old – for a b-boy/b-girl, the experience is approaching heroic. In keeping with hip-hop culture, b-boys/b-girls present a façade of confidence and invincibility as they engage in battles to prove their value and establish their dominance. The resulting vocabulary is one of the most physically demanding and visually impressive of the dance genres and leaves no room for the expression of vulnerability. For *In My Body*, Crazy Smooth – one of Canada’s top street dancers, performers, choreographers, instructors, judges, and community leaders – brings together an intergenerational group of dancers and an international creative team for an intensely athletic investigation of the evolution of self and the effects of aging on street dancers. Planned for March 2022 at the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts.

Toronto Presenting Partners: Canadian Stage and TO Live

Executive Producer: Centre de Création O Vertigo – CCOV

Developed with support from the National Arts Centre’s National Creation Fund and Canada Council for the Arts

In My Body Canadian Co-production partners: Bboyizm, The CanDance Network Creation Fund, *dance* Immersion, Canadian Stage, Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Brian Webb Dance Company, and Yukon Arts Centre

Give Thanks

The Staff and Board of *dance* Immersion give thanks to our partners whose collaboration makes this exciting season possible:

Public Funders:



Legacy Series Sponsor:



Venue and Presenting Partners:



Our deepest gratitude to the individuals, artist collectives, foundations, and arts organizations that support our work through donations, volunteer time, and community collaboration.

If you would like to help drive opportunity and inspiration for Canada's Black dance artists with a donation to *dance* Immersion, please visit our website. Donations directly support artist fees for presentations, workshops, and residencies.

Àse, Aché, Axé



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design by: lightupthesky.ca