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Editorial

Opening[1]

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This special edition is dedicated to David Thatanelo April and Dada Masilo.

Reader, I want you to know these names.
I too want you to know the name of Eric Mshengu Shabalala.
I want us as a community to do so together.
I want you to share with me the names I need to know too.
Their names, their lives, their dance.

In 2011, Eric Mshengu Shabalala passed away.
In 2025, Dada Masilo and David Thatanelo April passed away.

Who else has passed away and are names we need to remember.
Who else we need to as a community know.
Who else we need to honour, respect, and never forget.

2025 reminded us how urgent it is for dance in Africa to be studied and shared and stories told.
Dance is not only a subject for historical study.
Dance is a subject that we must study in the now.
Dance is a subject that we as researchers in dance in Africa are responsible for, for documenting the living archive of those who make dance, for us to make sure that names are known.

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It is urgent we do so.

We are accountable.

We must.

This special edition on dance in/from Africa is intended to survey and share knowledges a decade since the last special edition for the African Performance Review edition in 2014 that exclusively focused in dance.

I as the editor wanted to curate the writings on dancing bodies from my home continent.

It has always been a strong political standpoint of mine that there must be academic work on dance in Africa by Africans.

I am based in the United Kingdom and this location in the global north has meant I have become familiar with dance knowledges here.

It is this location that I became aware of how academics in the global north rarely question privilege when they write about dance in Africa.

Funding and exchange rates enable dance academics from the global north to travel and work with dance makers in the Global South.

Furthermore, when students or researchers write about dance in Africa, there is often greater circulation of work by global north scholars about dance in Africa than work by scholars of the Global South about dance in Africa; a structural inequality in publication and education that favours the global north drives this.

I am guilty of all of these too.

And in this location of the global north where I am now based, I often encounter misaligned discourses about dance from/in Africa which is guilty of homogenisation and reductionism.

And it is in this location that I must acknowledge my own accountability and responsibility in contributing to this myth.

And to do so, in one respect (and there is much I must do still) is to make space and move back and this edition in an attempt.

This edition shows how dance in the Global South is complex and diverse, and how there needs to be more space, time and place for these knowledges to be shared; a choreographic strategy is at the core of this edition.

I acknowledge to that this edition is only able to provide a glimpse into these knowledges and are predominantly from the east of Africa. I hope that this does remind us that even in a particular region of geography, and in a nation state as well, there are many names with many knowledges.

So, in editing this special edition for *African Performance Review*, I have learnt or remembered the names:

Maria Helena Pinto
Panaíbra Canda
Augusto Cuvilas
Idio Chichava
Virgilio Sitole
Aaron Montoya
Frank Micheletti
Zab Maboungou
Faustin Linyekula
Adedayo Liadi
Ivan Barros
David Abílio
Mariano Silva
Mauro Vombe
Rui Lopes Graça
Sylvia Glasser
Lliane Loots
Gregory Maqoma
Jay Pather
Robyn Orlin
Sonje Mayo
Sharon Friedman
Alfred Hinkel
Jacki Job
Jacqueline Manyaapelo
Amelia du Toit
Lindy Raizenberg
Celeste Botha

Sarahleigh Castelyn
Sean Bovim
Robin van Wyk
Kristina Johnstone
Yarisha Singh
Janine Booysens
Shaun Oelf
Grant van Ster
Ebrahim Medell
Marlin Zoutman
Anderson Carvalho
Mthuthuzeli November
Darion Adams
Louisa Talbot
Lwazi Mzimase
Tamsyn Lucy Pretorius
Inge Beckmann
Njabulo Phungula
Brydon Bolton
Louise Coetzer
Oscar O'Ryan
Edith Katzenellenbogen
Gisela Taeger-Berger
Isabel Nel
Dancegod Loyd (Laud Anoo Konadu)
Afrobeast (Nicholas Botwe)
Ezuntey Flex / Eflex (Michael Kweku Afriyie Sarpong)
Incredible Zigi (Michael Amofa)
Black Sherif
Fuse ODG
Sho Madjozi
Davido
Omah Lay
Burna Boy
Wizkid

Osibisa
Fela Anikulapo-Kuti
Ghanaba (Warren Gamaliel Kpakpo Akwei)
Ricci Osei
Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre
Gaby Saranouffi
Desiré Davids
Edna Jaime
Thandazile "Sonia" Radebe
Phumlani Nyanga
Thabo Kobeli
Yogin Sullaphen
Matthew MacFarlane
Yaseen Manuel
Zinhle Nzama
Jabu Siphika
Lulu Mlangeni
Bafikile Sedibe
Pak Ndjamena
Ivan Barros
Joseph Tebandeke
Vincent Sekwati Mantsoe
Mamela Nyamza
Robyn Orlin
Sunnyboy Motau
Oscar Buthelezi
Eugene Mashiane
Lesego Dihemo
Sbusiso Gumede
Teboho Letele
Eric Perroys
Elvania N. Zirimu
Byron Kawadwa
Henry Wassanyi Serukenya
John Ssekitooleko Ssempeke

Ssalongo Senoga
Muzeeyi Ludoviko Serwanga
Robert Lubega
Ssalongo Kato
Bannaggunju dancers
Bakisimba dancers
Abadongo
Ab'oluganda Kwagalana Group
Abagoma ba Kabaka
Christian Martinek
Ninón Sevilla
Madam Lulu White
Madam Nellie Jackson
Sifiso Khumalo
Zinhle Nzama
Jabu Siphika
Ndumiso Dube
Siseko Dube
Sibongakonke Ndlovu
Refiloe Olifant
Mandla Matsha
Wesley Maherry
Flatfoot Dance Company
Company Kongo Ba Téria
Faustin Linyekula
Les Studios Kabako
Company Rary
Sello Pesa
Nora Chipaumire
Company TchéTché
Company Raiz di Polon
Company Jant-Bi
Germaine Acogny
Pape Ibrahim N'Diaye ("Kaolack")

Ousmane N'Diaye
Zab Maboungou
Joachim Montessuis

I know that I have many more name to know, remember and not forget, and I apologise if I have failed to include a name I must know, and to misspellings, I am sorry; I am learning.

I am honoured to know the names of the authors in the special edition:

Adriana Jamisse
D. Amy-Rose Forbes-Erickson
Sam Kusale
Gerard Samuel
Terry Bright Kweku Ofosu
Clare Craighead
Tawanda Chabikwa
Lliane Loots
Val Adamson
Benedictus Mattison.

I thank you for sharing your knowledges with me. It has been a profound learning experience for me, and I hope it will be for you too reader.

Let us together as a community know more names, more lives, more dance.

Best Wishes,
Sarahleigh Castelyn