



Urban Bush Women: Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, Artistic Director Brooklyn, NY

Passionate, strong and relevant, Urban Bush Women (UBW) is a performance ensemble founded in 1984 by choreographer Jawole Willa Jo Zollar to explore the use of cultural expression as a catalyst for social change. UBW weaves contemporary dance with music and text to illuminate the history, culture, and spiritual traditions of African Americans and the African Diaspora. Drawing strength and solidarity from each other, this all-woman troupe celebrates its African roots while expanding its horizons beyond its own perspectives. Performances by Urban Bush Women are electric and inspiring, and Ms. Zollar's insightful choreography communicates with tremendous strength and power.

Based in New York City, UBW has toured extensively throughout the United States and to Asia, Australia, Europe, and South America. The company has collaborated with artists from every field including jazz artist David Murray, poets Laurie Carlos and Carl Hancock Rux, directors Steve Kent and Elizabeth Herron, the National Song and Dance Company of Mozambique, and most recently, with Germaine Acogny's acclaimed Compagnie Jant-Bi from Senegal. The recipient of many awards, UBW has a repertory of thirty-two works.

UBW engages in extensive community-based programming, encouraging cultural activity as an inherent part of community life. Through its annual Summer Leadership Institute, the company partners with local presenters, area artists and community residents to bring the untold and under-told histories of their communities forward through performance.

Jawole Willa Jo Zollar founded UBW in 1984 after studying with dance greats Joseph Stevenson, Katherine Dunham, and Dianne McIntyre. She holds a BA in dance from the University of Missouri at Kansas City and an MFA in dance from Florida State University. In addition to thirty-two works for UBW, Zollar has created choreography for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Ballet Arizona, Philadanco, University of Maryland, University of Florida, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, and others. She is the Nancy Smith Fichter tenured professor in the Dance Department of Florida State University and holds an honorary doctorate from Columbia College in Chicago. The recipient of many prestigious awards and recognitions, she was named a United States Artists Wynn Fellow in 2008 and is a 2009 recipient of the John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship.

From the Press...

"Urban Bush Women – triple-threat performers who dance, sing and act with a searing sense of truthfulness." – *The New York Times*

"Ferocious cascades of fervor and emotion arranged and played out with their own logic and visual surprise." – *Chicago Tribune*

"Those Urban Bush Women! I forget sometimes how strong they are, how fierce, how smart. Dancing can run through their bodies like warm honey, or like steel stiffening them for battle." – *The Village Voice*

Company Website www.UrbanBushWomen.org

Video Excerpts <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WWKG9-yu-lo>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mgw0IR6JDiw>

For tour information,
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