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For Immediate Release



Hans Peter Diop Ibaghino. Photo by Chloé Gwinner

ROBYN ORLIN'S 'AT THE SAME TIME WE WERE POINTING A FINGER AT YOU, WE REALIZED WE WERE POINTING THREE AT OURSELVES...', PERFORMED BY SENEGAL'S COMPAGNIE JANT-BI, RECEIVES U.S. PREMIERE AT PEAK PERFORMANCES, JANUARY 24-FEBRUARY 1

When asked by Germaine Acogny to make a dance for her Senegalese dance company, Jant-Bi, South African choreographer Robyn Orlin faced a major challenge: a dramatic cultural divide. The result, “At the same time we were pointing a finger at you, we realized we were pointing three at ourselves...,” is a spectacle of music, dance and song that confronts, celebrates and instructs. The hour-long work receives its American premiere at Peak Performances, January 24-February 1.

Ceremonies play crucial roles as teachers and moral guardians in all cultures, embodying the unique values of each. “At the same time we were pointing a finger at you, we realized we were pointing three at ourselves...” a celebration of *la danse du faux lion*, a traditional Senegalese coming of age ceremony created to banish the fear of lions in young males, has a cast of seven male dancers each of whom embody a separate character who reveals personal childhood stories, unusual in a culture in which men consider expressing personal feelings a weakness. Their stories are integrated into the dance.

Brimming with exuberant energy, and humor, the work's underlying political and moral messages including responsibility for others are delivered with a generous spirit.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Born in Johannesburg in 1955, Robyn Orlin studied at the London School of Contemporary Dance from 1975-1980, completing her Master of Fine Arts at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1993. She has worked in television, film, theater, dance and opera, working as a choreographer, producer, dancer and teacher in South Africa and Europe. Her awards include Knight of the French National Order of Merit, a Laurence Olivier Award for outstanding achievement in Dance and the Jan Fabre Award for the most subversive choreography, among others.



Photo of Robyn Orlin by Peggy Jarrell Kaplan



Photo of Compagnie Jant-Bi by Philippe Lainé

Compagnie Jant-Bi was created in 1998, by its current artistic director Germaine Acogny, with dancers who had participated in the first professional workshop of L'école des Sables, the International Center for Traditional and Contemporary African Dances, located on the southern coast of Dakar, in Senegal. In its 17 year history, the company has performed all over the world, including in major festivals in Europe and North America and in prominent theaters such as Théâtre de la Ville in Paris; FIND in Montreal; and Jacob's Pillow, The Kennedy Center and Arizona State University in the United States.

Compagnie Jant-Bi works closely with l'école des Sables, the International Center for Traditional and Contemporary African Dances. The principal aim of the Center is to offer African dancers professional training in traditional and contemporary African dance, and to develop and promote contemporary African dance. The Center is also a meeting place for the exchange of dance and choreography belonging to the African Diaspora, as well as different cultures from all over the world. As a result of its work with choreographers from other cultures and by incorporating their different dance styles, the company embodies a fusion of the different cultures and the essence of African dance.

WHERE TO GO

Performances on January 24 and 31 are at 8:00PM; January 29, 30 at 7:30pm; January 25 and February 1 at 3:00PM.

The Alexander Kasser Theater at Montclair State University is located at 1 Normal Avenue, Montclair, New Jersey 07043. Tickets are \$20, and are available at the box office, www.peakperfs.org, or by calling 973-655-5112.

Charter bus service is provided from New York City's Port Authority Bus Terminal—arcade on 41st Street between 8th and 9th Avenues—to the Alexander Kasser Theater (\$10 per person, round trip) for all Saturday and Sunday performances. Bus reservations may be made by calling 973-655-5112 or by visiting www.peakperfs.org.

For train service, available only on weekdays, go online to www.njtransit.com or call 973-275-5555.

For restaurants close to the Alexander Kasser Theater, visit www.destinationmontclair.com.

Programs in this season are made possible in part by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Dept. of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts; The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; and the National Dance Project (NDP) of the New England Foundation for the Arts.

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