

THE AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

DANCING



ON THE AIR

THE TEENARAMA STORY

Written & Directed By Jiiko Ozimba

Original Music By Jiiko Ozimba

Executive Producer Beverly Lindsay-Johnson



WELCOME

N. Saleem Hylton
Co-Founder/Acting Board Chair



The African American Music Association (AAMA)
On behalf of the Board of Directors and Executive
Board of the African American Music Association
(AAMA), I would like to welcome you to the viewing of
Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Dance Story.

AAMA's mission is to promote, preserve, and protect the music that was composed and performed by African America artists. The highlight of the original *Teenarama* dance show was the selection of the Hand Dance music that the teens of the 1960s here in the Nation's Capital danced to, along with the entertainers that appeared each day to perform their latest hits. "*Teenarama*" was the pride and jewel of the DMV.

As a regular on the show, I recall how we all raced to the WOOK-TV station on 1st Place, NE after school to be on time for the 5:30 PM live broadcast.

As a native Washingtonian, and founder of the AAMA, it is an honor to sponsor a music-driven project that is so relevant to preserving the legacy of the music and culture of the 60s here in DC., which still stands today. I know that you will enjoy this special musical **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story.**





FROM THE WRITER/DIRECTOR JIIKO OZIMBA



Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story has been one of the most difficult and potentially the most rewarding musicals that I have written to date. Usually, I create contemporary stories from my own life experiences, observations, and imagination. My music has spanned my styles of familiarity: R&B, Soul, Gospel, Go-Go, and neo-soul. However, this story is based around a very specific phenomenon, space, and time in history... a time before my own and a topic I'd never even heard of, *The Teenarama Dance Party* television show on WOOK-TV. In addition, it had to involve styles of music for which I had very little knowledge and unfortunately, little appreciation.

When the idea was proposed to me by Beverly Lindsay-Johnson, I dropped my next pursuit, which was to be a sister play to my musical **North Capital**. Instead, I moved forth, seeing the importance of the preservation of the "Teenarama" legacy. After literally months of hearing individual and collective stories from people who danced on "Teenarama", studying the history and the time period in Washington, D.C., immersing myself in music from the time period, and ultimately falling in love with all of it, **Dancing On The Air: The Teenarama Story** was born. Though different for me, in that it is historical fiction, it provides a harmony of controversy, musicality, and "feel good" that marks all of my shows.

Over a period of months, I watched this talented young cast learn D.C. Hand Dance, the Twist, the Jerk, the Twine Time, and other dances of the 1960's, while also learning history, lines, original music, and choreography.

Most of this work began on Zoom, the virtual space medium utilized during the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced us to fight through the challenges of music, vocals, and dance out of synch. However, their enthusiasm and respect for the history and the process always shined through the camera. Lawrence Bradford and Dr. Carmen White were our gifted and innovative choreographers who made it happen under these unprecedented circumstances. Upon our first in-person rehearsals, the cast was able to grab hands and Hand Dance and even execute group choreography together. This was nothing short of phenomenal!

Very few rehearsals or recording sessions went by when I did not inwardly or outwardly thank the Creator for the talent, tenacity, flexibility, professionalism, support, positivity, faith, and joyful, friendly spirits of this cast. Not only did they gel into a powerful ensemble, but they authentically became family and friends. Congratulations Titans! (Inside joke) You did it! I wish you all the blessings, success, love, joy and prosperity life has to offer.

I hope you enjoy this abbreviated livestream production of **Dancing On The Air: The Teenarama Story** and continue to follow this story as it evolves and reaches stages and screens near and far.



From the Executive Producer Beverly Lindsay-Johnson



In 1998, I produced a documentary entitled **Dance Party: The Teenarama Story**. *The Teenarama Dance Party* was produced and broadcast on a small television station in DC, WOOK-TV (Ch. 14) (1963-1972), the first television station in the nation to program for the “Negro Audience”. “*Teenarama*” was created for DC’s African American teens who were forbidden to dance on the Milt Grant Show (WTTG-TV) where white teens

danced (African American teenagers could only dance on The Milt Grant Show on Tuesdays, called by the teens “Black Tuesday”. This was segregation and social injustice in the Nation’s Capital during the 1950s and 1960s. *The Teenarama Dance Party* ran from 1963 until 1970, 6 days a week live from the WOOK-TV and Radio studios located at 5321 1st Place, NE. The teens showed up and showed out with the latest dance craze, and of course, danced their cool DC Hand Dance styles to the sounds of Motown, Stax, Chess Records and other tunes of the era. “*Teenarama*” was the jewel of the African American Community.

The documentary **Dance Party: The Teenarama Story** aired on PBS stations nationwide and received a National Capital Chesapeake Bay Chapter of The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Emmy Award in 2007 for “Best Cultural Documentary” and is included in the archives of the Paley Center for Media in New York and Los Angeles. The Smithsonian Anacostia

Community Museum in Washington, DC houses the archival collection of materials on the history of the “Teenarama Dance Party.”

After the debut of the documentary **Dance Party: The Teenarama Story**, historian Michon Boston asked me to consider the idea of presenting “*Teenarama*” as a theatrical production. In 2015, I sought out playwright Jiiko Ozimba to create a theatrical musical based on the “Teenarama Dance Party”. After Jiiko accepted, we formed a partnership, and she began to write the script and compose 11 original songs for the musical **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story**. I began fundraising for development and production of the musical. There were “Teenarama Dance Party Reunion” cabarets, a script reading at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and at the Anacostia Busboys and Poets Restaurant in Washington, DC. I must say thank you to the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, The Awesome Foundation and community donors who believed in the importance of this new work.

I am very proud of the talented cast and production staff and honored that **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story** continues the legacy of an important time in African American history and culture.



From The Dramaturg Tamara L. Brown, Ph.D.



The Teenarama Dance Party television dance show debuted March 7, 1963, on WOOK-TV. It developed from its radio predecessor that ran on WOOK-AM. White businessman Richard Eaton owned and promoted both ventures aimed at the Washington, D.C. and surrounding area, African American population. Though "*Teenarama*" dominated the station's ratings from the beginning, the launching of WOOK-TV met with mixed feelings from some prominent Black leaders and media outlets. Premiering during

the height of the direct-action phase of the modern Civil Rights Movement, the concerned citizens questioned the motive behind the programming and whether it represented progress or situational segregation and the reinforcement of racial stereotypes. This dance party promoted a wholesome and respectable portrayal of District of Columbia teenagers and helped to quell the naysayers.

American Bandstand, launched in 1952 and hosted by Dick Clark, epitomized the teen-oriented dance show that provided a new venue for music and vernacular dance, and further helped propel television from its infancy into the popular medium it would become. It spawned many local shows that replicated this relatively cheap format and galvanized community spirit. "*Teenarama*" premiered after the demise of the popular, but segregated, *Milt Grant Show* that ran on WTTG for five years (1956-1961). White teens clamored to dance on the show, but their Black counterparts could only dance on Tuesdays, derisively dubbed "Black Tuesdays" in the affected community. WTTG executives claimed that the *Milt Grant Show* "had run its course" when they canceled it in March 1961. The more probable cause was that the show was taped from Maryland's Glen Echo Amusement Park's Spanish Ballroom, and after protests from activists to desegregate the park, it was slated to integrate in April 1961. The network did not want the racial firestorm that an integrated teen dance show might bring at the time.

Though aimed at a Black audience, "*Teenarama*" attracted the attention of racially diverse teens throughout the District, Maryland, and Virginia. It flourished under the tutelage of its most celebrated host Bob King who saw and cultivated the potential in many of the show's most popular dancers known as "regulars."

The regulars became community celebrities and helped popularize the show and the latest dances, while serving as role models and policing the behavior of other dancers. King left "*Teenarama*" under the cloud of an alleged but unsubstantiated scandal. The beloved show continued under various hosts until November 20, 1970 and distinguished itself as one of the most enduring of this genre. Though the legendary personality Don Cornelius credited music and dance events he produced in his hometown of Chicago as the precursor to the iconic *Soul Train*, (that launched locally in 1970 and nationally in syndication in 1971), there is a cultural continuum between these African American, youth-oriented, televised dance shows that catered to and showcased Black teens, music, and popular dances. *The Teenarama Dance Party* remains an important part of cultural history as a testament to the racial progress unfolding during the era and a cherished memory in the hearts and minds of those who danced on and watched the show.

In 2006, Beverly Lindsay-Johnson, a documentary producer, produced the award-winning documentary, **Dance Party: The Teenarama Story** that showcased and preserved the history of this iconic teen show. **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story** continues the legacy by adapting the story into a musical, written and scored by Jiiko Ozimba, to bring this seminal piece of D.C. history to a new generation and audience.

*Dr. Brown is professor of history and director of women's studies at Bowie State University. The editor of **Soul Thieves: The Appropriation and Misrepresentation of African American Popular Culture**, she is a cultural historian specializing in expressive black culture, popular culture, and the performing/vernacular arts. She appeared in the Emmy Award winning PBS documentary **Dance Party: The Teenarama Story**. Specifically, Dr. Brown advocates for the historical analysis of dance, culture, and the arts as history—how dance and other cultural forms inform the historical record.*

Photo credit: Ronald Bailey



Letter from Ward 7 Councilmember Vincent Gray



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

VINCENT C. GRAY
Ward 7 Councilmember
Chair, Committee on Health
Co-Chair, Special Committee on COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery

Committee Member:
Business and Economic Development
Judiciary and Public Safety

I am pleased to support the African American Music Association's musical theater project, "Dancing on The Air: The Teenarama Story," a musical play that illustrates the legacy of a local African American teen dance show, The Teenarama Dance Party, which aired on WOOK-TV Channel 14 from 1963 to 1970 in the District.

Teenarama was a vitally important part of teen culture in DC as the show was specifically created for African American teenagers to showcase their dance talents during a time when, due to racial segregation, black teens did not have the same opportunities to showcase their talents on mainstream shows such as the Milt Grant Show. The show also provided television and radio production skills to many of the teens who later gained successful careers in the media.

As a native Washingtonian and a graduate of Dunbar High School during the Teenarama era, I can attest to the importance of this type of programming for our communities. This musical theater production of "Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story" produced by the African American Music Association, a Ward 7 non-profit organization, will bring this historical story of DC's African American history and teen culture back to Ward 7 and District residents. I truly support and applaud your efforts!

Best wishes on your project and continued success!

Sincerely,

Vincent C. Gray

Kimberly E. Douglass –

Director, Theatre Operations & Programming, THEARC Theatre



As a Black artist, creative, and administrator, I find power in advocacy. Access, inclusivity and exposure for Black artists and creatives dwindled, or in many cases were non-existent, during the pandemic. We surrendered to the moment and have found POWER in new ways to share our stories and our art. As we slowly re-emerge into our new normal, we at THEARC Theater are continuing to prioritize creating equitable opportunities for Black and Brown citizens to consume and train in the arts. **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story** showcases the best of stories in contributing to historic legacy of Black artists during the teen dance era and is a story to be told within the community and all over the world.

THEARC Theater's journey to create pathways for the next generation is inspired by the free, joyful, and hopeful existence of future generations who ride the air of artistry and activism to bring about the necessary CHANGE we want and need in the arts community and beyond. Unapologetically we must be unyielding in serving OUR communities with TRUTH and building a lasting legacy for Black artists.

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DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES



Community Partners



Creative Team

TONY BERRY Musical Director



Tony is a Musician, Vocal Arranger, Singer, Songwriter and Musical Director. He was the Musical Director for the DC vocal group, The Velons, from 1986 to 2020. With his band, he has been Keyboardist and has provided musical backup to many legendary early R&B artists such as The Temprees, The Mad Lads, Baby Washington, The Chantels, The Jewels, Maxine Brown, and Barbara Harris of The Toys. As a songwriter, Tony has written, composed, and arranged original songs for legendary classic vocal groups including The Velons, The Jewels, The Rainbows, and The Clickettes

CARMEN WHITE, Ph.D., RDT/ BCT Cast Choreographer



Carmen White (aka DramaDoctor & Equity Member) is a spirited performer, inspirational speaker, drama therapist, and passionate educator who engages audiences worldwide by enlightening the mind and energizing the heart. A leading authority on drama-based training and experiential learning, Carmen is the Founder and President of Dramatic Solutions, Inc. (DSI), a comprehensive drama educational company and clinical practice. Also, an acclaimed actress and choreographer, Carmen embraces creativity as a medium to educate, develop, and nurture talent. She has spent more than 22 years collaborating with government agencies, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and corporations to facilitate development of their personnel. Carmen received her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction and Human Development at the University of Maryland, College Park; a Master of Arts degree in Educational Leadership from New York University; and, a Bachelor of Arts degree from New York University in Educational Drama. Carmen has been a Kennedy Center Artist-in-Residence for the past eleven years, and is delighted to be embarking on the third year of the DC Partnership Residency Research project.

LAWRENCE "BRAD" BRADFORD Cast Hand Dance Instructor



Lawrence "Brad" Bradford is the Founder, CEO, and Lead Master Instructor for the Smooth & Ez Hand Dance Institute. The Institute located at the Solar Eclipse in Washington, DC is recognized as the largest and most known Hand Dance School in the nation. Brad's philosophy is, *"An instructor's worth is measured by how well his or her students dance"*. In that regard, he has excelled, in fact he has produced more champion dancers than all of his competitive instructors combined. A native Washingtonian, he has for the past 30 years devoted himself to the preservation, promotion and advancement of the swing dance art form known as "Hand Dance". Brad is the only Nationally Certified Hand Dance Instructor in the United States. In 1992, he established the Institute with the goal of returning Hand Dance to its former illustrious place as one of the most exciting forms of entertainment in the DMV. Under the watchful eye of Lawrence Bradford, Hand Dance has grown and prospered in its return to popularity. It has once again regained its place and prominence in the dance community as one of a handful of sought-after art forms. This was never so evident as when the District of Columbia City Council in 1999, solely at the urging of Lawrence Bradford, recognized and declared by Resolution Hand Dance as the official dance of Washington.

Creative Team

FRANKIE L. BETHEA

Set Designer/Props/Makeup



Frankie is a proud native of Washington DC, with an intense passion for the arts. Frankie earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Theatre Arts at Howard University, where her admiration and love for Set Design and Technical Production blossomed. In 2017, Frankie completed an Internship with Bellafaccia Incorporated. Bellafaccia was fertile ground for Frankie. *"My journey has been filled with life changing moments; I have been fortunate to have learned from those whom I consider to be some of the most talent human beings on earth."* Frankie's design work can be seen in Views from Forever Duncan, In Red and Brown Water, Cabaret 1&2 and Blood at the Root.

SHORTÉ MADDOX

Costume Manager



An icon in the Hand Dance Community for over 30 years, Shorté is a consummate businesswoman. A beautician by trade, she has owned and operated several successful salons in various locations across the DMV. Shorté is passionate about her craft and has won multiple hair industry awards, (including the "Businesswoman of The Year Award" & "The Legends Award"). In this same industry, she has produced numerous Hair & Fashion Shows to rave reviews. Shorté also is credited with laying the blueprint for flare and glam in the Oldies Hand Dance clubs and introducing vibrant color schemes and designs to wardrobe in the Hand Dance community. Her contributions to hair and wardrobe began a noticeable fashion trend that still resonates within the Hand Dance community today.

Shorté is currently a Wardrobe Specialist at Ford's Theater in Washington, DC where she maintains and designs costumes for all in-house productions.

AISHA MASSAC

Make-up Artist Aisha Massac is a licensed makeup artist and esthetician. She is skilled with all skin tones and hair textures. Aisha Massac is a full production artist working in the area of print, TV, Film and video. Aisha has been called on by some of the top cosmetic and production companies such as LOREAL, Iman's Cosmetics, I- Envy/Kiss, H&M and Maybelline to name a few. Aisha's talent, professionalism and work ethics has made her one of the most sought after artist in her area. She has trained with Oprah's makeup artist, Derrick Rutledge, Vanessa William's makeup artist Sam Fine, perfected her brow techniques under the tutelage of celebrity brow artist Damone Roberts, and many other notables in the makeup arena. She has extensive experience in dealing with people of all personalities and enjoys the results of making people feel good. With extensive training in Makeup Artistry, she currently manages her own makeup artistry company. Aisha has created makeup looks for well-known celebrities, such as Russell Simmons, Taraji Henson, and Sandra Day O'Conner to name a few — some of her work can be viewed in People Magazine, O Magazine, Washington Post Magazine, Time, and Heart & Soul.



Creative Team

JIIKO OZIMBA (Director/Playwright/Songwriter)

Selah City Urban Theatre



Jiiko Ozimba hails from Washington, DC and was raised in Prince George's County, Maryland. In her youth, Jiiko visited many nations, and was often struck by the oppression she saw. She became a political science major, hoping to become a diplomat. However, as a student at the University of Maryland, European Division in Munich, Germany, Jiiko learned that the arts and media had real, world-changing power. She received her secondary education and early college education at the University of Maryland, Stuttgart, Germany and Munich, Germany. Having co-founded a student organization for students of color at the University in Germany, Jiiko wrote her first full-length production, **Reclaiming Glory** before matriculating at Howard University where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communications, with an emphasis in film. While at Howard University, Jiiko also began her education in theater and wrote her first plays. Her first professional production, **Good Luvin'** was produced in 1999 and was received by sell-out audiences. Jiiko Ozimba is the Founder and Artistic Director of the Washington, DC-based Selah City Urban Theatre. She has created seven musicals, including three for children while serving as an arts educator. In addition to the children's musicals, Jiiko Ozimba released the impactful Gospel musical, **Pardon** in 2010, followed in 2015 by the incomparable gentrification musical, **North Capital**. Her harmony of soulful original music, comedy, and controversy is the hallmark of her work and her newest work, **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story**, promises to provide the same.

BEVERLY LINDSAY-JOHNSON (Executive Producer)

Kendall Productions, LLC



Beverly Lindsay-Johnson has been producing award winning television programs since 1996. She retired after 30 years of service at Howard University and WHUT-TV Howard University Television located in Washington, DC. WHUT-TV is the nation's first African American owned and operated PBS station. She has received 24 television industry awards for her productions at WHUT, including the Central Education Network (CEN) Jerry Trainor Award for her contributions to public television. She is the first woman and first African American to receive this award. Beverly Lindsay-Johnson is President of Kendall Productions LLC, her multi-media production company. In June 2007 she received the National Capital Chesapeake Bay Chapter of The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Emmy Award for her documentary production **Dance Party: The Teenarama Story**. She is the Executive Producer for the musical **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story**. Her current documentary production, **Fat Boy: The Billy Stewart Story**, is produced for PBS broadcast. The documentary was awarded the 2021 Communicator Award in Excellence in the television/film category. In January 2021, she became the Executive Director of the African American Music Association in Washington, DC. She is the former President of the National Hand Dance Association in Washington, DC. Mrs. Lindsay-Johnson is also a Community Researcher for the Bronx African American History Project (BAAHP). She works with BAAHP in documenting the history of early R&B artists from the Morrisania section of The Bronx such as The Chantels and the Chords.

Production Team

**Calvin c. Watkins, Jr. – Director of Photography/Editor
President/CEO, Chosen Media, Inc,**



**Pete Chatmon - Musician, Producer, Musical Director,
Consultant, Entrepreneur**



These are just few of the many titles Pete is known to hold. As a 15-year veteran in the business, Pete's gifted musicianship, eclectic leadership style and loving personality have all placed him in high demand for his studio production, performances and mentorship; and have subsequently carried him across the waters, while lending these same gifts and talents to audiences, artists, dignitaries and leaders from around the world. To date, he has played for many gospel and R&B icons, including the Clark sisters, Kim Burrell, Stephen Hurd, Mike McCoy, Vashawn Mitchell, Chaka Khan, Ginuwine, Miki Howard, Raheem Devaughn, Big Daddy Kane and Anthony David, to name a few. Pete is the father of three beautiful daughters and holds to his motto that, "music is shaped through melodies and melodies are molded through life's journeys."

**Darlene Wallace
Still photography**



A native Washingtonian, Darlene participated in the first year of former DC mayor Marion Barry's summer work program as a clerk-typist. She graduated from Ballou high school in Washington, DC in 1979 and attended Prince George's community college to study word processing and accounting. She also attended the U.S.D.A graduate school and received her certificate of accomplishments in computer graphics programs. Darlene has 40 years of government service (U.S. Department of treasury, commodity futures trading, and the U.S. Department of transportation). A self-taught photographer and fashion designer, she created costumes for dance productions of *Lion King Alive* with Arron Jackson, *The Wiz* with Marcellus dance studio, and different productions danced by the dance institute of Washington. She also created several award-winning costumes for her daughter. Her passion is working with people and teaching the younger generation life skills.

**Shirley Robinson-Turner
Wardrobe Assistant**



Shirley has been a wardrobe assistant for the past two years, focusing on apparel alteration and design execution. She is experienced in theatrical wardrobe coordination along with assisting in performer costume changes. Shirley is dedicated to artistic integrity as an assistant wardrobe manager utilizing superior attention to detail in theatrical garments. She is a certified Hand Dance instructor and former member of a traveling professional dance troupe in the United States for over 30 years. Eventually, Shirley accepted a position at Prince George's Community College as leading Hand Dance Instructor between 2006-2009. Throughout the years, she continued to teach at various Hand Dance centers in Maryland.

**Alisa Hicks
(Intern)**

Pre & Post Production Team

Desiree P. Urquhart

Playbill Editor



Desiree recently retired after a 40-year career as a technical writer, proposal coordinator, government lobbyist, business development administrator, fundraiser, and cultural arts executive for several Fortune 500 engineering design firms, nationally renowned performing arts organizations and educational institutions. She also worked as the Special Assistant to the City Manager of Beverly Hills, California during which time she participated in the conversion of the Will Rogers Post Office into a 500-seat theater, the redevelopment of the Greystone Mansion into a murder-mystery dinner theater, the conversion of the City Hall lobby into an art museum, and the installation of art and sculptures in public spaces throughout the richest city in America. In 1999, she began her 13-year relationship with Arena Stage, the preeminent regional theater in Washington, DC. There she served in numerous capacities including as Director of the Allen Lee Hughes Fellowship Program, Director of Community Engagement, Director of Corporate Development, Director of Government and Community Relations, and as Associate Executive Director. Desiree briefly served as Vice President of Arts Education at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) in Newark where she oversaw 27 arts education programs in music, dance, theater and writing, before returning to Arena Stage to continue her lobbying efforts to secure public funds to support the theater's renovation program to expand its footprint on DC's SW Waterfront. A graduate of Wellesley College (Davis Scholar) and a National Urban Fellow (Baruch College), she studied abroad in South Africa soon after Nelson Mandela became president, and completed her thesis on the "Role of Black Theater in Sustainable Community Development Post-Apartheid: Creating a Blueprint for Social, Economic and Educational Intervention." Writing is Desiree's first love. Since moving to Isle of Wight County, Virginia to care for her 94-year-old mom, she has served as a contributing writer for the Western Tidewater Magazine and for the Windsor Weekly Newspaper for which she had a regular byline column entitled, "Someone to Watch." A grandmother of three, she currently is working on an historical romance novel and an anthology of short stories. Desiree feels blessed to have befriended Beverly Lindsay-Johnson and honored to have provided editorial services for the **Dancing on The Air: The Teenarama Story** playbill.

Renée Littleton

(Media/Marketing)



Renée Littleton has enjoyed a varied career in arts management connecting audiences with meaningful and quality performances and events through comprehensive communications strategies. Renée currently serves as the Chief Communications and Director of Marketing for The Phillips Collection, employing creative marketing strategies and partnerships in line with the museum's vision and brand identity. Prior to The Phillips Collection, she served as the Senior Director of Marketing and Communications at Arena Stage, where she focused on dynamic and effective marketing strategies, audience development, sustainability and establishing long-lasting relationships in the community. Renée has had the opportunity to work at diverse Washington metropolitan arts organizations, including Washington National Opera, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and LORD Cultural Resources in marketing, public relations, and development. At the Atlas Performing Arts Center, known for contemporary programming and its annual arts festival, Renée served as its publicist and marketing specialist for 7 seasons. She also has served as a consultant to small to midsize arts organizations, including Tribute Productions, Washington Savoyards and African Continuum Theatre developing and implementing successful initiatives to achieve goals particularly for identity-based organizations. Renée has served on panels for the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities and as a mentor with Cultural DC's Mead Theater Lab program for emerging artists. She received her M.A. in Arts Management from American University and her undergraduate degree from Carnegie Mellon University. A former Class of 2001 Allen Lee Hughes Marketing Fellow at Arena Stage, she also was a member of the Class of 2006 Kennedy Center Fellows, a comprehensive management-training program for aspiring arts managers, led by Michael Kaiser. center fellows, a comprehensive management-training program for aspiring arts managers, led by Michael Kaiser.

Darwana "AYO" Black

Editorial Graphic Designer



A native Washingtonian, Darwana attended Duke Ellington School Of The Arts where she learned the value of hard work, cultural awareness and volunteering. She has a BA degree in Project Management from Strayer University and a certificate for graphic/web design from the University of the District of Columbia. She is a designer with a passion for solving problems through creative expressions. Darwana is the owner of BCJ Graphics Signage Solutions. Through the investment of so many people and communities, she has developed a deep appreciation for those around her and understands it takes a village. With her many skills and talents, she has dedicated the last 10 years to building relationships of trust, understanding, equal rights and dignity through the African American Music Association, inc. Whose mission is to preserve, protect, promote and foster the continued development of African American music, culture, and the legacy of those who compose, record, and perform the music.

FULL CAST

Adiyb Muhammad (*Tex Gathings*)



Adiyb was born in 1955 in Washington D.C., the son of Delores and John Tucker, and is the oldest of three siblings. A veteran stage and screen actor, Adiyb has performed as a singer for different corporate and agency events and is most proud to have opened up for Bryan McKnight at one of President Barack Obama's first inauguration celebrations in 2008. Adiyb also has appeared on TVONE, BET, Netflix, Amazon and in various independent film projects. He also is a cinema director and film producer. After producing several theatrical productions, he made the transition to film and television. **Dancing on The Air: The Teenarama Story** allows for his love of stage acting and singing to come together. Adiyb says, "This being a DC story holds a very special place in my heart." He hopes to inspire audiences to experience this story and these incredible young people in this wonderful production.

Art Garfield (*Voice Of Radio Announcer*)



Art is a veteran comedian, actor, producer, director, writer, and voice-over artist. He began his career in stand-up comedy while attending Alabama State University as house M.C. at the Punchline Comedy Club in Montgomery, Alabama. Originally from East Elmhurst, Queens-New York and currently residing in Silver Spring Maryland, Art has traveled the nation performing in the top comedy clubs, in television on HBO's Def Comedy Jam, and Showtime at the Apollo. Despite numerous appearances as an actor in commercials and films, including Mo Money, Boomerang, Wendy's and more, Art became passionate about his writing. Art's natural progression from performer to writer is evidenced by his humorous award-winning campaigns in advertising for the radio, featuring Barry White for Anhueser-Busch Bud Light; and American Express/Money Gram, winning the coveted Mercury Award and London International Festival Award respectively for each campaign. Art also created and wrote award-winning TV commercial campaigns for super-star comedians Steve Harvey, Bernie Mac, J. Anthony Brown and Tony T. Roberts, and for Pepsi and Burger King. He has even tackled comedy writing for morning radio in the tough New York City market at the #1 urban hip hop station Hot97, where he wrote for the Miss Jones in the Morning Show and was known for his hilarious prank telephone calls. In addition to currently developing animation projects. Art can be seen on YouTube's Cineflix Channel's movie review show called, "I Heard!" with fellow comedian JB SMOOVE (SNL, Curb Your Enthusiasm) doing hilarious movie reviews.

Autumn Drake (*Girl Dancer/"Totsie" Understudy*)



Autumn, a 14-year-old talented voice and performing arts student, attends Jefferson Middle School in SW DC and is a three-year veteran of Arena Stage's renowned "Voices of Now" (VON) theatrical troupe. Her performances include several stage productions and the online world-premiere of "Inside Voices," a film by the VON ensemble, which earned her much acclaim as a talented newcomer. Autumn's favorite thing about voice and theater is the expressive freedom it provides in capturing a moment and bringing her own energy to enlighten audiences. In fall 2021, Autumn entered the Duke Ellington School of the Arts – Vocal Music Program as a member of the graduating class of 2025.

Daniel Young (*Cash*)



Daniel is a junior at Bowie State University (BSU) where he studies Theater Arts with a concentration in acting/directing. Daniel is one of the founding members of a student-led leadership group in the theatre program that works closely with professors to plan events and productions for the program. Daniel has been acting for eleven year and has performed in many plays and musicals. His recent credits include: as AJ/Mr. Black in You Still Black (BSU Theatre); Steve in My Dream Girl (1939 Studios); Bernstein/Mr. Martin/Ensemble in Little Shop of Horrors (BSU Theatre); Mr. Warbucks in Annie (RBS VPAD); Peter in The Boardroom (R.A.R.E. Soul productions); Bernardo in Westside Story (RBS VPAD); Peter in Witnesses to the Cross (FBCG Drama); and more. Daniel also has had his directing debut, directing Nonie & Rocky or Nonie & Rocky. After opening his mind to other aspects of art, Daniel has found a new perspective on art as a whole and is very excited about what the future has in store.

John L. Townsend, Jr. (*Waxie Maxie DJ And Voice Of Hoodlum*)



Holding a Bachelor's Degree in English and a Master's Degree in Education from Howard University, John is an avid writer and educator in the Washington, DC area.

FULL CAST

Johnathan Hobbs (*Happy*)



Johnathan is a Washington DC native and has been singing most of his young life. At 16 years of age, he is entering his junior year as a Vocal Music major at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. Jonathan has been classically training for about 3 years and has been acting since he was little. He has received small dance training in basic ballet, jazz, African dance, contemporary, and hip hop from City Dance and other teachers. Jonathan has performed in local projects such as: Lion King jr. (Pumba); Hairspray Jr. (Seaweed Understudy/Dwayne); High School Musical jr. (Coach Bolton); Aladdin jr.; A Chorus Line (Director); Amhal and the Night Visitors Opera and, Motown Christmas (an original project).

Jordan Embrack (*Lita*)



Jordan is very excited to be a part of **Dancing on The Air: The Teenarama Story**. She is a sophomore at the University of Maryland College Park studying Musical Theatre Performance. Some of her recent credits include singing with the Washington Performing Arts Society in their Children of the Gospel Choir at venues including The White House, and The Kennedy Center; The Boardroom Stage Play with R.A.R.E Soul Productions (Niecy); and Four Little Girls at The Kennedy Center. High school productions include: Cinderella (Town woman); The Man Who Came to Dinner (Sarah); Sister Act (Sister Mary Patrick); and, Pirates of Penzance (Mabel). Jordan wants to thank her family for their love and support.

Jordyn Jones (*Little Bits*)



Jordyn is a 16-year-old Washington, DC native and a senior at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts where she has trained in multiple vocal styles including Opera/Classical, Musical Theatre, Jazz, and Pop. Also trained in multiple dance styles and multiple acting, Jordyn has amassed regional theater credits for her performances in Once on This Island, Amahl and the Night Visitors, Porgy and Bess, and Motown Christmas.

Layla Smith (*Girl Dancer*)



Layla has been acting and dancing since she was 3 years old, taking up the art form after her mom and dad. Layla has been in many shows over the years and has had the opportunity to perform at renowned Washington, DC entertainment venues such as Arena Stage and The Kennedy Center. When it comes to dance, Layla loves to do hip hop and contemporary styles but also has experience in ballet, modern, jazz, tap, and musical theatre. She has danced at numerous dance studio's over the years but currently dances at Dance Expression Dance Studio and has been for the past three years. Layla attended Bishop McNamara High School and performed in some of their musical productions and dance shows. After graduating high school, she will attend Towson University in fall 2021 and will major in theatre arts. In the future, Layla plans to be an actress, dancer, and choreographer. She loves the fine arts and can't see herself doing anything other than that. Layla's mantra in life that keeps her going is that, "You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you" (Philippians 4:13). She uses this Bible verse to encourage her to keep moving further and to live out her dreams.

Leander Jackson, Jr. (*Bob King*)



Leander began his involvement in theatre when he joined the drama ministry of First Baptist Church of Glenarden (FBCG) in January 2017. His first time in a production was FBCG's Christmas musical, Uncut Coming of Christ. His first speaking role came in FBCG's 2018 Good Friday production, Witnesses to the Cross, as Believing Brother in Siblings 5000. Other credits include roles as: Doubting Brother in FBCG's Witness to the Cross (2019); Junior in RARE SOUL Production's, The Board Room (Summer 2019); and as Soldier, Townsman & Dancer in the Uncut Coming of Christ (2018 & 2019). Leander has an Associate's degree in Mass Communication and in fall 2021, will transfer to Towson State University to earn his Bachelor's degree in the same field. His other interests and experiences include two years of coaching as Assistant 15U basketball coach, Head Elementary basketball and Elementary Flag Football coach. He would like to thank his mom, dad, family, and everyone who's been with him through his continuous and fun journey in life. Leander states, "I consider myself to be honored and blessed to be a part of this amazing production, **Dancing on The Air: The Teenarama Story**."

Lindsay Renee Benjamin (*Maxine*)



Lindsay is a native of Washington, DC and is honored to be making her theater debut in **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story**. A graduate of Fisk University, Lindsay has spent the past decade as a professional dancer, instructor, and choreographer. Her specialties include commercial hip hop dance, heels performance, and ballroom. She has performed alongside artists such as Nao, Coco Jones, and Riley Knox at events such as the Essence Festival, Afropunk Festival and the Washington Wizards halftime performance.

Marvin Boone (*Chaz Hall*)



Marvin is proud to be working with SELAH Theater Company in **Dancing on Air: The Teenarama Story**, after having performed the lead role of Gary in play, **North Capitol** (also produced by Selah Theater). Most recently Marvin appeared in Cola McGill Productions' *Life After Death: Stories of Those Who Decided to Live Through Grief*. As a former classroom educator, Marvin has always used music and dramatic expression as tools to reach his students. His breakout role as Oliver "Daddy" Warbucks in the hit musical, *ANNIE*, *The Musical* (produced by The Arts & Technology Academy), highlighted Marvin's smooth tenor vocals and budding stage persona. Marvin was raised in Miami, Florida and is a graduate of Howard University. When not acting, Marvin is a licensed full-time realtor in the Washington, DC area. He releases a band of THANKS to his family and friends for their never-ending love and support.

Marya-Montez Wallace – (*Girl Dancer Production Assistant*)



Marya-Montez Wallace, is 19 years old and currently resides in Washington, DC. Marya attends Montclair State University in Montclair, New Jersey studying Theatre: Production, Design and Management. She has been studying dance since the age of 6. Over the years she has studied dance under various professional dancers such as Ebony Tye, Anthony Burrell, Afi Lydia, and others. Marya-Montez Wallace has also had the distinct opportunity to study dance at The Dance Institute of Washington for 6-7 years under Fabian Barnes himself along with Kahina Haynes, Ashante Green. Studying dance at The Dance Institute of Washington led her to train with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre with a full scholarship (summer 2016) and also with Earl Mosley at the Earl Mosley Institute

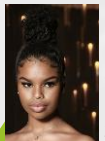
of the Arts (EMIA, both Summer 2019 & 2020) in studying various genres of dance. Marya began learning to DC Hand Dance at the age of 6 when she was instructed by Markus Smith & Trendlyn Veal. Her passion for Hand Dance and her dedicated training allowed her at the age of 8 years old to become a member of The National Hand Dance Association in Washington, DC (NHDA). Young Marya showcased with NHDA showcase dancers and traveled to New York to attend the 100th Birthday celebration of Swing Dance legend, the late Frankie Manning, where she had the opportunity to dance with and before such Savoy Ballroom legends as Norma Miller, George and Sugar Sullivan and Dawn Hampton.

Michael Hill (*DJ Night Light*)



Michael is a native Washingtonian, who now resides in Clinton, MD. He began his professional career as a pianist at the young age of 13, when he performed in the Mother's Band & Show alongside members of Parliament Funkadelic and Chuck Brown's Soul Searchers. Michael is a classically-trained baritone and attended the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. He was a student ambassador to help raise funds and awareness of what Ellington had to offer in the arts. For 10 years, Michael also trained the 1st place national and internationally adjudicated Oxon Hill High School Vocal Music Department. This choir is the only high school choir to win a Stellar Award in the Gospel Music Award's 37-year history. Currently, Michael is a vocal coach, music workshop clinician, songwriter, and is preparing to record his debut Gospel/Inspirational CD. in *Once on This Island*, *Amahl* and the *Night Visitors*, *Porgy and Bess*, and *Motown Christmas*.

Phoenix Miranda (*Totsie*)



Phoenix Miranda is a classically-trained vocalist from Prince George's County, Maryland. Since graduating from Suitland High School's Center for the Visual and Performing Arts in 2019, she is currently a junior pursuing her undergraduate degree in Voice Performance and Entrepreneurship at Michigan State University. Phoenix has played the role of Rapunzel in Montgomery College's Summer Dinner Theater production of *Into the Woods* and has performed on air with the Joshua Jenkins Quartet for Washington, D.C. jazz radio station, WPFW 89.3FM. She also was honored to perform on the John F. Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage and at the historic Fox Theatre in Detroit, Michigan. Recently, Phoenix produced and aired "Reflections: An Afrofuturism Podcast!" which can be streamed on Spotify, Apple, and the Podcast App.

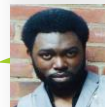
FULL CAST

Ronald Williams (*Block Boy Dancer*)



Ronald is a junior at Howard University in Washington, DC, studying for his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Musical Theatre. He recently finished his first “true” year studying Musical Theatre and plans to initially focus on live theatre and transition to film. Ronald also is a football player at Howard and a Scholarship ROTC Cadet.

Le’Shawn “SouLe” Troy-Rogers (*Jimmie Funk*)



Le’Shawn, also known as SouLe, was born and raised in Durham, N.C. He recalls at an early age being introduced to music in church, where he sang in the children’s choir displaying his high tenor voice. His voice has the cadences, intonations and sounds of Sam Cooke and Smokey Robinson and is celebrated as the reincarnated soul from Motown’s generation of music. As a Recording Engineer, Producer, Singer/Songwriter, Musician and Graphic Design artists at SouLe Muz, his music production company, Le’Shawn stays pretty busy. He’s quoted as saying, “I never lose sight of the things that are most important, such as my family and charity.”

Preston Jones (*Lucky*)



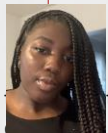
At 19 years old, Preston is currently a rising 3rd year student at Oberlin College & Conservatory in Ohio. He currently is working on getting his Bachelor’s Degree in Music with a major in Vocal Performance. Preston has had the opportunity to perform in various productions in various performance venues throughout the years. He was a choir member in Oberlin’s production of *Così fan tutte* in March 2020 and a choral member of the Maryland Lyric Opera’s production of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* in December 2016. He also was a featured soloist on a classical music-based podcast station called “From The Top” in March 2019. The program is part of an NPR station, which features young talented musicians from all across the country to showcase their musical abilities. Preston’s association with **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story** began when he played a character for its script reading held at the Kennedy Center “Page to Stage” Festival in September 2018. He is honored to be a part of its inaugural live professional stage production.

Sia Milner (*Theresa’s Mother*)



Sia, a native Washingtonian, is honored to be working again with the Selah City Theatre Company. She has been part of Selah’s ensemble since its inception and has played many roles in the company’s stage plays including: *Good Luvin’*, *Pardon: The Musical*, and *North Capital* in which she brightened the stage with her strong presence and soulful singing. Sia was the featured vocalist on the “Take It To The Streets” CD. She participated in the reading and musical performances of *Pardon* at the Atlanta Black Theater Festival and has written and directed several plays for the Beulah Baptist Church drama ministry. Sia is a graduate of Liberty University with a Master of Arts in Religion - Worship Studies. When not acting, she is the Minister of Worship at Beulah Baptist Church where she incorporates aspects of the arts into the Worship Experience to enhance the delivery of The Message.

Tashyanna Simpson (*Theresa*)



Tashyanna is a 17-year old high school senior at Takoma Academy in Maryland. She is the daughter of Owen and Pollet Simpson and the youngest of six children. Tashyanna is one who not only respects music, but also loves it. From a very early age, she started singing and from then on, she knew that she would never live without music in her life. Over the years, Tashyanna has cultivated her voice in such a way that is known and respected for invoking happiness in others. When she started high school, she began singing for chapel, which led to the opening of many other performance opportunities. She has travels to South Africa for the World Choir games with her high school choir and during which she was awarded one gold and two silver medals. She also had the privilege of singing at the Kennedy Center Honors in 2018 with Lin-Manuel Miranda and Christopher Jackson to celebrate the Broadway musical *Hamilton*. She also has had the opportunity of singing in a concert honoring opera legend Leontyne Price as well as participating in many other notable singing competitions. **Dancing of the Air: The Teenarama Story** is Tashyanna’s first musical theater performance. She plans on starting her freshman year at LaSierra University in Riverside, California in fall 2021, where she will double major in Pre- Med and Music Performance - Vocal. With these degrees, she hopes to one day become a surgeon and help people through medicine and music.

Joseph Silva – (*Voice Of Richard Eaton*)



STATEMENTS FROM ORIGINAL TEENARAMA DANCERS

Dr. Yvonne Mills-Lewis, Ph.D. - Teenarama Regular



I found out about The Teenarama Dance Party TV show in the halls of my high school, Calvin Coolidge in Washington, D.C. Word of this exciting all-black teen dance show spread like wildfire throughout the school. I remember going home to share the news with my parents and to get their permission to go. My popularity soared after becoming a "regular" on the show. As a young girl, I was very shy, protected and somewhat sheltered appropriately by my family, so the popularity and attention were exciting. It was nice to be recognized and it put a smile on my face. The popularity also served to enhance my self-esteem. Despite my shyness, I always loved to dance and was known for my triple turns with any one of my favorite dance partners: Albertis, Lucky or Mike. This was our legacy.

When Bob King, the beloved TV host gave me the nickname of "Little Bits," it made me feel so special because he recognized me. Bob King was our celebrity! I still treasure the nickname today because I have such wonderful memories of my high school experiences associated with it. Also, as an adult today, I have dear family, friends and colleagues who still call me by my nickname, and I enjoy that recognition.

It is so important to keep the legacy of the show in both the D.C. history and the African American history because it represents our story, our magnificent journey within our rich history.

Michael Goodwin - Teenarama Regular



I found out about the show by being a part of a group working with WOOK-TV's management to establish "Teenarama". We worked together to recruit other "regulars" and were there for the very first episode. I was, and am, an outgoing person and was already known in many areas of Washington, DC. The show, however, allowed me to become more well-known as one of the best dancers in town! The other regulars and I were on the show every day assisting Bob King and WOOK-TV. "Teenarama" became the foundation for creating a positive family atmosphere and establishing a TV show that was clean,

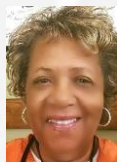
wholesome, and a wonderful entertainment venue for Black youth. Teens came from all parts of town to participate.

My fondest memory was being selected to appear on the Howard Theatre stage with Martha & The Vandellas dancing the "Shake-A-Tail Feather!" I also greatly enjoyed dinners with Bob King and his wife discussing "Teenarama" and what my next juncture in life would look like.

I went to Archbishop Carroll High School and lo and behold, a priest approached me one day and told me he'd seen me dancing up a storm on Wook-TV; his next question was, "Mr. Goodwin, do you have your homework?" My reply was what is now known as LOL!

The importance of this musical is that it will allow the general public to get a vision of the "good ole days" as seen through the eyes of my generation/era. Well-dressed and well-mannered young people were shown regularly interacting with all young people from all areas of the DMV with both "class and sass."

Donna Waters - Teenarama Regular



The influence that "Teenarama" had on my life as a teenager and adult was the dance program afforded me the opportunity to meet young people from other parts of the District. When I moved to other areas within DC, I reconnected with many of them, e.g., Footney and Carolyn who at one point lived around the corner from me in N.E. and who later married and became my adult friends.

"Teenarama" also allowed my self-esteem to grow and my popularity in high school was impacted in a positive way. At that time, DC had enrollment boundaries and you had to attend schools in your neighborhood. When the Board of Education changed the boundary system, students from other communities within DC went to high schools of their choice. Some academically gifted students commuted to Coolidge High School, but I was able to meet them on The Teenarama Dance Party show. My fondest memory was sitting on Wilson Pickett's lap when he sang "Sitting on the Dock of the Bay" and eating the Miles Long Sandwich! Cont...

STATEMENTS FROM ORIGINAL TEENARAMA DANCERS

....continued from previous page

My son knew how important hand dancing was to me. To honor this love of mine, he and his fiancé took hand dance classes at the Lincoln Theater. As a gift to me on their wedding day 17 years ago, he decided to make a Hand Dance his mother-son dance and also his first dance with his new wife.

I want the legacy of hand dancing to continue, and for it to be something that our youth find enjoyable for them to cling to as they grow up as I had on The Teenarama Dance Party.

Dorothy Clanagan ("Totsie") Teenarama Regular



When finding out about the television show, I was asked by Hosea Brown, who was working at WOOK with Lucky and Catoe Whitley, to come talk with them about becoming a "regular." After appearing on the show and becoming a regular, my popularity increased. It felt good when being recognized by other classmates as well as by people on the streets and elsewhere. Made me think myself that I was kinda important! I had the opportunity to meet a lot of new people and make new friends while attending The Teenarama Dance Party.

My favorite entertainers that appeared on the show were the Temptations. When I would see Paul Williams, I was done! He was sexy, a great serious singer and great dancer. James Brown appeared a lot from being at the Howard Theater: my other favorite was Mary Wells. Viewers remember fondly that Teenarama Dance Party was the city's first black teen dance show. History of this landmark broadcasted TV show was first captured in the 2006 Emmy Award winning documentary, **Dance Party: The Teenarama Story**, produced by Beverly Lindsay-Johnson.

The theatrical production of **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story** is important in keeping the legacy of "Teenarama", which was a major part of Black pride, Black images, and Black culture.

Lita Gray - Teenarama Regular



Oh, did I feel like a celebrity when in the company of my peers, classmates whispering "that's Lita" when I danced on "Teenarama". It even went beyond that. When riding the bus, people would ask me, "are you Lita? I've seen you dance o "Teenarama"." Then they would ask me about some of the regulars.

My fondest memories while being on the show was watching some of the dancers creating their different dances to the songs, the friendships and bonds that were made, and being up close to the entertainers featured on the show. Most importantly, Bob King introducing me to James Brown, and getting free tickets to the Howard Theater to see him perform!

Bob King projected that "father image" to all of us. He didn't hold his tongue when reprimanding us and you could talk to him about anything. He was very professional and "Teenarama" was very important to him. He made sure we dressed properly and projected a positive image in the character we presented on the show.

Robert Frye - Former Teenarama Dancer



Oh Man! The Teenarama Dance Party was the hottest topic of conversation in school and the neighborhood, especially the new UHF TV format.

I attended the show numerous times because my parochial school partners were already dressed in a suit coat and tie daily and got out earlier than most schools. That gave us a chance to be a dance partner to the girls that had a ticket..... and no partner! Stiff competition.... sometimes you win and sometimes you lose.

The first theme song from "Teenarama" was, "The Dontell Stomp." When you heard a song on the radio or heard it on the "Teenarama" show, you would run to the record store to get the "record-of-the-week" as advertised. We had the opportunity to see James Brown ALL the Motown stars. "Teenarama" was bigger than Ed Sullivan for us!

The youth today have figurines to follow such Chuck Brown, Sugar Bear, Big Tony and more. "Teenarama" showed us how to conduct and to present ourselves in a way that was social and entertaining, and that brought masses of people throughout the city together with pride, sharing their social skills in dance and friendship. Now there's no music, art or home economics in the schools to teach and grow future talents. Most of all, there's no "Teenarama"!

Capturing the story and the legacy of "Teenarama" in a theatrical setting will be a treasured way to give all a chance to go back to a magical time when 45rpm records changed thinking and the world.

STATEMENTS FROM ORIGINAL TEENARAMA DANCERS

Charles Hall ("Chaz") - Former Producer and Radio Host



Lifetime Board Member was, along with Calvin Hackett, a part of "Teenarama" Radio since the 11th grade. I got the opportunity to co-host the "Teenarama" Radio Show (1960). It gave me the opportunity to become a full-time radio personality and a Tech Assistant. When Mr. Eaton gave 'the green light' for Clifford Holland (Radio Manager and Program Director) and Tex Gathings (TV Director and Manager), the Teenarama TV Dance Party Show was created and allowed to go on the new WOOK television station.

There was excitement in the WOOK studios because "Teenarama" was produced and broadcast 6 days a week. The goal was to attract enough viewers, but I didn't think it would be as big as it got. It not only carved a niche in DC history, but now, also in African American and broadcast history. The Teenarama Dance Party lasted 7 years, from March 7, 1963, to its last broadcast on November 20, 1970.

My thought is that the success of the musical, **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story** will become a springboard for young people to understand what life was like in the 1960s for Black teens in DC and to take this and create their own legacy.

Reginald Luckett ("Lucky") - Teenarama Regular



I found out about the show at a party from a friend of mine, Hosea Brown, who invited me to the show where I met Cato Whitney and Chaz Hall. The rest is history. I was selected as a teen production assistant, and it built a certain amount of confidence in my life. It was easy being in charge because people were excited about the show and following the rules kept them coming back. Plus, I grew up in a tough environment that developed a toughness in my character. One of my responsibilities was picking up the entertainers from the Howard Theater because I was one of the few teens on the show that had a driver's license and a car. I was 16. When Tex Gathings, the program director, asked me to pick up Kim Weston, Carolyn Crawford, and Major Lance, I was excited because Ms. Weston was one of the most beautiful singers during that time, and Carolyn Crawford's song, "My Smile Is Just A Frown Turned Upside Down," was a hit then. And Major Lance was singing, "The Monkey Time," which was the most popular dance then.

I was there for six years as a production assistant and was offered an opportunity to learn broadcasting.

The documentary, **Dance Party: The Teenarama Story**, said it all. It made me realize the impact the show had on many lives in Washington, D.C. It showed the creativity of Black people in America during a highly racial era. It's important that the play expresses this foundational period where opportunities were few for us as Black people in America.

Albertis McCray, Jr. - Teenarama Regular



I was asked to be the partner by a female to dance with her on "Teenarama". the time, I did not know about the show. Once I went, I was hooked. I later found out you could be a "regular" in case enough kids did not show up. I applied and was excepted. "Teenarama" brought me great notoriety.

My fondest memory about being on WOOK was one summer when Bob King, the show's host, was going on vacation. He asked me if I would like to host the show. I said, "yes." I was given the chance to interview the guest, announce the records and do "Rate the Records." When Bob came back, he came to me and said the cameraman had said I was a natural. For me, that was high praise.

We were ladies and gentlemen. We were well groomed and polite. We went over to the ladies and asked them to dance, then took their hands and lead them to the dance floor. When we got there, we did a form of dance that was unlike any style outside of our area; nowhere else in the nation did they dance like we did. It was unique in its blackness! That is what I want to keep alive. Hand Dance is being taught all over the area and around the country now. Young and old are learning that a gentleman holds the lady's hand and guides her through the dance. I not only want to preserve our very own style of dance and our great skill at hand dancing, but also sustain our pride in both.

STATEMENTS FROM ORIGINAL TEENARAMA DANCERS

JAMES PRESTON Former Dancer (Submitted Prior to His Recent Passing on 9/6/2021)



"Teenarama" was new. It was a dance show for Black teenagers in D.C. and were on television. It was a whole new experience for a teenager back then. This is where I met people who became life-long friends, such as Yvonne Mills ("Little Bits"), Reggie Luckett ("Lucky"), and others. One other great experience was seeing and meeting the entertainers. I got to see Wilson Pickett, Kim Weston and Walter Jackson. I remember like it was yesterday. I hope that "Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama" musical will have an impact on today's youth the way that The Teenarama Dance Party TV show had on my generation.

Theresa Knight-Johnson - Teenarama Regular



I heard about The Teenarama Dance Party Television Show from my friend Vickie. While at a party, Vickie approached me saying she liked the way I danced and told me there was a television show in the city where teens from different high schools could go to dance. She invited me to come up to the studio where I would meet teens from all over Washington D. C. Since I liked to dance a lot, I decided to give it a try. I decided I wanted to go on the show because it would be a great opportunity and experience for me to meet other African American teenagers throughout the city.

I took a bus to the WOOK-TV studios, which took 1-1/2 to 2 hours one way. My thoughts as I rode the bus was to get to the station on time, making sure I was dressed properly and well groomed. I pondered about what special guest singer was going to be on the show and with whom I was going to be dancing with on the show. I often wondered about getting to ask Mr. Bob King if I could be on the Miles Longs commercial to get that juicy steak sandwich, which was delicious. Lastly, I thought about having a lot of fun with the other teens on the show. I was not aware of so many people admiring my style of dancing. However, I became aware when I would go to school and several people would approach me saying, "Girl, I saw you dancing on WOOK, and you were doing it!

"My favorite guest entertainers on the show were, James Brown, Carla Thomas, Walter Jackson, Mary Wells, Wilson Pickett, Kim Weston, Carla and Rufus Thomas, Pattie LaBell and the Blue Bells, Chubby Checker, Martha Reeves and the Vondell's. I admired Bob King for how he interacted with everyone. I enjoyed my interaction with him.

He was very encouraging and complimented me on my creative style of dancing. He had a way of letting you know that you were welcomed to be a part of the "Teenarama" family.

My wish for **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story** is to be known across the world for its great depictions of Washington, D.C. culture. Also, to acknowledge the contributions made for uncovering real-life stories that happen in our city during 1960-1970.

Maxine Grant – Former Teenarama Dancer



I felt very proud and honored to have danced on The Teenarama Dance Party television show. At present, it is extremely meaningful to look back on the history of "Teenarama" and to know that I was a part of that history.

I found out about the "Teenarma Dance Party," at my High School (Cardozo). One of our counselors saw a notice that WOOK Television Station needed black teens to dance on their new dance show. I was very interested in dancing on the television show because no one I knew had ever been on television. It sounded very interesting and would be a great experience for me since I loved to dance, and my parents didn't have a problem at all with me going on the show as long as I kept up with my studies and grades. Like many others who attended "Teenarama", I would say my fondest memories were seeing up-and-coming artists performing on "Teenarama" as well as connecting with teens from other schools.

I am excited that the documentaries and the musical about "Teenarama" will keep the legacy of "Teenarama" and Hand Dance alive.

There were several historical events that happened during the "Teenarama" era, like the Vietnam War, The March on Washington and the Riots of 1968 that had an impact on the "Teenarama" teens. The WOOK-TV studio and the "Teenarama" show was a safe haven for the young people during this time in U.S. history.

The theatrical musical, **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story**, is very important to keeping the legacy alive. The musical will give an insight to people who may or may not have heard of "Teenarama" and the significance of the show in the lives of some of the teens, and the WOOK personnel. I would like to express to the young people who are performing in the musical that the feeling it invokes is so surreal because I am reminded that I had the experience and made history as a trailblazer as one of the first African American teens to have danced on the air.

IN LOVING MEMORY

JOSEPH “TEX” GATHINGS
May 24, 1928 – July 9, 2020



Joseph Gathings III, affectionately known as “Tex” Gathings, was recognized as the “rock and glue” that held Washington, DC’s WOOK Radio and Television together. One of the most highly respected African American pioneers in broadcasting in D.C., Tex will always be remembered as the Executive Producer of *The Teenarama Dance Party* on WOOK-TV (Ch. 14)

Born at Freedman’s Hospital on the campus of Howard University, Tex and his family moved from Washington to Houston, Texas where his father started a medical practice. After attending Lincoln University in Oxford, Pennsylvania, he took a job as a radio announcer with radio station WOOK-AM in Washington, DC. After serving in the military, he returned to WOOK and when the station received its TV license in 1962, Tex became the Production Director.

“The station was so underfunded that they sent me to pick up a broadcast antenna. They couldn’t afford a moving truck, so I had to put the antenna on the back of my car and bring it back to DC.”

WOOK-TV was the first television station in the nation to program for the “Negro Audience”. Tex became the Executive Producer of the WOOK-TV show, *The Teenarama Dance Party*, a local teen dance show created for African American teenagers in filling the void when black teens were not allowed on the popular Milt Grant Show (WTTG) where white teens danced. “*Teenarama*” became a hit and the jewel of the black community in D.C.

Tex was highly respected by teens. He took “no mess.” He had a stocky build and was known to carry a pistol!

“We made sure that the teens were well dressed and definitely well behaved. If you weren’t, you were off the show.”

Tex left WOOK in 1972 to take a teaching position at Federal City College, which became the University of the District of Columbia. He remained there until his retirement.

He was honored by his peers in 2007 when he was inducted into the Gold Circle of the National Capital Chesapeake Bay Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. He appeared in the Emmy Award-winning documentary, **Dance Party: The Teenarama Story**.

In 2018, **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story** playwright, Jiiko Ozimba, Executive Producer Beverly Lindsay-Johnson and several former *Teenarama* Dance Party participants had the pleasure of having lunch with Tex. Listening to him discuss his life, career and time with *The Teenarama Dance Party* was an honor.

“Bold, funny, gracious and, intelligent... Tex Gathings didn’t seem to give much regard to being considered a trailblazer, one who impacted so many lives, or one who made history. He simply felt that he was a man “doing his job.” What a great human to believe and demonstrate that giving committed, groundbreaking, lifelong service to his people and his industry was no great feat, but the basic expectation of us all. Thank you for the rich legacy and lessons that you have left with us Tex. You will not be forgotten.”

Jiiko Ozimba, Playwright/Director
Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story

IN LOVING MEMORY



JAMES PRESTON, SR.
MAY 24, 1947 – SEPTEMBER 6, 2021

James Preston, Sr. was known by his many friends and colleagues as "Preston." Preston was a loyal "self-appointed" spokesperson of *The Teenarama Dance Party*, the African American teen television dance show on WOOK-TV in Washington, DC. Preston was proud to say that he danced on "*Teenarama*" in its early years. He wasn't a "*Teenarama*" Regular, but his presence was always known when he attended the show. He met many fellow "*Teenarama*" dancers, who became his life-long friends.

After aging out of the show, Preston was later drafted into the U.S. Army and was stationed in Vietnam where he served for two years. He received the Army Commendation Medal for his "exceptional meritorious service in connection with ground operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam."

He worked for the U.S. Department of Treasury for 37 years as a senior computer analyst. After his retirement, Preston went into private practice as the Director of the Justice & Mediation Service Center. He was a certified life coach, strategist, and taught conflict management and mediation techniques.

He graduated from Eastern High School in the Class of 1965. In 2006, he served as interim chairman of the 10,000-member Eastern High School Alumni Association of D.C.

Preston was an avid D.C. Hand Dancer and always talked about his hand dancing on *The Teenarama Dance Party* television show.

In 1998, Preston was introduced to Beverly Lindsay-Johnson, who at that time was conducting research for her upcoming documentary, **Dance Party: The Teenarama Story**. From that time until his passing, he provided contacts and resources for her productions on the story of "*Teenarama*", including **Dance Party: The Teenarama Story**, **Dancing Through the Flames: How DC Dance Culture Survived 1968** and **Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story**. He assisted with fundraising efforts for "*Teenarama*"-related projects and in organizing focus groups, which assisted playwright Jiiko Ozimba in developing the script for ***Dancing On The Air: The Teenarama Story***.

Preston was a founding member of Teenarama Incorporated, which was organized after the first "*Teenarama*" Reunion Picnic in the summer of 1998. He became the organization's first Executive Secretary. In 2021, Teenarama Incorporated appointed James Preston, Sr., a Lifetime Board Member.

"Preston was my "go to" person for information on "Teenarama". If he didn't know a particular subject about "Teenarama", he certainly referred me to someone who did. Preston went so far as to go to former dancers last known addresses and knock on the doors to see if they still lived there, and if so, gather their stories and contact information for me. I did not ask him to do that, he did that on his own and told me afterwards what he'd done. He was a dedicated preserver of the history and legacy of The Teenarama Dance Party.

*Beverly Lindsay-Johnson, Executive Producer
Dancing on the Air: The Teenarama Story*

TEENARAMA ERA GLOSSARY

Block Boy – A slang term in the 1960s for neighborhood teen males who were street savvy with a “cool” attitude, and fashionably dressed.

Block Boy Style of Hand Dance – A description of the style of hand dancing that the young men did in showing off their Hand Dance skills. The style is considered “cool.”

Boogaloo – A popular freestyle dance created in the 1960s.

Hand Dance – A swing-style partner social dance popular in Washington, DC. The dance is a descendant of the Lindy Hop of the 1940s. The dance was grounded (versus the aerial style of the Lindy Hop) and was danced to popular music of the era. Popular during the “*Teenarama*” era, the dance was called “Fast Dance” and was danced to the sounds of Motown, Stax, Atlantic and other tunes.

Bob King - Bob King was the first and most popular host of the original *Teenarama* Dance Party. Bob King was also a popular DJ on WOOK-AM radio.

Langston Park – Located in the Carver/Langston neighborhood clusters in Northeast D.C.

Miles Long Sandwich Shop - A popular sandwich shop in the 1960s and 70s, which served sub sandwiches (before the “Subway” franchise). You could order a “half Mile” (half foot) or a “Mile Long” (a foot long). The radio promotion was voiced by “Pearl, the Miles Long Sandwich”. The Miles Long Sandwich Shops were corporate sponsors of the original *Teenarama* Dance Party Show. The live commercial during “*Teenarama*” featured selected teens on the show eating the Miles Long Sandwich with a drink.

Nineteens (“19s”) – A very popular ladies shoe in the Washington DC area during the 1960s. The shoes were called “19s” by teen girls because they cost \$19.00. The original shoe was sold at I. Miller’s shoe store, located at 13th & F Streets, NW. In 2010, the shoes made a comeback by entrepreneur Nancy Smalls who bought the patent from I. Miller and created the same style from the show. The new Nineteens became a sell-out at \$190.00 a pair!

Payola - In the music industry, is the illegal practice of paying a commercial radio station to play a song without the station disclosing the payment. Under US law, a radio station must disclose songs they were paid to play on the air as “sponsored airtime.” The number of times a song is played can influence the perceived its popularity. (per Wikipedia, 15 Aug. 2021. Web. 9 Sep. 2021).

Rate the Record – A segment on the *Teenarama* show during which a new song was promoted by the host playing the song. A group of dancers from the show would rate the song based on sound and danceability. “Rate the Record” eventually became a show on WOOK-TV hosted by DJ Johnny Lloyd.

Regulars – A committee of teens from *The Teenarama Dance Party Show* who were given privileges apart from the general audience of teens appearing on the show. Privileges included entry without tickets, assisting the host in segments of the show, and transporting entertainers appearing on the show.

Riggs Park - A residential neighborhood in Ward 4 of Northeast D.C. where WOOK studios were located.

Teenarama – The abbreviated title of the original *Teenarama* Dance Party Show on WOOK-TV in Washington, DC. “*Teenarama*” was created for DC area African American teenagers and aired from 1963-1970. “*Teenarama*” was hosted by WOOK radio deejay Bob King.

The Milt Grant Show – The Milt Grant Show was a teen dance party program aired on WTTG-TV in Washington, DC from 1956 to 1961. It was hosted by a former radio deejay, Milt Grant. Due to racial segregation during this era, African American teenagers in D.C. were not invited to attend and dance on the show, which presented white teenagers. Eventually, the black teens were allowed to appear on the show on Tuesdays, eventually coined “Black Tuesday” by the black community.

Top 10 Board – A list of popular tunes of the week based on ratings from WOOK radio.

Waxie Maxie’s – A popular local D.C. record store located at 1836 7th Street, NW. Crowds gathered to watch WOOK-AM disc jockeys broadcast nightly from a glass booth in the front window of the store. Occasionally, musicians performing at the nearby Howard Theater dropped by to promote their records.

WOOK Cooker & WOOKIE Cookie – A slang term for the male (WOOK Cooker) and female (WOOKIE Cookie) dancers on the original *Teenarama* Dance Party Show.

WOOK-TV and WOOK-AM – WOOK-AM began broadcast in 1947 by owner Richard Eaton and his company United Broadcasting Co. In 1962, Eaton received a television license and created WOOK-TV. WOOK-TV debuted on March 5, 1963, and *The Teenarama Dance Party* debuted on March 7, 1963. Both WOOK-TV and WOOK-AM were programed for “The Negro Audience” (as described in its marketing booklet). In the 1960s, the WOOK studios were located at 5321 1st Place, NE.

SPECIAL THANKS

Michon Boston
Busboys and Poets, Anacostia
Marvee Campbell (Modern Glamour & Vintage Too)
Tommi Childs
Jean Crowe
Marian Currie
James Daughtridge
Edgar Dobie (Arena Stage)
Pearl Waldrup Gathings
Meshawn Clarke Hellums
Renee Hoaney & The Late Skip Mahoney
William Johnson
Kennedy Center Page-to-Stage Festival
Leon Isaac Kennedy
Larry Law
Christine Liddell
Renee Littleton
Professor Julie Malnig
Shirley Meachum
Kenneth O'Banyon
James Preston II
Joe Rivera
Sybil Roberts
Linda Roberson
Dee Dee Sharp
Nancy Smalls
Ronald "Smokey" Stevens
Staged Readings Cast Members
The Caldwell Family
John L. Townsend, Jr.
Susan Townsend
Desiree P. Urquhart
VFW Post 9619

Ron Burke - (Washington Informer Newspaper)
Brenda Siler - (Washington Informer Newspaper)
Roy Lewis - (Washington Informer Newspaper)
John Kelly - (The Washington Post)
Jas. Funk - (WPFW. 89.3 FM)
Coach Butch McAdams ("In and Out of Sports" Podcast)

LEGAL CONSULTANTS

John Mercer, Esq.
William T. Jolley, Esq.

And to all those not listed who have provided support to
this project .



QUOTES FROM YOUNG CAST MEMBERS

"Lita was expected to live a certain life. The expectations placed on her made her rebel. She realized that true love, good dancing and friendship brought her joy."

Jordan Embrack ("Lita")

"Being a young adult with an old soul, I loved the opportunity of being involved with such an important piece of history."

Leander Jackson, Jr. ("Bob King")

"I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to be in such a historical production. Now I can bring up 'Teenarama' when people start talking about American Bandstand."

Le'Shawn Troy-Rogers ("Jimmie Funk")

"Feeling Mr. Luckett's emotions and reenacting Mr. Luckett's tribulations will always remind me to be thankful for the sacrifices of our elders." (Additional Comment – "I recently learned that Mr. Luckett and I are actually related. He is considered to be my cousin.")

Preston Jones ("Lucky")

"The 'Teenarama' story is a 'golden nugget' in DC's History that must be preserved. I can't stop talking about 'Teenarama'!"

Marvin Boone ("Chaz Hall")

"I love the process and how this all came together. The Cast is so talented! It's amazing and I'm so blessed to be a part of an experience like this. My participation in this historical musical has helped me think about how I would like to present myself when it comes to my career."

Marya-Montez Wallace ("Girl Dancer Production Assistant")

Selah City Urban Theatre Company & Kendall Productions, LLC

Selah City Urban Theatre - "Selah" is a word used in the Book of Psalms, a collection of spiritual songs in the Bible. These songs of worship, praise, human experiences, righteous exhortation, and doctrine are often followed by the word, "Selah," which means "to pause." Though possibly used as a musical direction in Scripture, this pause presents a time of reflection and meditation on the message of each Psalm. In 2000, Jiko Ozimba launched Selah City Urban Theatre, (formerly known as Trinity Theatre), to provide a space for impactful musical theatre with thought-provoking themes upon which to reflect and meditate. In addition, Selah City holds acting workshops and provides drama-based material for academics and personal growth and development.

Kendall Productions, LLC is a multimedia production company providing professional services in film, video, entertainment management and consulting, and public relations. Emmy Award Producer Beverly Lindsay-Johnson is the President and Producer of Kendall Productions, LLC. Beverly Lindsay-Johnson and Kendall Productions received the 2006 Emmy Award as Producer of the documentary Dance Party: The Teenarama Story (PBS). She has received 24 media awards for Broadcast Excellence. Her latest documentary, Fat Boy: The Billy Stewart Story (2020 PBS) received the 2021 Communicator Award for Excellence in Film/Video Documentary. Kendall Productions, LLC has been serving its clients since 2000. Clients include The Tinner Hill Heritage Foundation, The African American Music Association, Harmony Hall John Addison Theater, The National Hand Dance Association, Humanities DC, The Atlanta Doo-Wop Association, Montpelier Arts Center, and the Mojo Workin' Soul Music Festival (San Sebastian, Spain)

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A Motown Teenarama Dance Party (2020)
Teenarama Dance Party Reunion (2017)

IN KIND DONORS

Jean Crowe
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Nancy Smalls

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MUSIC CREDITS

"Forgotten"

Written by Jiiko Ozimba
Music by Tony Berry

"Quick Step"

Written by Jiiko Ozimba
Music by Tony Berry

"Black Tuesday"

Written by Jiiko Ozimba
Music by Tony Berry

"Can't Stop"

Written by Jiiko Ozimba
Music by Peter Chatmon

"Dancing on the Air"

Written by Jiiko Ozimba
Music by Tony Berry

"I Met A Girl"

Written by Stephanie
Michel Huguenn, Yves
Francois Sanna,
Christian Padovan
Courtesy of APM Music

"Overnight Sensation"

Written by Jiiko Ozimba
Music by Tony Berry

"Light Bright"

Written by Jiiko Ozimba
Music by Tony Berry

"Baby Don't Walk Away"

Written By Gary James
Crockett, Dominic Glover,
Jason Glover Courtesy of
APM Music

"Air"

Written by Jiiko Ozimba
Music by Tony Berry

"Matter of Time"

Written by Jiiko Ozimba
Music by Tony Berry

"Silly Boys"

Written by Jiiko Ozimba
Music by Tony Berry

"Don't Tell Nobody"

Written by Jiiko Ozimba
Music by Tony Berry

"Baby Work Out"

Performed by Jackie Wilson
Written by Alonzo Tucker, Jackie
Wilson
Courtesy Brunswick Records,
Sunflower Publishing

"Boo-Ga-Loo"

Performed by Tom & Jerrio
Written by Jerry J. Murray
Courtesy of Lovelane Music, BMI

"Good Old Days"

Performed by Skip Mahoaney &
The Casuals
Written by Harrison Hoaney
("Skip Mahoaney")
Courtesy of Wonder Watt Music,
GP Promotions



THE TEENARAMA DANCE PARTY

1. "Teenarama" teens at The Miles Long Sandwich poster (left Debra Washington, Delmeita Ghant, right "Totsie" Clanagan, Jackie Medina)
2. "Lucky" Luckett receives award from host Bob King
3. Teen dancers eating a "Miles Long Sandwich" during the live Miles Long commercial on "Teenarama".
4. "Teen Day", a day when one of the "Teenarama" Regulars hosts the show.
5. The "Teenarama" Dancers celebrating "Jackie Wilson Day" as they show off their dance skills.
6. Host Bob King interviews a girl group.
7. Teen Jerome Sator stands in front of the kinescope camera with cameraman.
8. Host Bob King interview with music artist.
9. The Godfather of Soul James Brown performs on *The Teenarama Dance Party*.

10. Host Bob King interviews R&B balladeer Chuck Jackson ("I Don't Want To Cry")
11. Singer Jackie Wilson performs on "Teenarama" on "Jackie Wilson Day."
12. "Teenarama" Regular Yvonne Mills ("Little Bits") (right side)
13. Host Bob King interviews Chubby Checker ("Let's Do The Twist")

14. Teens dancing the slow bop in the "Teenarama" studio at WOOK-TV
15. Host Bob King
16. Host Bob King interviews singer Dee Dee Sharp ("Mashed Potato Time")

