



For Immediate Release

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**Kyle Abraham
Selected as New York Live Arts'
2012-2014 Resident Commissioned Artist**

New York, NY, November 8, 2012 - It was announced today that **Kyle Abraham** has been selected as the **2012-2014 New York Live Arts Resident Commissioned Artist (RCA)**. The RCA program identifies and supports outstanding mid-career artists and is one of the most robust awards offered to a choreographer in the United States, providing **nearly \$280,000 in direct support**, including a salary each year for two years plus full health benefits, two years of residency time and a commission of a new work or works to premiere at New York Live Arts.

The Resident Commissioned Artist award was created in 2011 to address what Live Arts perceives to be an overall lack of support for mid-career artists. The program is by invitation only and artists are selected by Live Arts Executive Artistic Director **Bill T. Jones** and Artistic Director **Carla Peterson**. Inaugural RCA **Yasuko Yokoshi** (2011-2013) continues her residency at New York Live Arts, with her new work *BELL* set for a world premiere on March 16, 2013.

As the second RCA, Abraham will work with his company, **Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion** (created in 2006), as well as acclaimed composers and visual artists, to create new works set to premiere in September of 2014. The works to be produced as part of his residency will provide the foundation for creating a sustainable touring career for Abraham's emerging and quickly evolving dance company. These works will later be presented as part of a fully produced international tour managed by New York Live Arts.

"Kyle is among a group of artists who are expanding the notion of what embodied investigation can be in the choreographic field," commented Jones. "With his residency, we hope that he will have the support he needs to continue to develop his choreographic voice."

Abraham has been involved over the years with both the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company and Dance Theater Workshop, the two organizations that merged in 2011 to form New York Live Arts. "I look at those two organizations as the ultimate springboards for my professional career in dance," Abraham noted in reflection after learning he had been selected for the award. "From having the opportunity to tour with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company only months after graduating from SUNY Purchase College in 2000, to the experience of having Dance Theater Workshop serve as the very first venue where my work was performed upon returning to New York after a three year absence from both dance and New York...all of those things make this Resident Commissioned Artist program at New York Live Arts even more meaningful to me."

Abraham's focus during his residency will be to create cross-disciplinary repertory programs with works varying in length from 15 to 30 minutes. The work will involve collaborations with acclaimed visual and performing artists, to be announced at a later date. The work will both stretch Abraham's artistic voice as well as build on the flexibility of varied repertory programming to support future touring and performing opportunities for Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion.

"It has been an invigorating process to help determine who would and should receive this second RCA award, following in the footsteps of Yasuko Yokoshi, a mid-career artist with a supremely well-honed artistic voice," said Peterson. "For Kyle, a younger, ambitious, highly prolific artist and gifted performer, noted for using controversy, race, and personal history to inform his choreography, this award comes at a critical juncture. The award's substantial resources will provide breathing room to step back, reflect critically on his development as an artist, and dive more deeply, generatively and thoughtfully into his artistic aspirations, process and craft."

The Resident Commissioned Artist Program receives lead support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Start-up funding for the program was given by the Rockefeller Foundation Cultural Innovation Fund. Support for the March 2013 premiere of *BELL*, by inaugural RCA Yasuko Yokoshi, is provided by MAP Fund, a program of Creative Capital; and the Japan Foundation.

ABOUT KYLE ABRAHAM

Kyle Abraham is also the 2012 Jacob's Pillow Dance Award recipient. He began his training at the Civic Light Opera Academy and the Creative and Performing Arts High School in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He continued his dance studies in New York, receiving a B.F.A. from SUNY Purchase and an M.F.A. from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

Over the past few years, Abraham has received tremendous accolades and awards for his dancing and choreography including a 2010 Bessie Award for Outstanding Performance in Dance for his work in *The Radio Show*, a 2010 Princess Grace Award for Choreography, a BUILD grant and an individual artist fellowship from the New York Foundation for the Arts, a Jerome Foundation Travel and Study Grant, and selected in 2009 as one of Dance Magazine's 25 To Watch. In 2011, *OUT Magazine* labeled Abraham as the "best and brightest creative talent to emerge in New York City in the age of Obama."

His choreography has been presented throughout the United States and abroad, most recently at On The Boards, South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center, REDCAT, Philly Live Arts, Portland's Time Based Arts Festival, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Danspace Project, Dance Theater Workshop, Bates Dance Festival, Harlem Stage, Fall for Dance Festival at New York's City Center, Montreal, Germany, Jordan, Ecuador, Dublin's Project Arts Center, The Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum located in Okinawa Japan, The Andy Warhol Museum and The Kelly-Strayhorn Theater in his hometown of Pittsburgh, PA.

As a performer, Abraham has worked with acclaimed modern dance companies including David Dorfman Dance, Burnt Sugar Dance Conduction Continuum, Nathan Trice/Rituals, Mimi Garrard Dance Theater, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, Dance Alloy, The Kevin Wynn Collection and Attack Theatre. In addition to performing and developing new works for his company, Abraham.In.Motion, Abraham also teaches his unique approach to post-modern dance in various schools and studios throughout the United States.

Abraham's upcoming performances include the world premiere of *Another Night* set on Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. In *Another Night*, Abraham presents a richly inventive contemporary jazz work, which innovatively fuses the many dynamic facets of American dance, inspired by the legendary drummer Art Blakely's interpretation of Dizzy Gillespie's jazz classic "A Night in Tunisia."

Other new works include *Pavement*, which premiered at Harlem Stage on November 2. His newest work for Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion, *Pavement* drew its inspiration from John Singleton's 1991 film *Boyz n the Hood* and W.E.B. Dubois' classic essay *The Souls of Black Folk*. Layered with a score comprised primarily by Handel's *Carestini (The Story of a Castrato)*, and the gun-laden sounds of an urban landscape, *Pavement* examines the ups and downs throughout the conflicted chronology of two of Pittsburgh's historically black neighborhoods.

Lastly, Abraham is working on a new pas de deux for himself and acclaimed Bessie Award winning dancer and New York City Ballet Principle Dancer, Wendy Whelan.

ABOUT NEW YORK LIVE ARTS

Located in the heart of Chelsea in New York City, **New York Live Arts** is an **internationally recognized destination for innovative movement-based artistry** offering audiences access to art and artists notable for their conceptual rigor, formal experimentation and active engagement with the social, political and cultural currents of our times. At the center of this identity is **Bill T. Jones, Executive Artistic Director**, a world-renowned choreographer, dancer, theater director and writer.

We commission, produce and present performances in our 20,000 square foot home, which includes a 184-seat theater and two 1,200 square foot studios that can be combined into one large studio. New York Live Arts serves as home base for the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, provides an extensive range of participatory programs for adults and young people and supports the continuing professional development of artists. Our influence extends beyond NYC through our international cultural exchange program that currently places artists in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Funding Support

Major support for New York Live Arts is provided by: Bloomberg Philanthropies; The Brownstone Foundation; The Robert Sterling Clark Foundation; Con Edison; The Joseph and Joan Cullman Foundation for the Arts; Doris Duke Charitable Foundation; The Ford Foundation; The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation; Florence Gould Foundation; Japan Foundation; Jerome Foundation; Lambent Foundation; MAP Fund, a program of Creative Capital; The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; Mertz Gilmore Foundation; MetLife Foundation; The New York Community Trust; The Rockefeller Foundation; The Jerome Robbins Foundation; The Scherman Foundation; The Shubert Foundation; and the Trust for Mutual Understanding. New York Live Arts is supported by public funds administered by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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