



Raja Feather Kelly & Bill T. Jones, New York Live Arts Annual Gala 2025, photo by Whitney Browne

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NEW YORK LIVE ARTS PROUDLY ANNOUNCES RAJA FEATHER KELLY AS 2027 LIVE ARTERY FESTIVAL GUEST CURATOR

THE LIVE ARTS 2019-2020 RANDJELOVIĆ/STRYKER RESIDENT COMMISSIONED ARTIST RETURNS TO LIVE ARTS TO CURATE CELEBRATED FESTIVAL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ARTISTIC DIRECTOR BILL T. JONES

“a creator with boundless vision in search of ever more artistic terrain, a roving intellect and imagination on the hunt for more mediums, modes, and forms.” - [Vogue](#)

New York, NY (April 2, 2026) — New York Live Arts (Live Arts), led by world renowned choreographer, Tony Award-winning, National Medal of Arts, MacArthur “Genius” Award and Kennedy Center Honors recipient **Bill T. Jones**, announced **Raja Feather Kelly** as the 2027 [Live Artery](#) festival Guest Curator. Kelly returns to the historic 219 West 19th, after being awarded the New York Live Arts 2019-2020 Randjelović/Stryker Resident Commissioned Artist ([RCA](#)).

“At the conclusion of Raja Feather Kelly’s RCA award, a question remained for both of us about our future as two artists, and his future with New York Live Arts. As our organization evolves, we sought a Guest Curator for the festival with the intellectual breadth, the curiosity, and boldness to look at our time and identify where and by whom the future of our form is being made. Raja Feather Kelly is that person!” **said Bill T. Jones.**



[Raja Feather Kelly](#) has been awarded a Creative Capital Award (2019), a Breakout Award from the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation (2018), Dance Magazine's inaugural Harkness Promise Award (2018), the Solange MacArthur Award for New Choreography (2016), and is a three-time Princess Grace Award winner (2017, 2018, 2019). He was born in Fort Hood, Texas and holds a B.A. in Dance and Poetry from Connecticut College and completed a certificate at the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute.

In 2009 he started his dance-theatre-media company **the feath3r theory** with whom he has premiered eighteen evening-length works, and in 2019 he choreographed the Broadway Pulitzer Prize-winning, Tony Award-winning Broadway musical *A Strange Loop*. Portrait of Kelly by Alex

Kikis.

*“Our field is in a moment where artists and organizations are coming together and collaborating in new ways that will forge new frontiers. My relationship with New York Live Arts and Bill T. Jones has been ever evolving and this new engagement is thrilling and unique, **said Kelly.** “To be a guest curator at this leading organization is an incredible and serious responsibility of building community. I am excited by getting the art and artists in front of audiences and simultaneously getting audiences behind the ART!”*

The dynamic Live Artery festival remains one of NYC's most attended dance-specific platforms during the annual presenter conference season, featuring resident commissioned artists and curated guests. The 2026 festival in January presented 22 events featuring 28 lead artists over 11 days. Highlights included Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company’s Home Season featuring the remount and NY Premiere of the duo’s last piece from ‘88; Ogemdi Ude’s smash hit and sold out North American Premiere of *MAJOR*; reprises from Ruth Childs, Lisa Fagan and Lena Engelstein, and Tere O’Connor; nine showings of excerpts or works-in-progress including current RCA Joanna Kotze, as well as past award recipients Kyle Abraham, Faye Driscoll, and Raja Feather Kelly; and six offsite co-presentations welcomed packed houses in support of artists Wally Cardona

and Molly Lieber, Ishmael Houston-Jones, Kashia Kancey, Juliana F. May, and additional RCA alum, Okwui Okpokwasili.

“As we continue our commitment to being artist-led, we're thrilled to welcome Raja's voice to our curatorial team. His discerning aesthetic and fearless questioning of what art is - and whose voices it serves - will help shape the next iteration of this important platform, said Live Arts Producing Director & COO **Kyle Maude**. Dates for the 2027 Live Artery festival will go public as part of Live Arts's 2026-2027 Season Announcement in June. Details of Kelly's lineup will be announced later this fall.

74 years old and still creating new work with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company, Bill T. Jones remains one of the most decorated and influential choreographers in the world, collaborating with boundary-pushing artists, advocating for their vision, and fortifying a creative future in two roles: Artistic Director / Co-Founder / Choreographer for the Company and Artistic Director of New York Live Arts. Jones is a multi-talented artist, choreographer, dancer, theater director and writer, and has been awarded two Tonys, a National Medal of the Arts, Kennedy Center Honor, MacArthur “Genius” Fellow, and many other distinctions. New York Live Arts' signature Randjelović/Stryker Resident Commissioned Artist award and program was created in 2011 and is named for lead donors Slobodan Randjelović and Jon Stryker. The 2025-26 RCA is made possible in part with support from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

ABOUT

RAJA FEATHER KELLY is a choreographer and director and the Artistic Director of the feath3r theory (TF3T), the Brooklyn-based dance-theatre-media company he founded in 2009. Over the past decade, he has created 19 evening-length works with TF3T to critical acclaim, most recently *Bunny Bunny* at The Invisible Dog. Kelly co-directed Michael R. Jackson's *Complications in Sue* at Opera Philadelphia with Zack Winokur, starring Justin Vivian Bond.

Upcoming projects include a triptych titled *A Body of Dangerous Ideas*; choreography for Missy Mazzoli's *Lincoln in the Bardo* at the Metropolitan Opera; and direction and choreography for *TEETH* at Asbury Park Theater Company, and Movement Direction on the Feature Film *Is God Is* by Aleshea Harris produced by Amazon MGM.

In 2025, Kelly served as Production Dramaturg for Elle Barbara's *AUTOGYNEGAMY* at the National Arts Centre (Canada) and as a DanceWEB Mentor at the ImPulsTanz Dance Festival (Austria.) He will return in 2026 to direct Barbara's one-man show at Théâtre Outremont and again serve as DanceWEB Mentor in Vienna.

Kelly choreographed the Tony Award-winning Broadway musical *A Strange Loop*

and *Fairview* at SoHo Rep, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and Theatre for a New Audience—both winners of the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. His direction and choreography credits also include *White Girl in Danger*, *SUFFS*, *Lempicka*, *The Listeners* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, *Macbeth in Stride* at Brooklyn Academy of Music, and his playwriting debut *The Fires*, a New York Times Critics' Pick at SoHo Rep in 2024.

His honors include a 2025 Doris Duke Artist Award; a 2025 Research Fellowship from the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts; a Princeton University Arts Fellowship (2023–2025); a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; an Obie Award and Outer Critics Circle Award honor for choreography for *A Strange Loop*; an inaugural Jerome Hill Artists Fellowship; a Randjelović/Stryker Resident Commission at New York Live Arts; a National Dance Project Production Grant; a New York Dance and Performance “Bessie” Award; a Creative Capital Award; three Princess Grace Foundation-USA Awards; a Breakout Award from the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation; *Dance Magazine*'s inaugural Harkness Promise Award; a Creator-in-Residence at Kickstarter; and fellowships from the Center for Ballet and the Arts at NYU, The Yard, and the New York Foundation for the Arts. He was featured on the cover of the February 2020 issue of *Dance Magazine*.

Born in Fort Hood, Kelly holds a B.A. from Connecticut College and completed a certificate at the Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute.

NEW YORK LIVE ARTS

New York Live Arts, guided by the leadership of visionary artist **Bill T. Jones**, collaborates with boundary pushing artists, advocates for their vision, and fortifies a creative future. It also serves as home base for the **Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company**, which has been creating groundbreaking work for over forty years. New York Live Arts acknowledges and offers deep gratitude to Lenapehoking, where the theater sits-the land, and waters of the Lenape homeland.

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