

(/topic/DANCE-AFRO-BRAZILIAN-)

# BWW Review: Celebrating Advocacy through the Arts with the INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ARTS FESTIVAL

by Caryn Cooper (/author/Caryn-Cooper) Mar. 13, 2017

NATIONAL+HUMAN+RIGHTS+ARTS+FESTIVAL+&url=https://www.broadwayworld.com/article/BWW-I-RIGHTS-ARTS-)

om/article/BWW-Review-Celebrating-Advocacy-through-the-Arts-with-the-INTERNATIONAL-

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ARTS  
Advocacy-through-the-Arts-with-the-INTERNATIONAL-HUMAN-RIGHTS-ARTS-)



The International Human Rights Arts Festival took place on the weekend of March 3-5, 2017 at Dixon Place in New York City. The festival featured more than 70 artists producing more than 40 events, all oriented in the theme of advocacy. Artistic media ranged from theater, dance, music, photography, film, spoken word, and much more. This festival was produced by Tom Block and Julia Levine, with the dance portion curated by Jessica Chen.

As part of the dance portion of the festival, I had the opportunity to see two companies perform human rights pieces on Saturday, March 4th.

The first company, Spilling Ink, is a multi-arts organization that uses the arts to shed light on the artistic and cultural contributions of India. They performed two pieces. The first, *Mahashakti*, celebrates divine female energy and power. It was a lovely duet with strong movements and intricate rhythms. I also appreciated the concentration and intentional movements within the choreography. The second dance was entitled *Aakashaat Patitam Toyam*. This piece looks to shed light on the ancient and contemporary verses on the themes to transcend evil, and echo righteousness, justice, and truth. It was mesmerizing to watch as they danced with such grace and amazing technique. I also appreciated the attention to detail, the beautiful shapes, and athleticism.

The Second Company (/people/Second-Company/), Movement of the People Dance Company (/people/Dance-Company/) under the artistic direction of Bessie-Award winning choreographer Joya Powell presented a moving piece, *Aconteceu/It Happened*. The dance is dedicated to the memory of the eight children who were tragically massacred by the police in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1993. Fusing contemporary movements with Afro-Brazilian dance, it tells the powerful, yet sad story of the untimely death of these children. It was definitely a deep and heavy topic. For me, it shed light on the issues surrounding police brutality and that it is not limited to the U.S, but is an issue around the world.

It is easy to turn a blind eye to these kinds of issues because they may not directly affect us. It is these kinds of stories that should not be forgotten. The oppressed shouldn't be and cannot be ignored! We need to work hard to protect everyone's rights. Protecting their rights is human rights.

It is during times like right now that we need to bring different human rights issues to the forefront. The media will only highlight stories that are considered to be "mainstream." However, just because not all issues are considered newsworthy doesn't mean they are less important. If anything, it means they need to be shared all the more! I commend Tom Block and his team for putting together this event, particularly at this time. I also applaud him for creating a platform where artists can be brave with their choreography and present challenging issues.

American-Phantom-  
Robert-Guillaume-Dies-at-  
89-20171024)  
First African American  
'Phantom' Robert Guillaume  
Dies at 89 (/article/First-  
African-American-Phantom-  
Robert-Guillaume-Dies-at-89-  
20171024)



(/article/CHESS-Set-for-a-  
Spring-2018-Run-at-the-  
English-National-Opera-  
20171026)  
CHESS Set for a Spring 2018  
Run at the English National  
Opera (/article/CHESS-Set-for-  
a-Spring-2018-Run-at-the-  
English-National-Opera-  
20171026)



(/article/Broadways-THE-  
LION-KING-to-Treat-  
Audience-Like-Kings-with-  
Free-20th-Anniversary-  
Ticket-Lottery-20171025)  
LION KING to Treat Audience  
Like Royalty with Free 20th  
Anniversary Ticket Lottery  
(/article/Broadways-THE-  
LION-KING-to-Treat-  
Audience-Like-Kings-with-  
Free-20th-Anniversary-Ticket-  
Lottery-20171025)



(/article/Richard-Thomas-  
Pamela-Reed-Daisy-Eagan-  
and-More-Tapped-for-THE-  
HUMANS-National-Tour-  
Dates-Set-20171024)  
Thomas, Reed, Eagan & More  
Tapped for THE HUMANS  
Tour: Dates Set!  
(/article/Richard-Thomas-  
Pamela-Reed-Daisy-Eagan-  
and-More-Tapped-for-THE-  
HUMANS-National-Tour-  
Dates-Set-20171024)



(/article/Review-Roundup-  
Critics-Weigh-In-on-the-  
Broadway-Revival-of-M-  
BUTTERFLY--Updating-Live-  
20171026)  
Review Roundup: Critics  
Weigh In on the Broadway  
Revival of M. BUTTERFLY- All  
the Reviews! (/article/Review-  
Roundup-Critics-Weigh-In-  
on-the-Broadway-Revival-of-  
M-BUTTERFLY--Updating-  
Live-20171026)

## Ticket Central

Browse All Shows (/shows/shows.php?page=)

- A BRONX TALE (/sp  
broadway-offers.cfm)
- TIME AND THE COI  
(/special-broadway-  
offers.cfm)
- THE LAST MATCH (/broadway-offers.cfm)
- CHICAGO (/special-broadway-offers.cfm)
- ANASTASIA (/speci  
broadway-offers.cfm)

## Watch Now on BWW TV

More (https://www.broadwayworld.com/tvmaine)



(/article/VIDEO-First-  
Look-at-New-Stage-  
Production-of-  
BEAUTY-AND-THE-  
BEAST-on-Disney-  
Cruise-Line-  
20171023)

**First Look at BEAUTY AND THE BEAST on Disney Cruise Line** (/article/VIDEO-First-Look-at-New-Stage-Production-of-BEAUTY-AND-THE-BEAST-on-Disney-Cruise-Line-20171023)



(/article/VIDE  
Watch-Highli  
From-Sweder  
Non-Replica-  
PHANTOM-OF  
OPERA-20171

**Watch Highlight From Sweden's Replica THE PHANTOM OF 1**



(/article/TV-  
EXCLUSIVE-Get-  
A-First-Look-At-  
OPERA-201710

WAITRESS-on-Tv  
20171020)

**TV EXCLUSIVE: Get First Look At WAITRESS on You** (/article/TV-EXCLUSIVE-Get-A-First-Look-At-WAITRESS-on-To