

Biography

Reggie Wilson

Reggie Wilson founded his company, Reggie Wilson/Fist & Heel Performance Group, in 1989. Wilson draws from the movement languages of the blues, slave and spiritual cultures of Africans in the Americas and combines them with post-modern elements and his own personal movement style to create what he sometimes calls “post-African/Neo-Hoodoo Modern dance.”

His work has been presented internationally at Linkfest and Festival e’Nkundleni (Zimbabwe), Queen’s Hall (Trinidad and Tobago), Israel Museum (Israel), Dance Factory (South Africa), Danças na Cidade (Portugal), Danse Bamako Danse (Mali) and at Festival Kaay Fecc in Senegal, as well as numerous venues throughout the U.S. including Danspace Project, Dance Theater Workshop, Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors, Wave Hill, Judson Church, Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival, Joe’s Pub at the Public Theater, Contemporary Arts Center (New Orleans), Dance Umbrella (Austin, TX), Swarthmore College (PA), DancePlace (DC), Sushi, (San Diego, CA), The EGG (Albany, NY), the Mondavi Center (UC Davis, CA), UApresents (Tucson, AZ) and Summerstage (NYC). Wilson has traveled extensively: to the Mississippi Delta, to research secular and religious aspects of life there; to Trinidad and Tobago, to research the Spiritual Baptists and the Shangoists; and also to Zimbabwe, Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, Ghana, Cameroon, Chad, Mali and Senegal, to work with dance/performance groups as well as various religious communities.

Wilson received a BFA from Tisch School of the Arts, New York University, in 1988 and has lectured, taught and conducted extended workshops for community projects throughout the U.S., Africa, Europe and the Caribbean. His work has been supported by many foundations, including the National Endowment for the Arts and The Rockefeller Foundation. A 2002 Guggenheim Fellow, Wilson is also the recipient of the Minnesota Dance Alliance’s McKnight National Fellowship (2000-2001). In 2002 he received a BESSIE (New York Dance and Performance Award) for his work entitled, “The Tie-tongue Goat and The Lightning Bug Who Tried to Put Her Foot Down.”

“The Good Dance” is a new work he is developing to explore the influence of Central African culture on world performance forms and its metaphoric, historic, real world parallel with Mississippi Delta culture. He has researched the secular and religious aspects of life in the African American communities of the Delta and the Central African countries of Cameroon, Gabon and Congo (Brazzaville) during a multi-year exchange and collaboration between Reggie Wilson/Fist and Heel Performance Group and Congolese choreographer, Andréya Ouamba and his Company, 1er Temps based in Dakar, Senegal.

Previous works include “The Tale: Npinpee Nckutchie and the Tail of the Golden Dek (The Tale),” an examination of the human search for coupling and uncoupling that using tugging, push and pulling, hidden, subtle, aloof partner manipulation. “The Tale” premiered to critical acclaim in 2006 in New York at Dance Theater Workshop. About the piece The New York Times wrote “The Tale cultivates a concise gem of a world, where music and movement are sewn together by a social dance form called stepping.”