



For Immediate Release

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**Michigan Opera Theatre Opens 2018-19 Dance Series with Debut of  
Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company**

*Modern dance company to perform piece on struggle, addiction that incorporates  
Detroit culture*

*Oct. 27 at the Detroit Opera House*

**Detroit, Oct. 17, 2018** – Michigan Opera Theatre (MOT), in partnership with the University Musical Society, will open its 2018-19 dance series with the Detroit Opera House debut of the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company Oct. 27. The multidisciplinary company is considered to be one of the most powerful influences in the dance-theater world and will perform “A Letter to My Nephew,” a piece about the struggle and addiction of a young man set in a larger political context, including incorporating pieces of Detroit culture. MOT will present one performance Saturday, Oct. 27 at 7:30 p.m.

“‘A Letter to my Nephew’ is a powerful work that will resonate with anyone who has struggled to overcome adversity or to assist someone in those circumstances,” said MOT Principal Conductor Stephen Lord. “We are proud to present such an important piece to our patrons and welcome the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company on their debut performance at the Detroit Opera House.”

“A Letter to My Nephew” is the latest dance theater work of company co-founder Bill T. Jones and relays the story of his nephew Lance T. Briggs. On the way to a promising dance career, Briggs struggled with drug addiction, leading to prostitution and eventually becoming paraplegic.

Jones’s cultural critique is rewritten for the time and place of every performance and will be unique to Detroit, incorporating references to local culture, customs and architecture as they relate to world events. It is composed like a series of postcards sent home and launches a swirl of images around Briggs--a vogue ball, a breathtaking vista, and a scene of forced migration--as he lies in a hospital bed. Using conversations with his nephew, Jones navigates familial relationships within the context of a larger socio-political history. The performances features haunting projections by Janet Wong, a delirious score by Nick Hallett and a live performance by baritone Matthew Gamble and Hallett.

In addition to the performance, the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company will offer a master class the morning of the Oct. 27 performance from 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at the Detroit Opera House Margo V. Cohen Dance Studio. The class is open to intermediate to advanced level dance students ages 13 and up. Attendance is \$25 or free with a corresponding performance ticket. Pre-registration is required and can be done online at <https://michiganopera.org/learning/dance-education/>.

MOT will also offer an afterglow following Saturday evening's performance where attendees will have the opportunity to meet company dancers. The event will take place in the Herman Frankel and Barbara Frankel Donor Lounge and include drinks, a strolling buffet and DJ & dancing. RSVP is required by Oct. 24.

The Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company is the first in MOT's dance series celebrating modern dance through generations of the movement. It continues in March with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and concludes in April with the Martha Graham Dance Company.

The 2018-19 dance season is made possible by the Lear Corporation.

Tickets for the performance are \$30-\$100 and tickets for the afterglow are \$35 per person (performance ticket not included). Tickets may be purchased online at [www.MichiganOpera.org](http://www.MichiganOpera.org), by calling (313) 237-7464 or in person at the Detroit Opera House (1526 Broadway, Detroit).

For more information visit: <https://michiganopera.org/dance/bill-t-jones/>.

### **Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company**

*At the Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway, Detroit*

Saturday, Oct. 27, 7:30 p.m.

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### **About Michigan Opera Theatre**

Michigan Opera Theatre (Wayne S. Brown, President and CEO; Stephen Lord, Principal Conductor, Dr. David DiChiera, Founder and Artistic Director Emeritus), one of the nation's most vibrant nonprofit arts organizations, is committed to presenting opera and dance of the highest artistic caliber. Founded in 1971, the company's mission is to serve as a major cultural resource to the state of Michigan and the city of Detroit. Visit the website at [www.michiganopera.org](http://www.michiganopera.org).

### **About Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company**

Founded in 1983, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company is considered to be one of the most powerful influences in the dance-theater world. *A Letter to My Nephew*, Bill T. Jones's latest dance-theater work, is an intimate, impressionistic collage for nine dancers, setting a portrait

of Jones's beloved nephew Lance T. Briggs – a talented dancer who struggled with illness and addiction.