

Beyonce's Choreographer Pens Blog for The Huffington Post "Dance Will Save the World"



(Los Angeles, California â€” August 24, 2011) Jeffrey Page's talents as a dancer and choreographer have taken him everywhere from Hollywood awards shows to West African villages, and have produced collaborations with the biggest names in modern dance as well as superstars of pop music. He was nominated for an Emmy Award for NAACP Image Award choreography in 2005, is credited with giving Beyonce Knowles her African flair, more recently served as a resident choreographer on Fox's reality TV sensation â€”So You Think You Can Dance.â€” In the Fall of 2009, Jeffrey expanded his reach even further when he made his Broadway debut in the cast of the musical FELA!. The lauded production recently racked up 11 Nominations and 3 Wins at the Tony Awards 2010.

It's fitting that Jeffrey would arrive on Broadway as a member of the FELA! ensemble to wow audiences in a show about a Nigerian musical pioneer (Fela Anikulapo-Kuti), since West African dance has been his specialty since childhood. Page says, â€œI think Fela! has been a hit because it's playing with a wide variety of textures that Broadway hasn't seen.â€ The media seems to agree; The Associated Press raved in its FELA! review: â€œAn extremely talented ensemble of attractive, limber, athletic dancers are in nonstop motion throughout the play.â€ The New York Times wrote: â€œFela! never stops dancing, and Mr. Jones uses his ravishing ensemble to evoke everything from joyous sensuality to the kind of governmental oppression that turns people into zombies.â€

Like his FELA! director, Bill T. Jones, Jeffrey Page has spread his talents across concert dance and musical theater, and has taken on directing as well as choreographic responsibilities. He has served as an African dance instructor/consultant for Cirque du Soleil's breathtaking Show "O", Alvin Ailey's American Dance Theatre and most recently in July 2009 Page was one of the resident choreographers of reality sensation So You Think You Can Dance responsible for the West African piece "Balanta" performed by Season 5's top five men which was praised by various online entertainment sites as "intricate," "energetic" and "incredibly entertaining."

Choreographers across the world fantasize about the once in a lifetime chance to work with Beyoncé Knowles, an extraordinary talent who is known to keep a tight knit circle of dancers and creative people. Jeffrey however casually throws it on his resume as if it is a second thought but humbly says The multi-faceted choreographer was sought out to work w/ the multi-Grammy Award Winning entertainer on her 2007 world tour "The Beyoncé Experience" in support of her sophomore album "I Am...Sasha Fierce". The two had previously met while dancing alongside each other at promotional appearances for her debut solo album, Dangerously in Love. In 2006 Jeffrey helped choreograph Beyoncé's live performances of "Destiny Fulfilled" featuring husband Jay-Z while also choreographing the diva's performances at The World Music Awards and VH-1 Fashion Rocks Tribute to dance icon Josephine Baker. That same year Jeffrey assisted Beyoncé's resident artistic director Frank Gaston during the MTV Video Music Awards for the song "Ring the Alarm". In 2011 Jeffrey constructed the entire finale of Beyoncé's internationally inspired epic music video "Girls Run the World."

Choreographer Fatima Robinson is just one of Jeffrey's colleagues who have noted his enduring quest for knowledge and hands-on experience, frequently seeking out his expertise.

Robinson recruited Jeffrey to co-choreograph the Coming to America-esque opening of the 2005 BET Awards for Will and Jada Pinkett Smith and the finale of the 2005 Billboard Music Awards, in which R. Kelly and a gospel chorus sang "Let Your Light Shine," a tribute to Hurricane Katrina victims. The well known and versatile Taluego Brothers enlisted Jeffrey to co-choreograph for the 2005 NAACP Image Awards featuring the cast of David LaChapelle's acclaimed dance documentary "Rize" and his choreography has also been featured on tour by Arista recording artist Jazmine Sullivan.

Unlike much of the formulaic African dance that has been incorporated into music videos, films and entertainment over the years Jeffrey brings a traditional authenticity to this intricate and ancient artform. In fact his first statement in rehearsal to the performers of "So You Think You Can Dance" was "This is not going to be Hollywood African." Those few words pay homage to the African continent whose lexicon, style and rhythms have often been substituted for stereotypes and gimmicks. In fact very few Hollywood dance choreographers can boast that they've performed with and received praised from the national dance companies of West Africa (Ballet Djoliba, Ballet Africains, Le Ballet National du Senegal) which may be what separates Jeffrey from his peers.

Jeffrey has graced the stage at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., starred in Debbie Allen's Louisiana bayou-set dance musical Soul Possessed, choreographed with Otis Sallid for the Middle Eastern International Film Festival in Abu Dhabi and paid homage to black intellectuals like Langston Hughes and Zora Neal Hurston in play adaptations of their written works. For the gifted virtuoso who earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts with honors from the University of the Arts and jokes about being "tricked" into taking an African dance class by a teacher who advertised it as "hip-hop" Jeffrey is lighting up stage, tv and film with his colorful and creative choreography. Whether he's combining Korean

folklore and Brazilian Samba or conducting anthropological research into traditional dance and music of Senegal, Guinea, the Gambia and Guinea-Bissau, nobody in the industry can deny Jeffrey's deft ability to create stunning visual collages of work which are transcending cultural barriers.