



Omari Wiles

Dance Mogul Magazine Exclusive Interview >>>

Dance Mogul: How are you holding up during this pandemic?

Omari Wiles: I am taking it day by day and I am finding creative ways to help me work, continue my career, and take care of my other dancers. emotionally, I am tired but I am hanging in there and pushing forward. I am feeling joyous at the moment and proud as a black man and as a performer/artist. the pandemic is not stopping me and instead, allowing me to push harder.

Dance Mogul: How has the protesting and rioting affected you?

Omari Wiles: The protesting and rioting have been a toll on my heart. knowing what we're fighting for, it's not just a person, it's a system. seeing your brothers, sisters, and friends fighting, speaking up, and seeing the youth speaking up is inspirational. it's necessary. the rioting is one of the actions that happen. I don't promote violence but there's a lot of hurt going on and pain. some people do not know how to release that. as a gay black man, the rights for the LGBTQ community started off as a riot. the first brick was thrown. I am someone who is constantly fighting for my community, for rights and justice. there's work that must be done.

Dance Mogul: The dance industry has taken a huge hit, what are some of your thoughts on how dancers can maintain and bounce back?

Omari Wiles: The dance industry has taken huge hits. dancers are forced to be in their homes and work from home and to find innovative ways to reach their following and be able to create and cultivate. I advise a lot of the students to keep creating content and to keep moving in the spirit and passion of dance. Our art is also a form of protest. Don't let this quarantine stop you from that. find ways within your home and yourself, and find new ways of moving. and push it forward with that. Don't be afraid to embark on something new. We are going to bounce back eventually. We're gonna make sure we're protecting everyone out there as well. We have to bring it full circle.



STAYING FOCUSED

Dance Mogul: What was it like to work on "Black is King"?

Omari Wiles: *Black is King*, the film itself is very important and necessary. its a way of protest. its a way of showing the world how great we are as a people. how human we are, as a race, and how we all deserve equality and justice. We all deserve our humanity. the experience of being able to be a dancer on a historical film was inspirational and the young dancers rising up and having the opportunity to show their talent and their black magic. as a gay black man, it's important for me to the world to see that I am also a king and I am worthy of a crown. it's the most important thing I have gotten out of this experience.

Dance Mogul: Is there anyone you would like to thank?

Omari Wiles: I would like to thank my mom, my father, my family, I would like to thank my best friend. I would like to thank my boyfriend, JT. they gave me the strength and the reason to keep dancing. They have all given me purpose and helped me find myself as a young black king. I would like to thank the whole Black is King production cast, crew, creators, and staff for the opportunity.