DANCE Mogul Magazine™

Inspiring Self Empowerment

WORLD PREMIERE



The Queen of Bollywhack

Kumari Suraj


HOUSE OF SURA
HOS



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Dance Mogul Magazine

INSPIRING SELF-EMPOWERMENT

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KUMARI'S PHOTOS BY:
KATE SINGH

PHOTOS FOR THE ISSUE PROVIDED BY
FEATURED ARTIST




Welcome!
to Dance Mogul Magazine
Inspiring Self-Empowerment

DANCE MOGUL MAGAZINE
CELEBRATING KUMARI SURAJ

Preserving Culture Through the Arts…



Basil Harris
Basil Harris/CEO & Founder

Anthony Harris
Anthony Harris/Co-Founder

Dance Mogul Magazine was founded by father and son team, Basil Harris and Anthony Harris. In an effort to help support and promote the importance of Arts and Education, Dance Mogul Magazine was birthed. Since Dance Mogul Magazine's conception in 2010, we have been sharing stories of dancers from all over the world. We're aware that far too many talented and hard-working street dancers, contemporary dancers and professional dancers in general, have not gotten due credit for their work; as a result, we've set out on a mission to help change that by inspiring and promoting Self-Empowerment through the pages of our publication. With this inspiring multi-culture issue, we invite you on an exciting adventure… an exploration into the many forms of cultural expressions of dance! For 2017, our intent is to bridge the gap between dance cultures, bringing awareness to the vast art of dance and movement worldwide. In this issue, we celebrate Kumari Suraj. Kumari is the first Waacking choreographer to explicitly introduce the dance style to mass media by creating dance content for the FOX reality hit TV show *So You Think You Can Dance*. Suraj is the founder and CEO of LA's International Waack/Punk/Pose Festival (Waackfest), the first festival in the world solely devoted to the cultural education and preservation of Waacking, Whacking, Punking and Vogue. Suraj is considered as the "go-to" expert for this underground dance from the 70s, serving as an international ambassador of its history, culture and technique. This issue is a first of its kind and we were pleased to work closely with Kumari as she offered her Creative Vision for the layout and design. We hope that you are inspired by this issue. Dance Mogul Magazine would like to welcome you to our world wide dance family!

DANCE MOGUL MAGAZINE
FULL FEATURE MAGAZINE



"An exploration into the many forms of cultural expressions of dance"

No matter what part of the world we live in, personal expression of the soul is vital. This personal expression is the one thing that all of us desire, and the one thing that makes us fully alive. It is, in fact, the one thing we all have in common. In spite of this, there are constant reminders around us that present us as a world of people who are divided. So much attention is given to all the ways we are believed to be different; as a result, few of us can see the major ways that we are alike. Unfortunately, the great human divide not only keeps us ignorant of each other, but it actually keeps us "at war" with one another in one way or another.

This thinking must stop if we are to live as civilized humans and make our world better. With this issue, ***Dance Mogul Magazine***, in its traditional leadership role, hopes to bridge the nonsensical divide, and display our human commonalities, starting with one of the most powerful art forms—DANCE!

With this issue, and others to come in 2017, we spread our wings beyond the walls of separation in an effort to unite us, *spirit to spirit*, by way of the international dance market. Our intent and purpose remain the same—*to empower and to inspire*—as we bring awareness to dance cultures all over the world… and present to YOU personal expressions of the soul!

It is important that we all discover and share what we have in common, so that we become a unified humanity, rather than a divided and hostile one. ***Dance Mogul Magazine*** invites you to join us in the joy of not only bridging the gaps, but *erasing the nonsensical divides* wherever they may be found.

Kumari Suraj

Who is she?







Kumari

QUEEN MOTHER

Kumari Suraj, coined as the "The Queen of Waacking Nouveau", is also the Queen of many historical firsts. She posted the first Waacking choreography videos on youtube, influencing everyone in the industry the world over. Now, Whacking is seen in countless stage shows, concerts, commercials, music videos and more, with much of the style's visibility tracing back to Kumari's tireless promotion of the dance style in the 2000s. Suraj is the first Waacking choreographer to explicitly introduce the dance style to mass media by creating dance content for the FOX reality hit TV show *So You Think You Can Dance*. Suraj, is the founder and CEO of LA's International Waack/Punk/Pose Festival (Waackfest), the first festival in the world solely devoted to the cultural education and preservation of Waacking, Whacking, Punking and Vogue. Suraj is considered as the "go-to" expert for this underground dance from the 70s, serving as an international ambassador of its history, culture and technique. In addition to helping preserve Waacking/Whacking's classic movement vocabulary, Kumari has expanded the dance style's potential as the first choreographer to combine Whacking's signature arm work with Dancehall, Bharatnatyam, Bollywood, Bhangra, House & 90's Hip Hop. Her two styles, "Bollywhack" and "Frankie Douglas", are inspiring new generations of Waacking enthusiasts.

Web: kumarisuraj.com

Kumari

QUEEN MOTHER

Vlogger. Dancer. Choreographer. Fashion Stylist. Globetrotter. Educator. Historian. Fly Girl.

Kumari Suraj's artistic versatility and passion for movement have established her as one of the leading figures in the global street dance community. With a mission of spreading the joy of dance to countries often untouched by the street dance scene, Kumari has cultivated a reputation as a key educator in Whacking/Waacking and a vibrant force to be reckoned with in cyphers and battles.

Raised in a funk-filled household, Kumari left home at 18 to travel the world in search of dance pioneers and deeper understanding of the culture surrounding the underground dance scene. New York City became a home away from home for the budding cypher queen as she studied under key movement innovators, including The Mop Tops, Elite Force, Electric Boogaloos, Rock Steady Crew, The Lockers, Brian Green, The House of Ninja, Ana Sanchez,Archie Burnett, Viktor Manoel, Tyrone Proctor and many more.

In 2004, Kumari was the first person to teach a weekly vogue class at Portland State University, which made the front page of the Oregonian.

By 2006, Kumari was entering respected international dance competitions, including BBoy Hodown, and was soon flown overseas to begin her teaching career in Denmark. Since then, Kumari has brought her signature style of dance to students in 30 different countries across six continents, focusing on a unique blend of Whacking, House, Hip Hop, Dancehall, Vogue and traditional styles from her ethnic roots. Kumari's rise in the street dance world also paralleled the rise of YouTube, allowing Kumari to develop an Internet fan base hungry for clips of her powerful, yet feminine, Waacking solos.

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Kumari

QUEEN MOTHER

Kumari made a splash into American households when she served as the first choreographer on Fox's *So You Think You Can Dance* to explicitly introduce Whacking as a dance style and movement vocabulary. Now, Whacking is seen in countless stage shows, concerts, commercials, music videos and more, with much of the style's visibility tracing back to Kumari's tireless promotion of the dance style in the 2000s.

Dance education has been at the heart of Kumari's artistic journey. This passion led her to create the International Waack/Punk/Pose Festival (also known as Waackfest) — the first festival in the world devoted to the cultural education, preservation, and evolution of Waacking, Whacking, Punking and Vogue. Kumari has brought together dance pioneers and legends, including Jody Watley, Archie Burnett, Dashaun Welsey, Viktor Manoel, Dallace, Javier Ninja, Angel Ceja and Princess Lockeroo, among many others, for immersive weekends filled with dance master classes, panels, and battles. Kumari has also founded dance companies, including international groups The Waackers, London Waacktitioners, India's House of Suraj, and Los Angeles's Jungle Jills.

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Kumari has taught at renowned dance studios worldwide, including Millennium LA/Tokyo, Debbie Reynolds Dance Studio, EDGE PAC LA, Pineapple Studios, B. Supreme, and HotStepper. In addition to helping preserve Waacking/Whacking's classic movement vocabulary, Kumari has expanded the dance style's potential as the first choreographer to combine Whacking's signature arm work with Dancehall, Bharatnatyam, Bollywood, Bhangra, House & 90s Hip Hop. Her two styles **"Bollywhack"** and **"Frankie Douglas"** are inspiring new generations of Waacking enthusiasts.

Today, Kumari's Whacking/Waacking proteges continue her legacy at studios across the globe, teaching Waacking with Kumari's "Frankie Douglas" flavor to young students seeking a distinctive street dance education. Kumari has choreographed and danced for artists, including **Mya**, Dizzy Rascal, MC Hammer, Jody Watley, and Little Boots, among others, and has been featured in publications, including Dance Track Magazine, Dance Spirit and Dance Mogul Magazine. She has worked in Portland, Oregon, 2015-2017 where she helped educate & inspire the **LGBTQ Ballroom & Street dance communities**. Kumari maintains an active and vibrant presence on YouTube by producing concept videos and her travel/fashion/dance vlog series, **"Kumari's World."** Kumari is currently working as a full figure model, artist developer and creative director in Los Angeles & New York City. Catch her if you can.

Video Links

Bollywhack History - Nimbooda - Bollywhack + Contemporary Indian FT. Brinda Guha
House of Suraj India - Hymn For The Weekend (Group I mentor in India) - Pinga
Fetty Wap Afro Remix Ft. 1st Female Dhol Drummer in North America,
M Tooray House of Suraj India - Major Lazer

Web: kumarisuraj.com

Kate Singh
PHOTOGRAPHY

“My

mother has been the #1 fan and supporter of my artistic journey and my life. When I was young, I admired her beauty, grace, strength and artistic nature. She is the woman I wanted to be like when I grew up. A U.S. Army nurse for 20 years, single parent and one bad ass photographer, she has shot 90% of my most iconic looks throughout my career. Her intuitive insights, yet often politically incorrect approach to life, has given her star status in my life and her community. She encourages self-expression while building self-confidence through her life example and photography.

I’m blessed to be her daughter and #1 Muse.
Thank you, Mom... I love you.
-Kumari Suraj

Your Unique Story deserves a professional touch.



www.AevumImages.com

Dance Companies

Jungle Jills -The Waackers - House of Suraj



Queen Mother
Kumari Suraj



BollyWhack

Bollywhack & Frankie Douglas Style
Bollywhack is entirely real work at a time when we need bridges in every way they can be built. Bollywhack works have exposed Indian cultural enthusiasts to Waacking and Whacking LGBTQ cultural enthusiasts to my Desi Diaspora. Homophobia & racism are huge issues in both of her East & West Indian cultures. Now Kumari, is witnessing how this union of dance and culture heals lives with understanding through practical application of art in context to current social/political climates. Bridging antiquated gaps created by hatred, fear and prejudice are steps toward a more unified humanity; a utopian humanity.

Kumari's work brings collaborative people into frame with voice and authority, exposing them to the average "Joe non-dancer". We don't want this just to matter to dancers who already like it. We want it to resonate with and draw across barriers to the unfamiliar. Teaching people to have more understanding, compassion, to stand for themselves, survive and thrive. How much more potential is there for change from a person with a cultural connection who already proposes power of movement?

Before being the first choreographer to feature Waacking on Fox's *So You Think You Can Dance*, Kumari, spent 13 years devoted to the cultural clarity, preservation and evolution of Punking, Whacking and Waacking in both street dance and popular culture.

Now making global strides in the expansion of the dance style's potential to bridge cultural communities otherwise unrelated, Kumari created Bollywhack & Frankie Douglas. Kumari Suraj is proud of her unique ethnic mixture of East Indian, West Indian, Native American & European descent. For the past 13 years she has taught people in over 30 countries, how to recognize their potential and power while celebrating their culture and individuality.

Below are some samples of my recent work that is spreading all over the world. Exposing Indian cultural enthusiasts to Waacking and Whacking cultural enthusiasts to my cultural heritage.





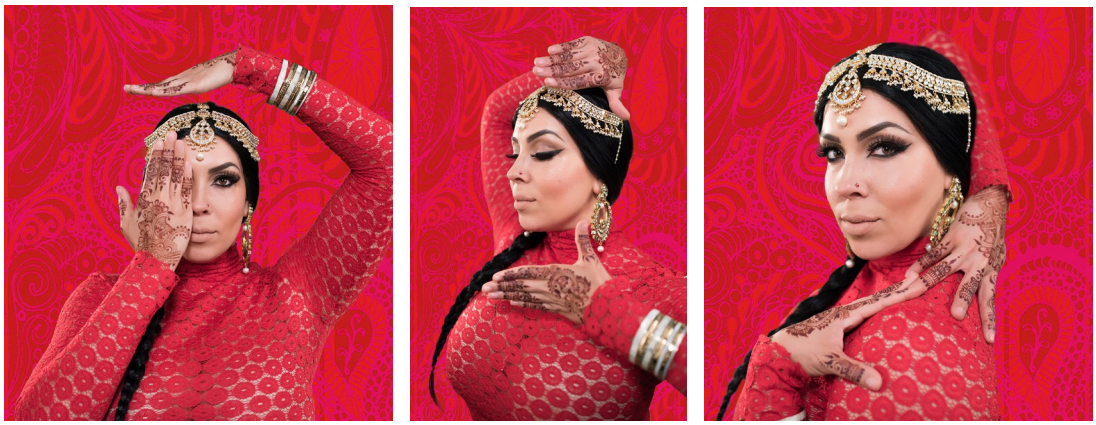
Photos by Kate Singh of Aevum Images

What is Bollywhack?

Bollywood meets Waacking?!?! Created by Kumari Suraj in 2009, Bollywhack fuses Bollywood Dance, Bhangra, Khattak, Bharatanatyam and other traditional movement from Kumari's South Asian roots, with the 70's Disco styles of Punking & Whacking. This cross cultural connection is a seamless union of powerful arms, elegant hand gestures, exotic poses and dramatic story telling facial expressions. Since it's re-launch in May 2016, Bollywhack reached over a **half million (500,000+) views on social media** in 4 short months.

Community Partners

In 2016, the Kumari Suraj brand was handpicked by Bollyshake, along with a few others, to represent the dance community on a global scale with the Girl Rising, "We Dream We Rise" charity that involves Priyanka Chopra, Freida Pinto, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Amitabh Bachchan and Michelle Obama. Kumari Suraj was chosen to help educate women to empower themselves energetically through dance. #WeDreamWeRise



Photos by Jay Buezo, edit Kate Singh



Photos by Mike Quain

Frankie Douglas Style...

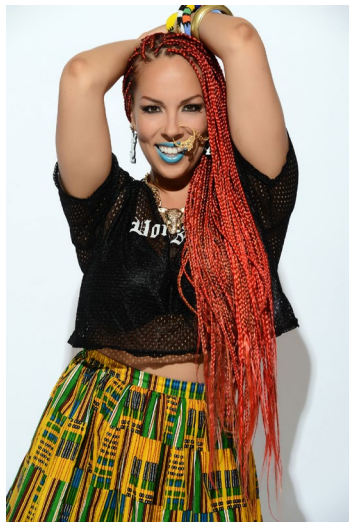
Description:

Being a product of the infamous 90's MTV generation with hopes of being a Fly Girl, Kumari's inspirations lead her to create the Frankie Douglas Style. Frankie Douglas is Kumari's "around the way girl", her Tomboy hip hop alter ego seen in performances with her female Hip Hop crew, The Jungle Jills or her Frankie Douglas style videos.

The names Frankie & Douglas were given to her by peers who reacted to her "boyish" mannerisms and sexual orientation. Suraj, mixing her Tomboy persona with her Afro Caribbean roots, 90's Hip Hop, House and Whacking, created the entity known as Frankie Douglas Style.











Founded in June 2010 by Kumari Suraj, the Jungle Jills have been an inspiring group of 90's inspired Fly Girls. "Jungle Jills" are daughters of the Hip Hop, Body Rock, BeBop, Urban Consciousness, Jungle Sounds movement. To be a "Jungle Jill" is an open statement for strong female artists in Hip Hop the world over. Women who fight for their dreams and persevere for those they love. Jungle Jills are "Concrete Roses", of tribal ancestry, who hail from modern Urban Jungles (metropolitan cities) set to conquer life through their many gifts and talents. Jills have performed for World of Dance, Choreographer's Carnival, JLO, Missy Elliot, Step Up 3D Album release with Flo-rida, film,television and more.

Kumari also created many afro centric inspired looks for the Jills including pants, dresses, handmade door knocker accessories and more. Kumari's desire is to expand the brand into a dance based sports apparel clothing line named, "Jungle Jills".








CARNIVAL



THE WAACKERS

Waacking
Dance Style..

The Waackers is the world's premier Whacking crew, preserving and evolving the iconic street dance style since its resurgence in the early 2000s. Historically, they are the first Waacking crew since the dance style's resurgence in 2003.

The Waackers was established in 2009 by choreographer and teacher Kumari Suraj, who spearheaded a mission to build a strong foundation of Whacking history and movement vocabulary within the dance community. With members hailing from different cultural and geographic backgrounds, the Waackers are known for their outstanding Whacking technique, along with their love of fashion, art and performance. Waackers are encouraged to develop a solid base of technique and freestyle ability, while also growing as individual artists.

The Waackers have trained with key historic figures in the Waacking world, including Original Legendary Punker Viktor Manoel, Whacker Tyrone Proctor, Archie Burnett and the late Dallace Zeigler, among others. With dance education under their belts from such style masters, the Waackers traveled the world, performing, teaching, judging and winning battles across Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas.

The Waackers have been featured dancers with artists including: Toni Braxton, Mya, Estelle, Jody Watley, Carmit (formerly of the Pussy Cat Dolls), and are primarily based in Los Angeles. The Waackers iconic photos & videos continue to influenced music video directors on videos such as Jojo's "When Love Hurts" (2016) and producers for such epic television moments like, "The Wiz Live" (2015).

After 8 years of Waacking around the world, The Waackers concluded their final chapter in 2016.

THE WIZ CLICK TO SEE VIDEO **SHOW REEL CLICK TO SEE VIDEO**

"To the dance family I have shared so much space, time, tears, pain, laughter, good & bad with, I thank you for being apart of my journey. You've taught me through my failures and triumphs as a leader, how to be a better human being. Thank you for trusting me even in moments I didn't trust myself. I love you for sharing this journey with me over the past 8 years. It's been an honor being your leader. Thank you for being a part of a movement & legacy that has both inspired and changed the world."



Raquel Cabrera 2008-2012



ChaCha Nieves 2008-2012



Aj Marechal 2008-2012



Junko Sasaki 2008-2012



Celeste Zarpas 2008-2012



Tony Tzar 2009-2012



Jian Pierre-Louis 2009-2012



Noel Bajandas 2006-2012



Michael Duo-Sama Terrell 2009-2012



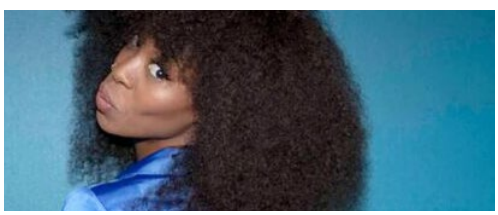
Rob Rich 2009-2012



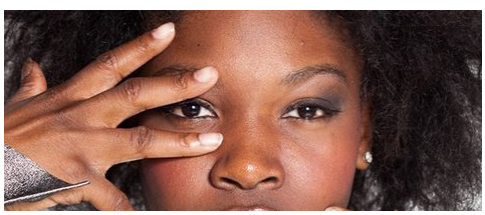
Lashaun Price 2009-2012



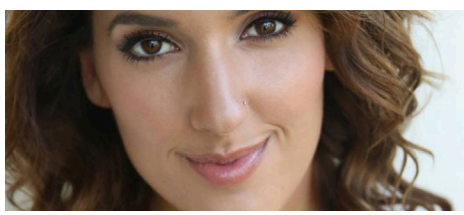
Rudi Smit 2009-2012



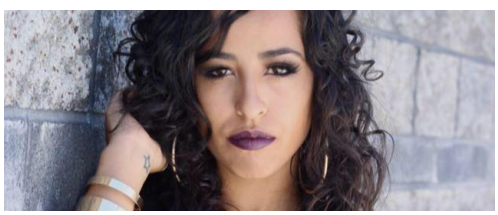
Quinetta Willmington 2009-2012



Tiffany Lewis 2009-2012



Nelly Bethel 2009-2012



Angel B 2009-2012



Brice Johnson 2012-2017



Daron “Day Day” Bell 2012-2017

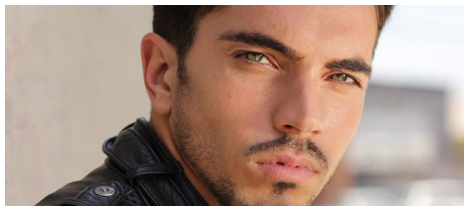
Family Tree



Himerria Wortham 2012-2017



Jesus Coca 2012-2017



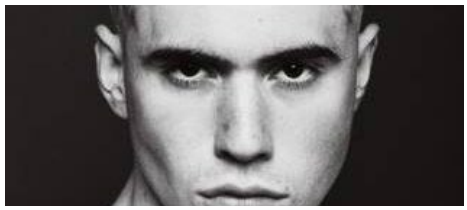
Jaeme Velez 2012-2017



Mariana Moncada 2012



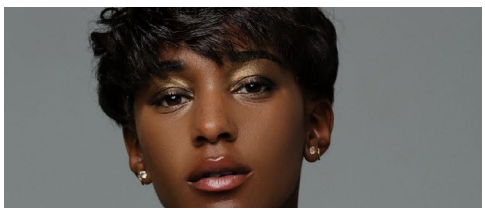
Maureen Asic 2012-2013



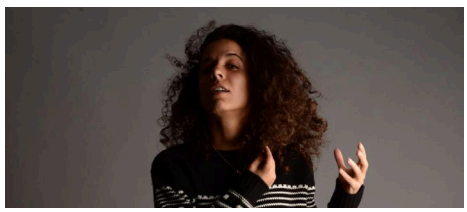
William Ylvisaker 2012-2013



Lorena V 2015-2017



Amin Simone 2015-2017



Nina Rodrigues 2015-2015-2017



Jojo Diggs 2015-2017



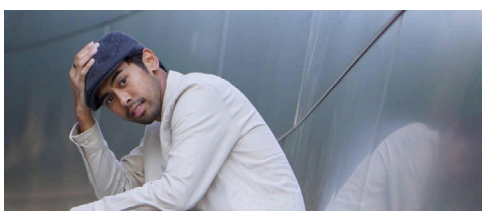
Akela Jaffi 2015-2017



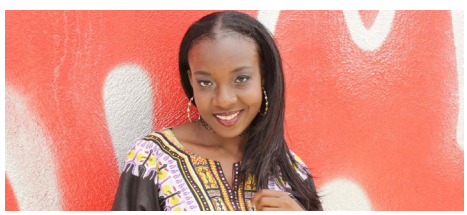
Akane Takenawa 2015-2017



Balta Monkiki 2015-2017



Fred Mayor 2015-2017



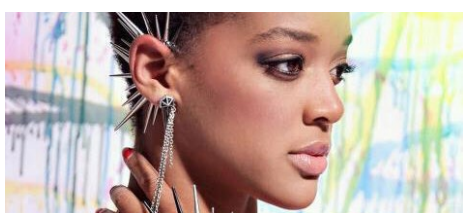
Harmony Gbe 2015-2017



Kristin Santiago 2015-2017



Serghinio Wooter 2015-2017



Amber Madison 2015-2017

2008 - **2017**



CHOREOGRAPHERS CARNIVAL



WORLD OF DANCE LA 2015

THE WAACKERS



Photo by: Mike Quain

THE WAACKERS

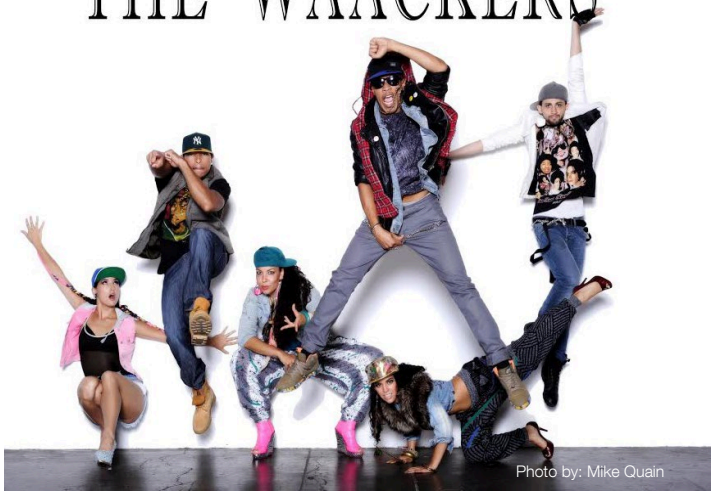
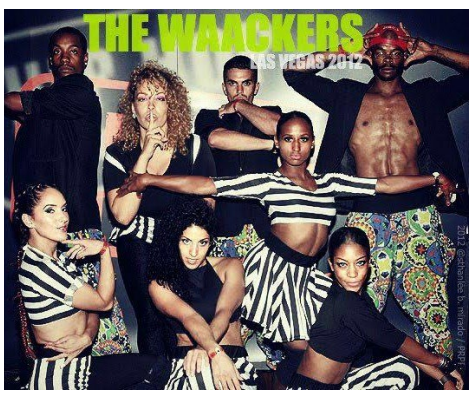


Photo by: Mike Quain







CHINA TOUR 2012



CARMIT BACHAR AVALON HOLLYWOOD CA



JODY WATELY WHY BLACK WHEN TV ONE



LONDON



LOS ANGELES CALIFORNIA







NOKIA THEATER



House of Suraj is the artistic brain child of Kumari Suraj. Kumari created a live choreography showcase for Choreographer's Carnival called the "House of Suraj" where she incorporated Bollywhack for the first time to a live audience in Los Angeles in 2012. During her 2014 journey through India, Kumari met, mentored and trained with many waacking enthusiasts. The House of Suraj happened by accident when five of these enthusiasts bonded during video projects to create the first generation of the collective: India's elite Whacking/ Waacking family. HOS will be three years old in June. Since it's creation, the members in India have been sowing seeds through community events, workshops, performances, winning battles and making television appearances promoting the club culture of Waacking. Check out each member's story inside this legacy issue.

About the HOS logo

"Passion, Diligence, Discipline and Strength. That is what I had in mind when I made this logo for the Indian Waacking crew, House of Suraj. I tried to showcase these ideas in the logo all the while, keeping the Indian feel intact."
- Swapnil Kumar (Lil Green Man Designs, Hyderabad, India) Designer

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The future of HOS India & US

While HOS members in India are paving the way for younger generations to experience the transformative confidence building influence of Waacking in their lives, they are continuing to further their careers in the commercial media.

Kumari is working to build the House of Suraj production company in the United States. Kumari's dream is to own a warehouse that facilitates dance training, dance production, film/video production for music artists, commercial production, stage production/tour rehearsals, beauty/self enhancement, personal styling and costume production.

Kumari is working towards that goal one project at a time by building her film making skills, relationships and reputation in the industry. Her first major film endeavor begins in 2017 with the production of two short films shot in the US and India, featuring HOS India. Kumari considers these short films to be pillars or milestones in her life's work and reflective views on humanity. Both short films have been incubating and developing for 6 years. In 2018, look for The Traveler & The Queen of Hearts.

Support House of Suraj

Kumari is beyond proud of her dance family in India and wants to continue cultivating their growth through a T-shirt fundraiser she created. Every T-shirt sold goes back to building the House of Suraj and the dance community in India.

Please visit our store click here.

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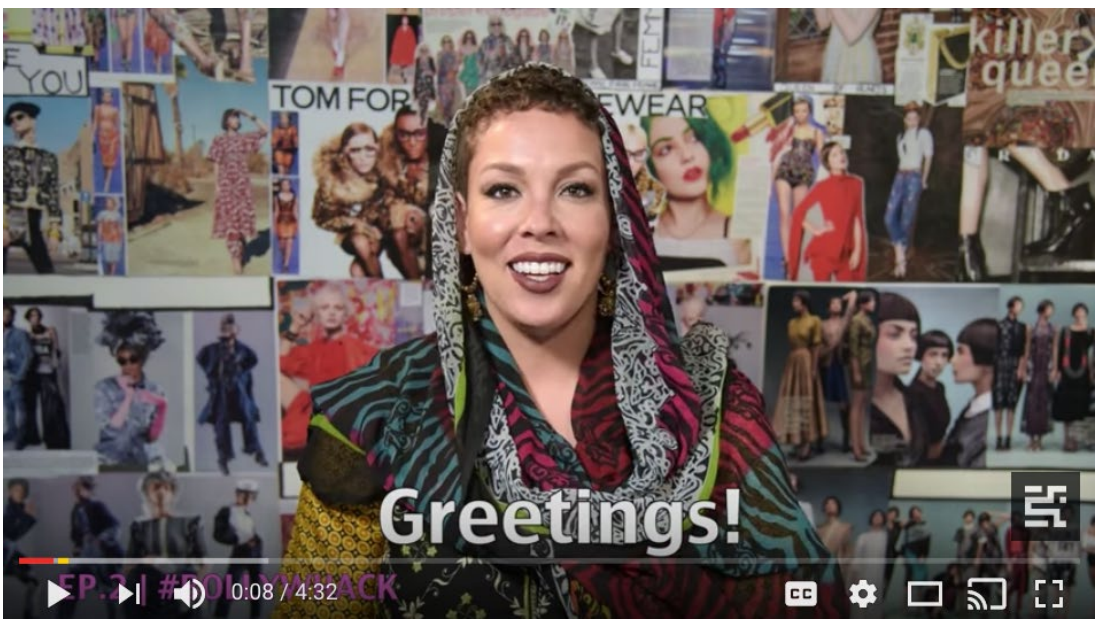
WEB: KUMARISURAJ.COM

CLICK TO SEE VIDEO



BOLLYWHACK HISTORY

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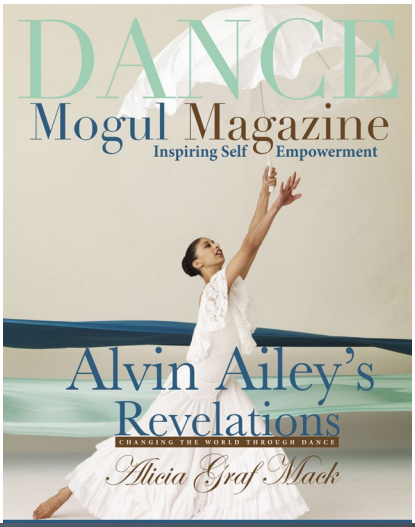
Premium Issue



Premium Issue



Premium Issue



Standard Issue: *Dance Mogul Italy*



Standard Issue: *Dance Mogul* **Croatia**



Click on the words Standard and Premium issue above each magazine for a preview.

Favorite Students, Children & Dance Family

Lisa Marie & Siri Sveter (Jungle Jills) Mekhola Bose, Anusua, Bgirl Amb, Sangram & TJ (House of Suraj)

Lorena V, Rudi, Day Day, Yoda Jones, Quinetta, Aj Marechal

(The Waackers)
Anuq Wilson (dance for peace)

Daniel Giron (and houses of the budding Northwest Waacking & Vogue scene)



Sangram Mukhopadhyay

Leader *of* the *Calcutta Waack Pack* House of Suraj India

Dancing in India is not a mean task and to begin with an aspiring chartered accountant who likes to whack it off the dance floor, well things couldn't be more interesting! This is Sangram Mukhopadhyay, aged 22, who resides in India and enjoys the benefits of a culturally affluent community. To begin with, the literature and art that predominates my taste is regionally juxtaposed with the spells of hip-hop, mostly influenced from my twin who happens to be among the first generation of hip-hop artists of our country. Today my identity as a waack dancer is mainly attributable to Kumari Suraj, whose brilliant YouTube workshop video on waacking exonerated the little I twirl today. The inception of The Calcutta Waack Pack has shaped every bit of my dancing personality. The exuberance to it was the declaration of my indictment into the House of Suraj under the leadership of the person who pushed me to do what I can do best.

The life cycle looks great with a sense of accomplishment in terms of the endless knowledge that I seek to embark upon. Specifically, when you have the rarest and the finest sharing the platform with you who deserve tremendous accolades. My affinity towards stage as a small theater dancer mainly helps me renovate my understanding of individualism. Further, the daunting amazement of seeing a guy do waacking (apparently the first of its kind) reflects the kind of gendering deep rooted in our Society, let alone art. The fact that style and gender are so closely confused and the concepts of femininity and masculinity not being the custody of any particular gender is yet to percolate. Having said all of this, the transition that dance has seen in general and the kind of acceptance my understanding of waacking and dance on a broader prospective has received, makes me feel extremely lucky to have been born in such a fantastic time of resurrection and innovation.



Mekhola Bose

Mekhola Bose

Founder of The Calcutta Waackpack. House of Suraj

Kolkata, India

Dancer, Drummer, Model. Crafts of Kammotionn Crew

I have been dancing in local cyphers since 2011, and decided to take dance professionally in 2013. Since then, I have been traveling around India to get down in jams and take workshops from most of the international Hip Hop/club style artists that have come here, to expand my knowledge on the subject.

In 2014, I met Kumari Suraj who I had been following on YouTube since 2011. My whacking changed after receiving first hand knowledge and corrections from her. I have only recently co-organized India's first Theme Jam called Retro Rally keeping 1 vs 1 waacking as the main category.

I also work as a choreographer in my city and I have made a collective called The Calcutta Waack Family where all whack lovers come together to session and jam. Recently we won Asian Battleground 2016 India and will travel to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to represent India in the world finals. We are currently waiting on our visas.

Dance Mogul



Who am I

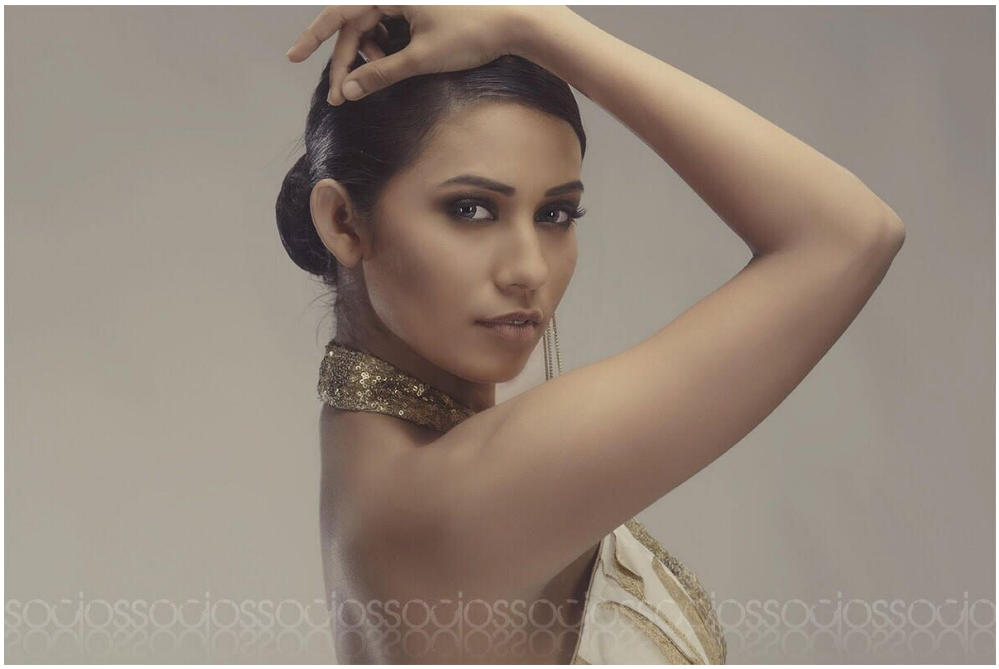
I am originally a classically trained dancer specializing in Kathak. I have been doing this dance form for the past 13 years. I have been trained by Birju Maharaj for this form and performed for him in a big show where I got to share the stage with other highly experienced dancers when I was just 13 years old. After completing school, I got into Hip Hop as it grabbed my attention with the new crews coming up in our city and different street battles happening. Then I started training in other street dance forms like waacking, house, old school.

Anasua Chowdhury India

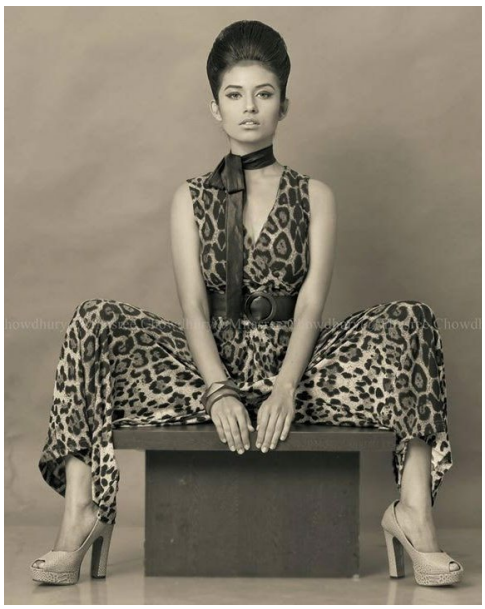
Dance Mogul Magazine Exclusive>>>

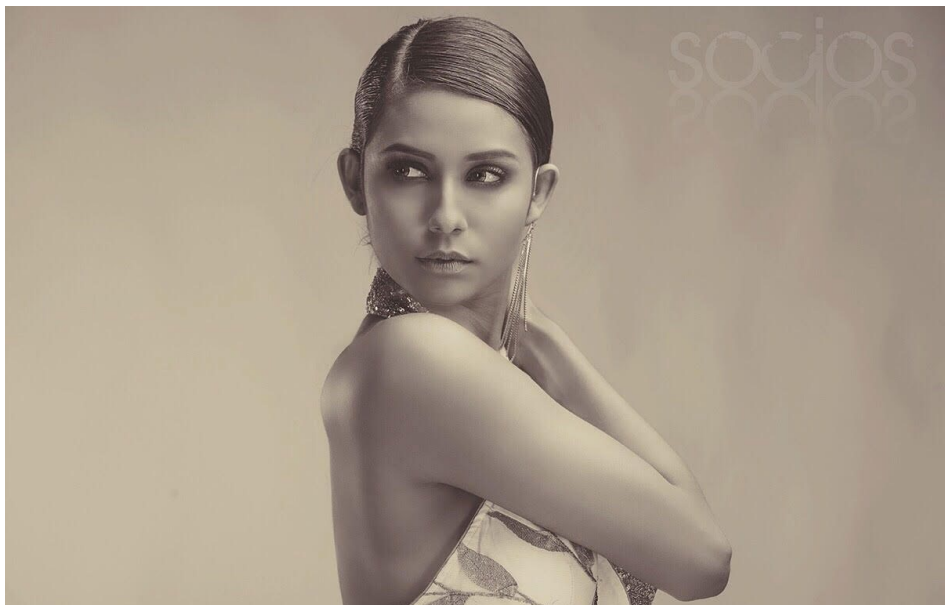
Why I chose waacking-

I had seen a friend (Mekhola) do this dance in a video. It grabbed my attention as I found it very different and stylish. We met up and I told her how I wanted to learn waacking and know more about the style. My friend helped me learn the basics and it all continued from there! I started watching videos of the pioneers of the style, battles, showcases, and learned about the history of the style. My friend and I decided to work on this style together and make a forum of waacking in our city to get it in front of other dancers!! Ever since then, I have not stopped waacking and my interest and love for this style just keeps increasing. I feel I can relate to this dance style the most and I really feel it when I perform because it is so much fun and it gives you a vibe of disco and funk. Also, I feel it looks damn creative and innovative when mixed with either dance styles! So, that's what I try to do!! I mix waacking with Kathak (classical dance form) to give an Indian feel to the form.







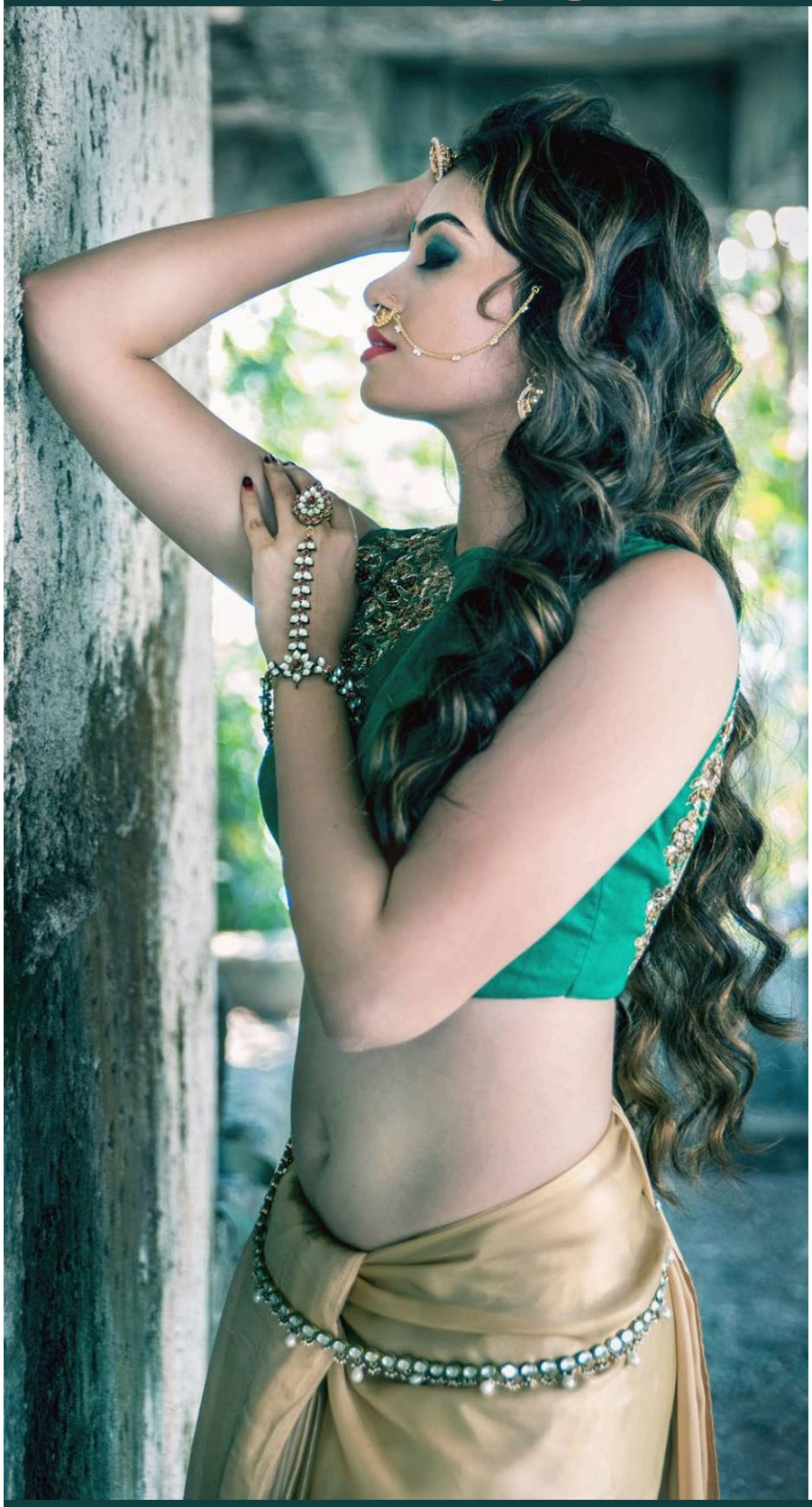


Achievements-
I have won many scholarships for my classical dance form and won many competitions, namely: Nehru Children's Scholarship and Shri Auribindo Institute. I have been a finalist in the reality tv show: *India's Got Talent Season 5* as a solo artist. I have also won local battles in my city as a solo style dancer and with my waack pack forum too! I have recently been a part of a crew called Desi Hoppers who won WOD 2015 and participated in a reality show based on the journey of the dancers to WOD called Bindaas Naach.

Apart from this, I am a professional actor and have performed on TV fiction shows like Dil Dosti Dance, D4 get up and dance, Fear files, CID and more. I also do corporate shows in Kenya, Uganda and within the country! I also featured in the 2016 viral Nike TV commerical and participated in many other viral Youtube ads.

About HOS-
Through HOS, i want to build this dance style more with my fellow mates and bring it to the notice of dancers here in India. When I perform Waack at different college fests, people tell me they have not seen waacking like this before and that they want learn it properly. Clearly, people have incorrect knowledge about it. Hence, I want to make this style more famous and introduce it to the whole of India.

Ambarin Kadri



A_K

Ambarin Kadri is a professional Hip Hop Dancer & Model.

Ambarin Kadri, aka Bgirl AmB, has been breaking/Bgirling for 8 years, making her the 1st Bgirl of India. She is one of the founders of the Roc Fresh Crew, pioneers in India's Hip Hop scene. Modeling strong leadership, commitment, and unity for rising breakers, organizing events that promote Dance alongside DJing, MCing and Graffiti, and providing an authentic voice of Hip Hop culture. Championship winners of Countless Crew, Solo, Footwork and Power Moves battles, Roc Fresh has left an impact across India and abroad.

Apart from Hip Hop, she is into other dance styles like Waacking, Popping, House, DanceHall.

Member of Detroit's all style crew called the Ill Minded Stylez by Jade Soul Juberi & India's elite waacking crew House Of Suraj were brought together by the renown Kumari Suraj in 2014.

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>



Notable performances of AmB - The launch of Ed Hardy, Delhi; the Auto Expo for Yamaha Motors; E.A. Sports sponsored Vexture National Gaming Competition; MTV's CrazySexyCool.com; the Red Bull Street Style Soccer Competition Finals; Bandra Festival with NYC's DJ Rekha; Gold's Gym; Pogo Mad Carnival; MTV Stunt Mania (5 city tour); and for Hip Hop nights at major clubs including Squeeze, Velvet Lounge, Enigma, Blue Frog and Ra.

AmB has featured in several Music videos- Punjabi MC's Morni Jan; Juggy D's Ni Soniye; Disney's The Cheetah Girls: One World; Shamur's Rock Your Body; Star One's Chak De Funjabi; Disney's We Rock (Camp Rock); and in Bollywood movie songs Aloo Chat and What's Your Raashee.

And her TV Commercial and Printshoot work includes-Kingston Pen Drive; Magic Moments Vodka-Cds & Cassettes; Yamaha FZS; Nokia Mobile; Reebok MTV Fitness Fun-Da-Mentals; McDonalds; Lays, Indian Idol; MTV Campus, Fanta, Reliance HD, UTV, Mother dairy, Tuborg, Relaxo, Maybelline, Whisper, QuickHeal AntiVirus, Smitten&Hoppins, Titan Raga, Hungama Music App, Prisma Leggings, Fanta, 7Up, etc

She has represented India in Germany at the Indo-German HipHop Cultural Exchange (Infinite Opportunities) 2011-12 and has been the Bgirl ambassador from 2011 till present. She was the youth ambassador of Adidas Originals between 2012 and September 2014.



Tejasvi Patil

Tejasvi Patil AKA Tee J, began her dance journey as a Hip Hop dancer in 2012. Halfway through 2013, she was introduced to one of the most petite yet annihilating dance forms - Whacking (from her crew leader Abhishek Das {FAM.O.U.S crew}). Under the guidance of Kumari Suraj, she became a First Generation whacker and has been a powerful Whacker representing 'House of Suraj' ever since. Within a year, she became the First Female to represent India at the World Finals in Taiwan at - Dance@ Live - and reached the Top 8!





She has been a pivotal member of the first diverse crew of India, formed in the year 2013, who are often referred to as "the X-Men of India" - the FAM.O.U.S Crew - who have gone on to star on shows like '*India's Got Talent*' (Season 6), on *Colors* where they received the Golden Buzzer and went straight through to the Semi-Finals, on the 2nd season of '*Dance Plus*'!

As part of the crew, she has traveled across several cities in India for various festivals and dance classes, and has been responsible for organizing 6 successful volumes of the first ever Krump Festival in India - IKF - bringing in Judges from all over the globe; right from - Asura, Kid Tight Eyez, Kofie, Flyboi, Girl Tight Eyez, Jr. Stretch, Tchozn, Yung Wave, Grichka, Coco Roots, Ugly Fate, Slam, and Tight Eyez for IKF, to Paradox and Shaadoww for the Hip Hop event 'Hip Hop Hurray' and Hiro for the House event 'High Spirits'.

She has also been featured in many commercials with Bollywood stars like Alia Bhatt for 'Maybelline', with Jacqueline Fernandes for the 'UNICEF' commercial, 'Spice Girls', with Deepika Padukone and many Indian female sports personalities for 'NIKE', with Ranveer Singh for 'Jack N Jones', and also for brands like 'Gaana' and 'KFC'. As a member of FAM.O.U.S she recently was a part of the Indo-German dance flick called 'Heartbeats' to be released in 2017, and also choreographed a YouTube video directed by ace Bollywood choreographer Remo D'Souza featuring Tiger Shroff called 'Flying Jatt Junior'.

Her most recent achievement has been winning the All Style and Whacking categories at the first ever Whacking event in India - Retro Rally - held in Bangalore and inspiring plenty of young girls and guys to step up their game and embrace their love for dance through all her work and achievements in the Indian dancing community.

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The Waackers
2008-2014

Yoda Jones was born in New Orleans, Louisiana and raised in Southern California. She has a great and deep love for art and music. Her dad plays bass, her uncle plays guitar, and she was surrounded by musicians, singers, and artists of all styles and cultures from a young age. Yoda chose to love music by dancing to it! She started dancing at the age of 6, learning the classical Indian dance, Bharta Natyam, from Mrs. Padmini Vasan, founder of the Padmalaya school of dance, at age 13.

Yoda Jones

CLICK HERE

Classical Indian style of Bharatanatyam>>>

She performs her Arangetram, a solo debut performance of the Bharat Natyam dancer. This was the beginning. From here her love for dance grew and expanded. She started to study others styles of dance: house, locking, waacking, popping, Hip Hop, vogue, Chicago foot working. Anything funky and free, grounded with soul. She also is learning areal arts and capoeira. She studies art and dances with pioneers, teachers and dancers worldwide. Yoda Jones also works professionally in the dance industry, creating and sharing with artists, choreographers, musicians and dancers. Dancing and performing in tours, music videos, live stage shows, commercials, industrials, TV shows, and movies to accomplishments of hard work and dedication!

"My love for dance, music, and art will always continue to grow and expand. Music and movement are endless. I am always a student and will continue to test myself and express myself! 100%"

>>>



CREDITS:

MUSIC VIDEOS/LIVE SHOWS/TOURS:
MICHAEL JACKSON CIRQUE DU SOLEIL
(CURRENTLY ON IN LAS VEGAS @ THE MANDALAY BAY!)
SOUL TRAIN AWARDS 2014
SOUL TRAIN AWARDS,MJ ONE 2013
ONE DROP (CIRQUE DU SOLEIL). BENEFIT SHOW FOR WATER.
PAUL MC CARTNEY WORLD TOURS
DISNEY'S SUMMER GLOW FEST
CHRIS BROWN
USHER
GNARLES BARKLEY
TONI BRAXTON
AMERIE
MICHAEL JACKSON
TIESTO/BUSTA RHYMS
SUPER HEAVY BAND(DAMION MARLEY,MICK JAGGER,
JOSS STONE,AR RHAMAN)
STEPH JONES
TAMMY FAYE
ERIC HUTCHENSON
FLASH MOBS
TOUR OF INDIA
CASTER DANCE SHOW IN CHINA
CHOREOGRAPHERS CARNIVAL(LA)

"Yoda Jones was my Bollywhack Muse! The first woman to show me the classical Indian style of Bharatanatyam. She was also one of the first members of The Waackers. Yoda was my first test subject for my first Bollywhack video in 2008. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oteO6PKxuHw. Yoda helped connect me to my traditional dance roots which sparked a flame in me that will never die. I am truly grateful for her influence on my life."

-Kumari Suraj



Photo by: Sara Teller

Nellie Bethel

The Waackers

Nelly Bethel has been performing for JLO's Vegas show since 2015. She recently choreographed a Waacking section for her 2017 New years performance on NBC.

"Kumari Suraj deserves a special shout-out! She introduced me to Waacking more than 10 years ago.. (where does time go..?) When we were creating this choreo, I immediately thought back to Kumari's piece when I first came out to Los Angeles from Denmark. So many amazing memories and dope creations. The universe brought it back full circle. Kumari helped me find myself in this city, and I won't forget. Kumari introduced me to the style and gave me a safe space to develop into the woman I became with training, friendship and inspiration for days. My first crew in America (The Waackers), first show-cases and dress up sessions were with Kumari! At the end of the day, I am so, so glad that I had the guts to choose dancing as my way of life. I LOVE it. I am living life so joyfully, and creatively. And I am grateful. Thank you Kumari!" - Nellie Bethel

>>>





Who is Quinetta Wilmington?

Quinetta was born and raised in the inner city of Philadelphia. Since a child, she was always a part of the neighborhood and school dance teams. As time went on, Quinetta realized that dancing was so much more than a hobby. While attending college at Norfolk State University, she made the dual decision to not only complete the Registered Nursing Program, but also to become a professional dancer. In 2007, Quinetta graduated with honors and a degree in Nursing. In 2009, Quinetta moved to California to follow her dreams of becoming a professional dancer. Fast forward years later and she has done just that. Quinetta signed with one of the top agencies less than 4 months after moving to LA and is blessed to say that each year is progressively better than the last.









Showcases & Performances

She has performed with a wide range of artists including the veterans and the newbies of the music industry. Iggy Azalea, Queen Latifah, Estelle, Jordin Sparks, Usher, Rihanna and Beyoncé are a few of the many. Most recently, Quinetta had the great opportunity of being a part of the Formation World Tour, the Epic Visual Album Lemonade and one of the print models for Ivy Park Fall/Winter Line 2016. Her journey this far has inspired her to also start a Dance Mentoring program, where she goes to inner city/ underprivileged neighborhoods to encourage and inspire the youth to not only dream, but to put those dreams into action. Quinetta strives daily to be a light, expressing through dance the joy and fulfillment that comes with being true to yourself and following your hearts desires.

While training in Los Angeles, Quinetta was scouted by Kumari Suraj to train under her in a style known as Waacking. Quinetta had no idea how much of an impact this particular style would expand her vocabulary as a professional dancer. Not only did it help her find her femininity in dance, but she gained a life long sister in the process. Waacking became apart of her life. Whenever there was an opportunity to freestyle at an audition and/or job, Quinetta would showcase her newly found talents. You can see her Waacking in videos including Toni Braxtion "Make My Heart" and Estelle "Freak".





DaRon DayDay Bell
The Waackers

Born and raised in Los Angeles, DaRon DayDay Bell discovered his love for music and dance at a very young age. He was always inspired by the sounds of Jazz, Disco, Funk and Hip Hop music thanks to his mothers and grandmothers taste in music. DayDay, at the age of 9, fell in love with the MTV music video era mimicking the likes of Michael Jackson, Janet Jackson, Madonna, Britney Spears, N'Sync, Bell Biv Devoe, Jennifer Lopez, Destiny's Child and many more.



DayDay joined his high school dance team and when he discovered the professional Los Angeles dance community/industry he knew that he'd found his home. Since graduation, he continued his training at both world renowned dance studios Millennium Dance Complex and Debbie Reynolds Dance Studio, training in styles such as Hip-Hop,JazzFunk/Street Jazz, House, Contemporary and Waacking.





He's performed in countless number of dance showcases like Carnival: The Choreographers Ball and Club Posers with choreographers such as Phlex, Andre Fuentes, Tricia Miranda, Michael Silas, Trey Rich, Donyelle Jones, Gerran Reese, Lashaun Price, Andye J, and Kumari Suraj to name a few. He also has built a strong professional resume working with/for major stars/brands like Jennifer Lopez, Mya, Daddy Yankee, Dawn Richard, Travis Garland, and A-Mei.



Durango, Mexico



Lorena Valenzuela

The Waackers

Lorena Valenzuela was born and raised in Durango, Mexico. She started dancing at the age of 3. After years of training in technical styles such as ballet, jazz and contemporary, Lorena moved to Monterrey, Mexico to pursue a College education. That's where she met her dance family, "Funkdation Crew". Together, they won national and international competitions and traveled across Mexico performing and teaching workshops. In April of 2012, they were chosen to be part of the American TV show *"America's Best Dance Crew"*. This led to other amazing opportunities like performing live for the "Festival People Magazine" in San Antonio Tx, "Vail International Dance Festival" in Colorado, "Culture Shock LA: Beauty", "Fosse the Jack Rabbit" "VIBE", "World of Dance" in CA and performances for TV stations such as Fox 11, MTV and Univision. Lorena started Whacking in the summer of 2010 and she's been teaching this style for over 6 years. Last year, she began choreographing Whacking for important dance shows in Los Angeles such as "LA's International Waackfest", "Carnival: Choreographers Ball, "World of Dance", "Collaboration SoCal", "MaxtOut", "VIBE", "USJ", "Rythmic Expressions" among others. She's been teaching in professional dance studios such as Movement Lifestyle, Kinjaz Dojo, Studio V, Soho Dance LA, Culture Shok San Diego,The Get Down District, Stylz and the South Coast Conservatory in Southern California, and "The Jukebox Studio" in Phoenix, Arizona, "In the Groove Studios" and "District SF" in San Francisco and "The New Day Center" in Portland, OR as well as "Block 1750" in Denver CO. She's now signed with The Movement Talent Agency and has begun her journey as a professional dancer in Los Angeles. In the past few months, Lorena booked music videos for singers JoJo, Jody Watley and Nayer, also danced for artist Mya's Live Performance at the Echoplex LA, among other great opportunities. Lorena became part of the outstanding Waacking crew "The Waackers" led by Kumari Suraj and now directed by Lorena Valenzuela. Together, they've been working hard to make the Punking/Waacking community of LA grow. She has judged important Waacking battles such as; "Return of the Waack", "Jungle Spacehip Ball", "Homeland 2015 Jam", "Waackers of the Galaxy", "USJ 2v2 Jam", "The Wild 7" among others. Being from another country is challenging and Lorena has experienced a lot of difficult situations. But, those experiences have made her stronger. She believes that if you stay strong, humble, and work hard in life, you'll get anywhere you want.



Celebrating Kumari Suraj

"I met the wonderful Kumari Suraj in October 2011 for the first time at her event "Waackfest" which was my first ever waacking battle, and it memorable for me. It set my print in the Waacking community of the world. I got so inspired by Kumari's contribution to the scene that I went back to my country and decided to create a Whacking community from scratch. Two years later, I moved to LA and we re-connected through OG Punker Viktor Manoel. I supported her with some choreography for the same event we met at 2 years earlier. That's the time when we actually became really close; we both came into our lives at a point were personally and emotionally we needed a real friend, someone we could talk with honestly and we could trust. To me, that was the beginning of our friendship, not as Waackers but as human beings. We started traveling together, battling together, teaching together... she became one of my best friends. Even though we are in the same community, we support and lift one another up. Ever since then, we both have the purpose to put Whacking in the game! We want to show the world how rich and spectacular the Whacking culture is. But, most importantly, we motivate and inspire each other because we believe in each other's talent and heart! When I see Kumari, I see a strong, talented, beautiful, super creative woman! I'm happy she's a part of my life.

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Credits: Mya, Jody Watley, Jojo, Nayer, ABDC season 7



Rudi Smit

CLICK TO SEE VIDEO

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

Jazz Funk/Hip Hop Dancer, Choreographer & Artistic/Creative Director

The Waackers

Rudi Smit is a 23 year old Jazz Funk/Hip Hop dancer, choreographer and artistic/creative director from Cape Town, South Africa.

He has taught, performed at and/or judged competitions in all the major cities in South Africa (Cape Town, Johannesburg,Port Elizabeth, Durban) and internationally in The USA (Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Houston, Chicago, Seattle, San Francisco) Russia (Moscow, Saint Petersburg), China (Chengdu, Beijing, Wuhan, Harbin), New Zealand (Auckland, Whangarei, KeriKeri, Hamilton), Italy (Naples, Verona, Bari, Caserta, Ischia, Catania), Germany (Hannover, Berlin), Greece (Athens, Thessaloniki), Ireland, Romania, Croatia, Slovakia, Scotland, Belgium, Hungary, Austria, France, Spain, Cyprus (Limmasol, Paphos), Zimbabwe & The UK (London, Telford, Kent, Manchester, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Stoke-On-Trent)

Rudi has just choreographed his first international film, Honey 3, starring lead cast members Cassie Ventura, Kenny Wormald, Dena Kaplan, Bobby Lockwood, Sibongile Mlambo & Ambrose Uren. This film is produced by Universal and directed by Bille Woodruff.

He is also the choreographer behind the Meghan Trainor Me Too dance video that went viral worldwide in September 2016. As a result of the video, Rudi has been featured/interviewed on several radio stations and TV channels in South Africa making headline news all over the country and trending #1 on YouTube South Africa for over a week, as well as having feature articles posted in several magazines and newspapers in and out of South Africa.

He is the first South African to teach at all of the following studios/ companies/camps/conventions in the countries mentioned below:

USA: Debbie Reynolds Dance Studio, Movement Lifestyle, Millennium Dance Complex, Boogiezone, Culture Shock, CollectiveUth, CF Dance Academy, Jayvee Dance Centre, SoReal Studio, Soundbox Studio, Fly Dance Studio, Chapkis Dance.
UK: The Garage, Pineapple Studios, Studio 68, Full Out Dance Academy, BSix College, Jag Dance, The Misfitted Hub, Studio 25. The Len Goodman Dance Centre. Sticky Warehouse. Street Dance Telford. Street Click Dance Studio. Fenton Manor Sports Complex. Robanna's Studio.
Ireland: Streets Ahead, Liffey Trust, Haus Of Funk.
Russia: ResiDance for Fame Your Choreo 2014. Greek Salad Dance Camp.
China: LClass Dance Camp. Titans Dance Convention. ICC Dance Camp. LClass Studio. 0451 Fashion Dance Club.
Italy: W.H.E.S. Dance Convention. Centro Danza Arabesque. Athena Dance. Eagle Gym. Accademia Vesuviana Della Danza, Manu Moving Gymnasium, Rage DanceLab, Learn In The Box, Ilary Dance, Star Top Line Dimensione. Work Out Club. Maratona D'Estate Sezione Urban. Akerusia Dance. Dream Dance. Passion In Move. A Passo Di Danza.
Greece: Pro Dancers Studio. Off Beat International. We Got Moves. Hip Hop International Workshop. Nick Marianos Dance Factory.
Germany: Move & Style. Motions. D's Dance School. Tybas Dance Intensive.
New Zealand: Viva Latino Studios, Fresh Movement, Hardcore Dance Company, Demonstr8 Da Flow Studioz, Dziah Dance Academy, Federation Dance Academy, City Dance, Dance Xpress.
Romania: Dracula Dance Convention.
Croatia: M18, XXL.
Slovakia: River Park Dance Centre.
Scotland: MAD Dance Studios.
Belgium: Next Level Dance Convention.
Hungary: Corvin Dance Centre.
Austria: Vienna Performing Arts Centre.
Cyprus: Free Flight Dance Company, Hip Hop Summit, Studio 6.
France: LAX Studio.
Spain: Quality Summer Dance Camp.
Zimbabwe: Dance Avenue

In 2008, he was selected as one of 20 crew members to form part of a production called the Temple of Hip Hop, choreographed and directed by Kumari Suraj (So You Think You Can Dance USA season 8 choreographer/ creator of The Waackers) This production introduced him to the foundation and technique of different street dance styles, namely: Popping, Locking, Waacking, Voguing, House, Dancehall etc. This was the start of his first proper introduction into the Hip Hop world and the first formal training he had ever received. He is predominantly self taught.

He is the choreographer of well known South African dance crews, Untamed, Primitive & Untimitve. Rudi and his crews have been featured on numerous TV channels in South Africa including SABC 1, 2, 3, CTV and ETV. They also made headline news in South Africa, featuring on channels such as Channel24, ViaTV, eNCA, Hectic Nine 9 and Expresso TV for their viral dance video to Meghan Trainor's "Me Too." Additionally, Rudi has been interviewed on radio stations such as KFM, GoodHope FM, Heart FM, Cape Talk, One FM and RadioWave.

Their main titles include six gold medals, two silver medals and two bronze medals over the course of entering HHI South African qualifiers for five years. (2009 – 2013) Each of those five years they had the opportunity to go to Las Vegas and compete in the Hip Hop World Championships. In 2012, Untimitive set a brand new record for South Africa, placing 9th in the Mega Crew division. Furthermore, Primitive has won the following titles during their time together: Masters Of Rhythm 2012 champions, OSK Gunz Blazing champions 2011, McDonalds Street Rhythm Champions 2013 & Hip Hop Indaba Champions 2013.

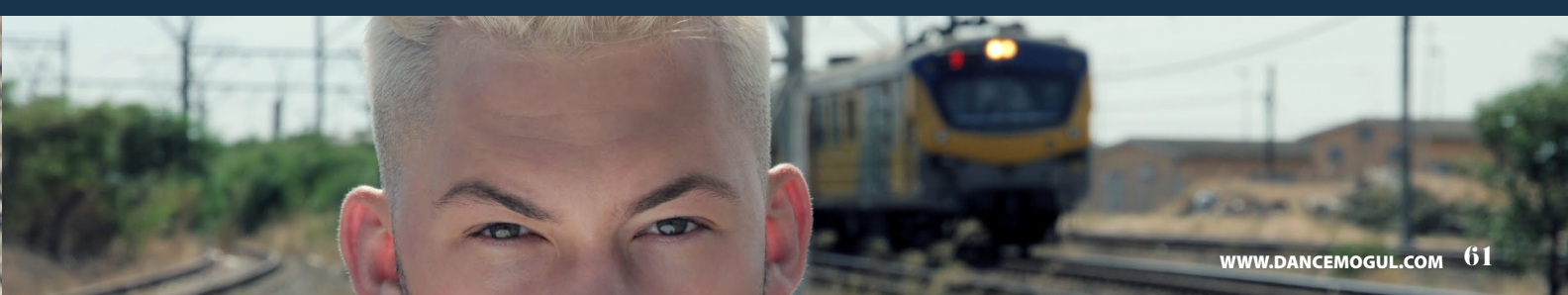
Rudi is the first South African to choreograph for and showcase his work at the LA Carnival Choreographers Ball. He has done three Carnival pieces to date (2011 – 2013.) Through Carnival he has had the opportunity of working with industry names such as Matt Cady & Beau Fournier (Fanny Pak), Tony Tzar, Laura Edwards, Sisco Gomez, Zack Venegas, Nico O'Connor, Ricky Lam, Lashaun Price & 8 Flavahz (ABDC Season 6) who have all danced in his Carnival pieces during the period of time that he submitted his work.

He is also the first and only South African member to join and make it into the international Waacking crew, The Waackers. Prior to getting into The Waackers, he had the opportunity of being a Waacking and Voguing specialist choreographer for the ETV television program, "Step Up Or Step Out" (2011).

In 2011, Rudi was chosen to be one of the dancers who performed at the official launch of LMFAO's clothing line (Party Rock Clothing) during the annual Fashion Minga show in Hollywood, Los Angeles (Choreographed by Matt Steffanina.) Rudi has choreographed and/or danced for names such as Danny K, Lloyd Cele, Loyiso Bala and has just recently started choreographing for Lakota Silva who was featured on LCNVL's lead single "Closer." He has also choreographed/danced for Romanian popstar, Inna, during a leg of her USA tour in Chicago and Seattle in 2012 and was also a dancer in Jaden, Willow & Trey Smith's "Find You Somewhere" music video.

Music videos choreographed: Dirtyfunk – Dance With You / Lakota Silva – Do Re Mi In the same year, Rudi was appointed as the executive and creative director of the very first South African branch of internationally recognized company, Dance2XS, by Patrick Chen.

Rudi has judged dance competitions nationally and internationally,namely: Fame Your Choreo (Russia), Salonika Open, Pro-Dancers Waacking Battles, Straight Outta Eightball All Style Battles, Bounce Street Dance Competition & HHI Nationals (Greece), The Street Dance NZ HHI Nationals (New Zealand), BDO Street Dance Midlands Championships (UK), Danza Vedizione, The W.H.E.S. Choreographing Competition (Italy), Hip Hop Summit (Cyprus) as well as the Sun City Battle Of The Giants competition, World Supremacy Battleground Qualifiers, SADTA Hip Hop Nationals and The SA Hip Hop Cup in both Cape Town & Johannesburg, South Africa.





AJ Marechal

AJ Marechal is a writer based in Los Angeles. A native Angeleno, she earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy at NYU, and her writing career has spanned across disciplines including screenwriting, playwriting, and journalism.

The Waackers

I was 18 the first time I saw someone Waack—I was at a deep house club in Hollywood, using a fake ID, with no real dance identity outside of freestyling. My boyfriend at the time, a popper, nudged me and said, "You should start learning that style," but I had no idea where to begin. After all, who else was Waacking, aside from this lone wolf at the club? Most dancers I saw were deep in LA's popping, locking, house and breaking scenes. But the style, while foreign and not very visible in 2007, nevertheless felt seductive, dynamic, playful. I had to know more about Waacking. In 2008, there were only two women I knew of in LA who trained in the style, and I was deeply shy around them. There was also no Waacking community, no professional teaching structure, no Waacking classes you could casually pop into on a weekly basis. But I was in school in New York at the time, flying back and forth across the nation with some regularity, and began training in Waacking under Archie Ninja in Union Square on cold winter nights. Waacking had more of a visible presence in NYC, but more so because of dancers blending it with Vogue. In LA, it still felt like a desert.

That is, until Kumari moved to LA. I remember watching one particular clip of hers over and over again on YouTube before we even met — her battling Aus Ninja in Waacking at House Dance International. Her movement style felt so unique — strong, feminine, plush, effortless. It didn't take long before we crossed paths on the West Coast, and I realized she was spotting all of us little lone wolf Waackers out on the dance floor, slowly gathering us together, building a tiny but focused community. She was passionate about the style, and, as anyone close to Kumari will tell you, a disciplined force to be reckoned with. We became The Waackers, with Kumari leading the charge, and just like that, LA had a Waacking crew.

With The Waackers, I had access to dancers who challenged me in the style, and forced me to grow quickly. I'll never forget getting down at a gay club in Silver Lake and Kumari pulling me to the side and gently scolding me for blending Waacking with Vogue — she wanted me to explore Waacking in a more pure, skillful capacity, and though at the time I shrugged off the note, I soon found myself siloing the styles so that I could train my arm speed and musicality more in Waacking. But beyond that, Kumari and The Waackers offered me access to the history of the style, and the opportunity to meet the legends that pioneered it — Angel, Ana, Dallas, and so forth. It wasn't just about bringing together a fierce group of Waackers who didn't have a crew home previously in LA; it was about building a culture, and preserving the dance style along with its history.

I graduated from NYU in late 2010 and began to pursue a career in writing, which led to dance taking a bit of a backseat in my life. But Waacking has always been there — and so has Kumari. We have remained close over the years despite geographic distance, watching each other evolve as dancers, professionals, and women. I'm grateful that Kumari was a trailblazer in creating our new generation Waacking community in Los Angeles. Now, classes abound. Teachers abound. Seeing a Waacker on the dance floor is normal. There are no more lone wolves; but I can't help but have a feeling when I get down at a club every now and then that I was privileged to be a small part of that ground floor effort. I see these young Waackers cyphering, so many of them around, and think, "Man, how times can change."

Writing credits include GRACELAND, RELATIONSHIP STATUS, New Guard LA, Variety and Mashable.



Jungle Jill

Siri "FlyGirl" Tveter

Siri's heritage is a mix of Thai and Norwegian. She currently lives in Los Angeles, California. She started dancing before she could walk and was copying steps from every music video shown on TV. But she didn't get into training until the age of 19. Top dancers and choreographers from all over the world trained her. She decided to move to America in 2012 to pursue her dream and started school for acting. She would dance after school, performing different shows, dance and music videos. Four years later, she graduated with a BA in Theater Arts and is currently pursuing her dream. She also has a love for teaching and has experience in teaching in various counties such as: Norway, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Canada. She is currently teaching in various studios in LA for all ages and levels of dance and acting.



Siri Tveter Celebrating Kumari Suraj

The very first time I met and got to dance with Kumari Suraj was in Bangkok, Thailand. That day was the day I found my soul sister! Kumari´s love for dance and the way she moved clicked with the way I moved.

Not only are Kumari´s dance moves super fun and inspired by moves from Mc Hammer, TLC and the FLY GIRLS from “In Living Color”, she also combines every dance styles and culture into her own style; Waacking, Indian dance, South African dance, house, dancehall, you name it, she does it!! Kumari is very interested in other people and always open to learn. She then makes her own mix and creates the style of KUMARI SURAJ.

An ARTIST: using dance/movement and fashion as her way to express. People gravitate to her because she has so much knowledge of life and dance. She has a big heart and she shares that so beautifully with the world. A strong woman. I had the pleasure to work with her several times in LA: live shows such as Carnival Choreographer´s Ball in Hollywood, dance/concept videos, or just training. She has been a big influence on me and taught me many dance styles so I can combine and create my own.

Always very creative, on point, knowing what she wants and goes the extra mile to get what she needs. That is why all her work is unforgettable. It is always an honor to work with my good friend Kumari!



Yaminah Celebrating Kumari Suraj

I have known Kumari for seven plus years. We first met when I was teaching Dancehall for IDA Hollywood and she was teaching Waacking. I would see her at auditions and always thought she was sick with it in her skills. Later, I joined her crew Jungle Jills, which was a group of strong, talented and versatile women that killed it in the dance industry. The experience with the crew was awesome! We danced on varies stages together such as Carnival in Hollywood, Step Up 3D release party, World of Dance, SF Hip Hop festival and more! We also audition for American's Best Dance Crew together. From my experiences in knowing Kumari and working with her, we gained a sisterhood that has been meaningful. She's a dope person and artists and I look forward to continue seeing her blossom in her art and as a woman." - Yaminah

www.Yaminahlegohn.com

Jungle Jill

Yaminah Legohn

Artistic Director/Choreographer of Art Of Legohn®

Owner/Instructor of Afro Karibé®

Passionate, dedicated, and hardworking is the least to say about Yaminah Legohn, choreographer, teacher, professional dancer and performer of West African, Dancehall/Reggae, Hip Hop, Jazz and Modern dance styles. Recently, she appeared on BET's "F In Fabulous" choreographing for Savannah Lynx. The latest music video she choreographed " I Remember" by Carl Thornton has won an Akademia Award. Before moving to New York, Legohn spent time in her home-town Los Angeles, gaining experience in the Hollywood industry as a choreographer, teacher and professional dancer. She has worked with multiple artists such as Nick Cannon, Shakira, N.E.R.D., Tony Toni Tone, Lil Wayne, and B.o.B. and appeared on TV shows and commercials such as Disney's "Phineas & Ferb" and "So Random". Yaminah's electrifying performances have also been sought by some of the dance industry's top ranking festivals and showcases, including the Choreographer's Ball "Carnival" in Hollywood and New York, World of Dance, International Hip Hop Festival and RAW Artists in both Los Angeles and New York. She has also performed at the Black Choreography Festival (Bay Area), American College Dance Festival and the Soul Nation Festival in Indonesia.



There is no doubt that Yaminah is a well-rounded and trained dancer. Having studied West African, Samba, Ballet, Modern (Horton, Graham, Limón and Dunham techniques), Legohn's versatility translates seamlessly in every performances. Adding to her dynamic repertoire, she embraced Dancehall growing up in the vibrant culture and often fuses the dance style in her choreography. "Dancehall has always been a part of my soul and has been a major influence in my artistic development." In 2010, Legohn founded Art of Legohn, LLC a multimedia arts and entertainment company, specifically a music, visual art and dance division boasting a wide variety of dance styles, including West African, Dancehall, Hip-Hop and Modern dance. Art Of Legohn® seeks to create and inspire through music, dance, art and performance, both nationally and internationally. In 2013, Legohn launched Afro Karibe®, a diaspora-inspired mix of cultural dances that include West African, Dancehall, Afro-House, Hip Hop and Samba. Yaminah Legohn masters her choreography, teaching and performing arts projects by continuing to captivate audiences through her artistic performances and by building the dancer in her electrifying and energetic classes. Legohn has taught master classes and weekly classes in Southern and Northern California, Brooklyn and New York City. She loves to spread her knowledge of dance and enjoys helping her students become great dancers. Simply put, she lives to spread her love and passion for the arts. Legohn holds a BA degree in Speech Communications & Dance with an emphasis in choreography from San Francisco State University.



www.lisamarie.tv

Celebrating Kumari Suraj

"In my first year moving to Los Angeles, I became a work-study at the infamous Debbie Reynolds dance studio. Here I was fortunate to meet and learn from the some of the best choreographers and dancers in the world. Kumari Suraj was one of those people. Her style was a mixture of house, hip hop, and funky soul which reflected the dance moves I loved and grew up with. She introduced me to the style of waacking and mentored me through my growth as a dancer and performer."
- Lisa Marie

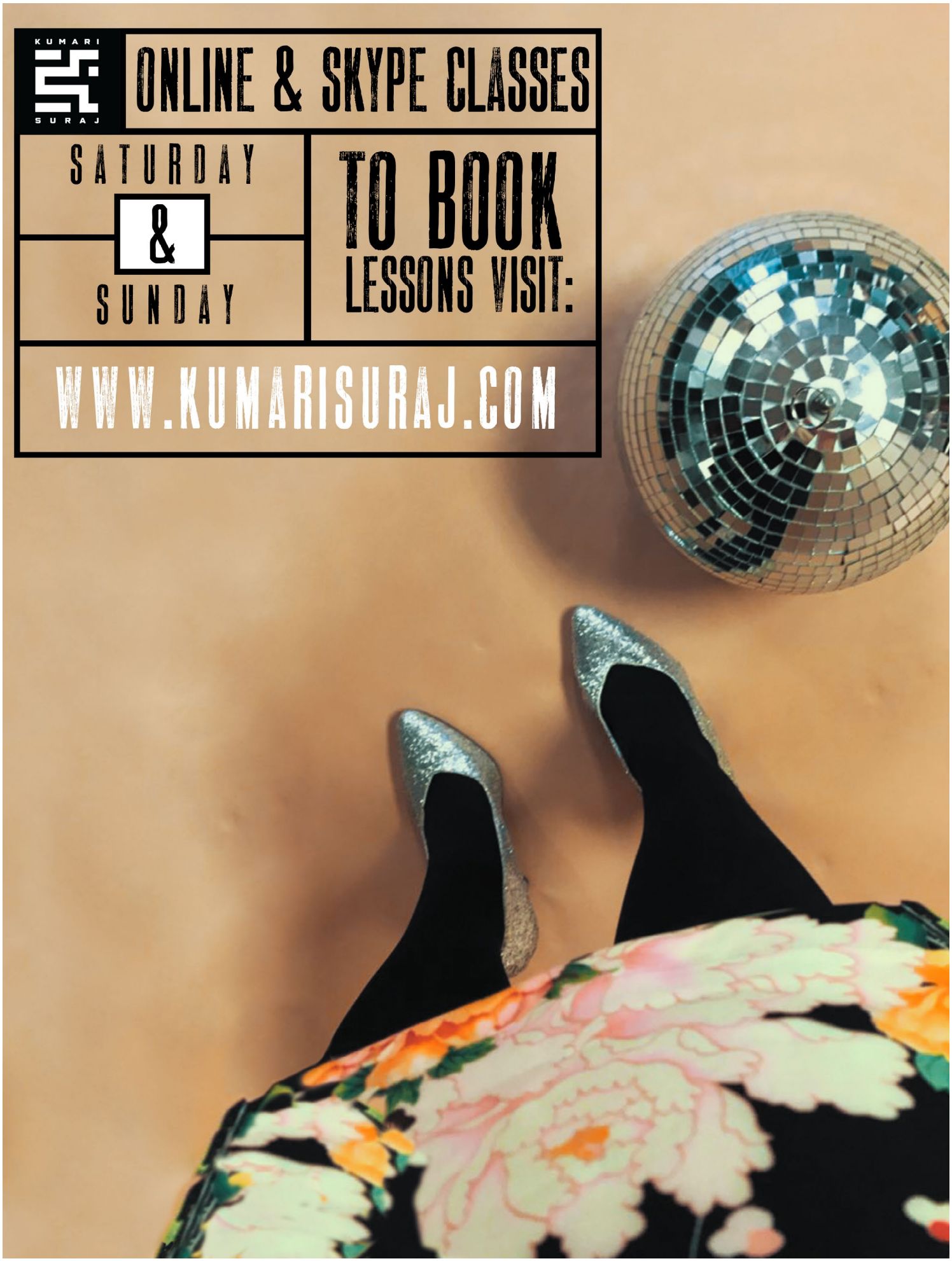
Lisa Marie

CLICK HERE VIDEO

Lisa Marie is an American actress, dancer, choreographer and fitness professional. For a list of recent films and television appearances please visit imdb.me/lisamarie. She has been to over 33 countries teaching dance and dance fitness. She is an international presenter and educator with Zumba fitness and loves her large Zumba family of friends. Lisa Marie created Fly Girl 101 training sessions to help dancers, dance lovers, instructors, and fitness enthusiasts achieve their goals through movement. She uses inspiration from hip hop culture and her own knowledge and experiences growing up watching the original Fly Girls from the 90's.

Lisa Marie is known for her work on Stalked by My Doctor: The Return (2016), Pocket Listing (2015) and Pitbull Ft. Jennifer Lopez: We Are One (Ole Ola) 2014 World Cup Song PARODY (2014).

Jungle Jill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History of the NW Kiki Scene

Over the past 11 years, Kumari has built and closely mentored dance communities in South Africa, Denmark, Los Angeles, The UK and India. Observing the hunger and desires in her hometown she decided to bring the culture to Portland, Oregon.

In 2015, Kumari Suraj created the first Vogue Ball in Portland called, NYE Black & White Ball. It featured Dashaun Wesley as a judge and teacher. Epic Drag Balls like the famous Critical Mascara produced by local Drag sensation Kaj-anne Pepper have been around for years. However, Kumari saw the lack of Ballroom/ Disco cultural education in regard to education, movement, house communities and event production. She decided to bring her event Waackfest to Portland for two seasons.

LA's International Whack/Punk/Pose Festival (Waackfest) is a Disco & Ballroom Culture based dance brand curating festivals, events, workshops & fashion for the masses. 2015's "Jungle Spaceship Ball" & 2016's "Tim Burton Ball" inspired new generations of Portland artists to train, create houses, perform locally, travel to New York to compete at the Latex Ball and even become viral sensations. See "Grocery Store Voguers on Buzz Feed, Teen Vogue and Cosmo.

In 2016, Kumari introduced Nostalgia, a smaller monthly dance party and competition to further stimulate community growth. Nostalgia is the "Studio 54 of The NW", an ethereal pansexual disco experience. The party was a safe space for fashion, music and art lovers to connect while watching the dance community fine tune their skills through themed competitions. During the 2015-2016 season Kumari brought ballroom and waacking legends like Princess Lockeroo, Javier Ninja, Father Stephan Blahnik, Carlos 007 and Jaron The Fame to teach workshops and mentor the hungry PDX children.

For the past 4 years Kumari has been mentoring Portland dance darling Daniel Giron aka Father Romeo Ada, equipping him with what he needs to be a leader in his community. In the beginning it was only Daniel, Father Ada. Now the community has grown exponentially. The Houses featured in this article are all birthed from the education, Kumari provided this past season. Most attended balls, met their house families, took classes and competed or performed together in the past year. Kumari is fondly referred to as "Mother of the Pacific North West". After two seasons of community development Kumari is moving back to LA leaving the budding ballroom and disco communities of Portland in the hands of the following Houses.

HOUSE OF NEPTUNE (Portland)
Birthed from the Portland Queer scene, the three Neptune Daddiez seek to cover the world in glitter! After a transformative immersion in radical self-expression at What The Festival, and being exposed to the reckless glamour on display at Critical Mascara, one of Portland's competitive Balls, they came together to cultivate in each other the things they had come to prize and celebrate: a knowledge of self and a faith in their own ability to create something that could reach out and impact those around them. Cat Daddy (James Lange), Sugar Daddy (Kyle Rustebakke), and Baby Daddy (Stanislav Peck) Neptune are excited to create opportunities to collaborate with a diverse group of artists, and inspire you to live your life as art!

"While the Vogue and Ballroom community had shown us the transformative power that queer dance could provide, in Kumari we saw a way to put more of ourselves into the art form we were exposed to. From her, we learned that you can communicate strength, confidence, and passion through movement without changing into something else, but by becoming more of what you already are. We were validated, taught, and heard by a teacher that fostered our creativity while challenging us to push our own boundaries. The only limits were the ones we gave ourselves." - Neptune Daddies



HOUSE OF MALICIOUS ALLURE (Seattle)
Malicious Allure is a voguing and waacking collective founded by choreographers and educators Tracey Wong and Keelan Johnson. Due to the growing need to see more dance diversity in the Seattle dance community, Tracey and Keelan had a mission to enhance a growing voguing/ waacking scene in the Pacific Northwest by providing classes focusing on solid foundation and sharing the rich history of these dance styles. Malicious Allure was formed in 2016 and continues to push creative boundaries through their love of dance, theatrics, and fashion. With a diverse collective of individuals and movement, Malicious Allure brings a fresh perspective into their performances. You will never catch them following trends, but will see them at the forefront as trendsetters.



Photo Credit: Ryan Foster
Photographed left to Right: Emma Alexander, Grace Masaoka, Zahra Masaoka, Tracey Wong, Keelan Johnson, Sarah Stanger, Marc Fon, Alyssa-Cyre Oyadomari

HOUSE OF FLORA (Portland)
The House of Flora is a dance, drag and performance art collective that strives to push the boundaries of self-expression. The group aims to expand the Northwest's queer community by celebrating gender-sexual subjectivity that surpass the dominant society's binary categories, and honoring the notorious underground ballroom culture hailed from New York.

Over the past year, current father and mother, Daniel Girón and Paula Metzler have taken leadership roles, cultivating a strong well rounded group. They are now helping to mentor and mold other voguers & waackers who have gone on to become house leaders on their own.

The House of ADA continues to raise the bar with their high performance quality and dynamic sex appeal in live shows, battles and club events. The House of Ada are the highest ranking trophy snatchers at Ball in the NW.

When the global ballroom scene recognizes strong PDX Vogue performers, The House of ADA will be a staple pioneer and trailblazer. The HOA will continue setting a good example as teachers, entertainers and students in the Pacific Northwest.

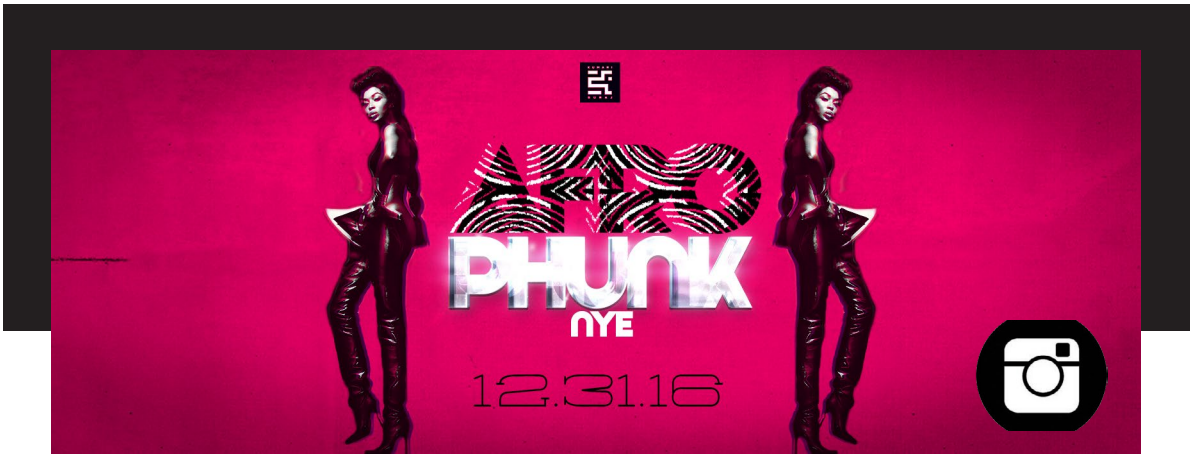


Photo Credit: Jay Buenzo - Dancers listed from left to right:
Upper row: Kayleigh Nelson, Janae Ball
Lower Row: Alice Johnson, Nicholas Petrich, Daniel Girón, Paula Metzler, Sindel Sylvester.



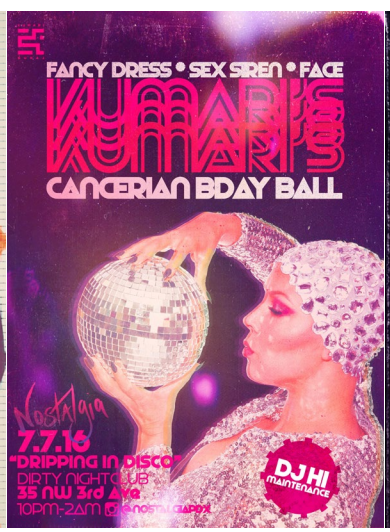
THE HOUSE OF ADA (Portland)
House of ADA (Latin for Fairy) was spontaneously established at one of Portland Oregon's drag balls. Original funding members: Brittany DeLano, Nicholas Petrich and Daniel Girón took home their own individual trophy (Love Ball 2014). Instantly making them the top contenders in the Northwest Ballroom scene.

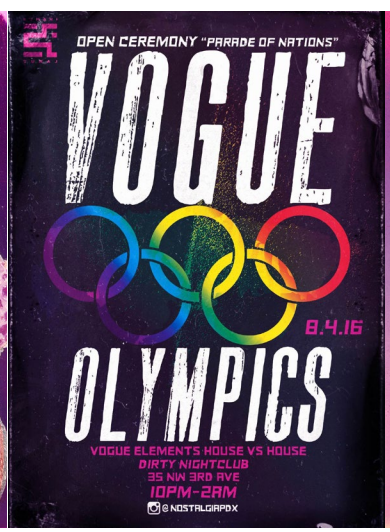
Nostalgia



Kumari Suraj is an international event & festival producer who brings a euphoric party ambiance specializing in the detailed talent curation of the world's most exclusive urban, neo-disco and ballroom artists. Nostalgia is a smaller monthly branch off the annual Waackfest. Nostalgia is the "Studio 54 of The Era". This etherial pansexual disco experience will take patrons on a ride through fashion, music and art of the 70's, 80's & 90's. Instagram: @NostalgiaWaackfest



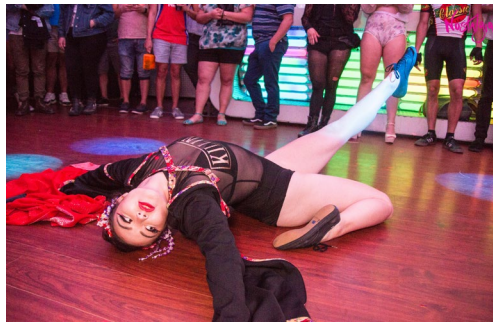






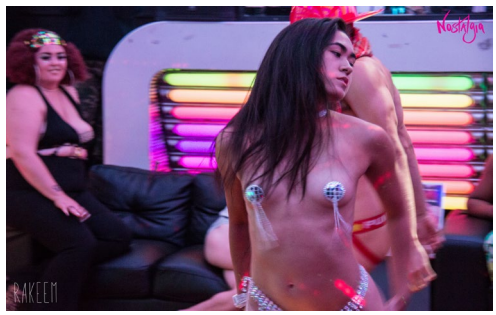

Nostalgia


Nostalgia
VOGUE
OLYMPICS




Nostalgia


Nostalgia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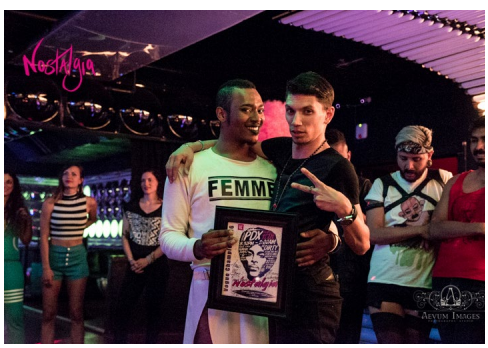
Nostalgia
FEMME


RAKEEM


Nostalgia
RAKEEM




VOGUE CHAMPION
Nostalgia







Accomplishments

Awards

- Critical Mascara (Vogue Categories) 2016 & 2014
- Banjee Ball Vancouver Pride (Vogue & Runway Categories) 2016
- Seattle's En Vogue Ball (SoftCunt & Vogue Categories) 2016
- Nostalgia PDX (Vogue Category) June 2nd 2016
- Waackfest Jungle SpaceshiP Ball (Vogue Category) October 2015
- Love Ball (Vogue Category) February 2014
- Black & White New ears Eve ball (Vogue & Waacking categories) December 2014



CLICK TO SEE VIDEO

Daniel Giron

Portland, OR

Dance Mogul Magazine Exclusive >>>

About me:

I am a well-rounded dancer with a background in Latin partner dance styles, House, Waacking, Contemporary and Vogue. Currently I am choreographing, performing and residing in Portland, Oregon and am originally from Veracruz, Mexico. As a Voguer, I am the Father / Founder of House of ADA and am on a mission to help cultivate a strong Vogue community in the North West by continuing to provide weekly fundamental classes at Vitalidad Movement Art Center in Portland OR. My creative improvisational video "Grocery Voguers" received viral international recognition and over 40k views on Facebook and YouTube. I have included the link under press coverage for your review.



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Music

Favorite DJs

Maieli
Jian Pierre
Jasmine Solano
Denna Bee
RjKoolRaul
ROD

Musician

MTooray
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Artists Development

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"Music is my life. She's tattooed on my body like henna. She is the reason I became a dancer. As a dancer it has been my honor to respond to sound. To roll my hips in a dark corner of a hot club is the ultimate release. To dance as if the holy spirit took hold of me in front a giant speaker oblivious to time and space is my church. I've screamed, cried, laughed, elevated and lived in clubs the world over. Catching tribal undulations to music from my favorite DJs, artists, musicians is euphoria. I've pranced at clubs from over 30 different countries. From Diddy's Fashion week exclusives in Paris, to sweaty house parties on the beaches of Africa to a tiny dive bar in Uruguay. I got my life! Here are some of my favorite musical artists on the planet! Music is pure ecstasy and these people have helped me taste the truth." - Kumari Suraj



DJ Maieli

Maieli is influenced heavily by the diverse music scene of the city as well as her mixed Desi (Indian)/Latin roots. She incorporates different genres to provide groovy bass heavy mixes as well as producing her own tracks and remixes. Maieli got involved with music at an early age playing piano and then trumpet in her Jr. High band however she got her start Dj'ing in college in 2011 when she bought a pair of used technics from her then co worker and started to learn the basics of beat matching with turntables. From there she learned how to use ableton through youtube tutorials and started making beats and remixes. She's produced for rapper Horse powar as well as been featured on Dummy Mag's Astral Plane DISMISS U compilation.

Credits: Eden Music Festival, Open Arts and Music Festival
Vancouver International Bhangra Festival, Sunset Club Season Closer
Broke LA Music Festival (Formerly Brokechella)



DJ ROD





“Music, Art, Dance are words I live by. I grew up in South central LA where Battle lines were drawn down every block and wearing the wrong color isn’t an option but music is. ”

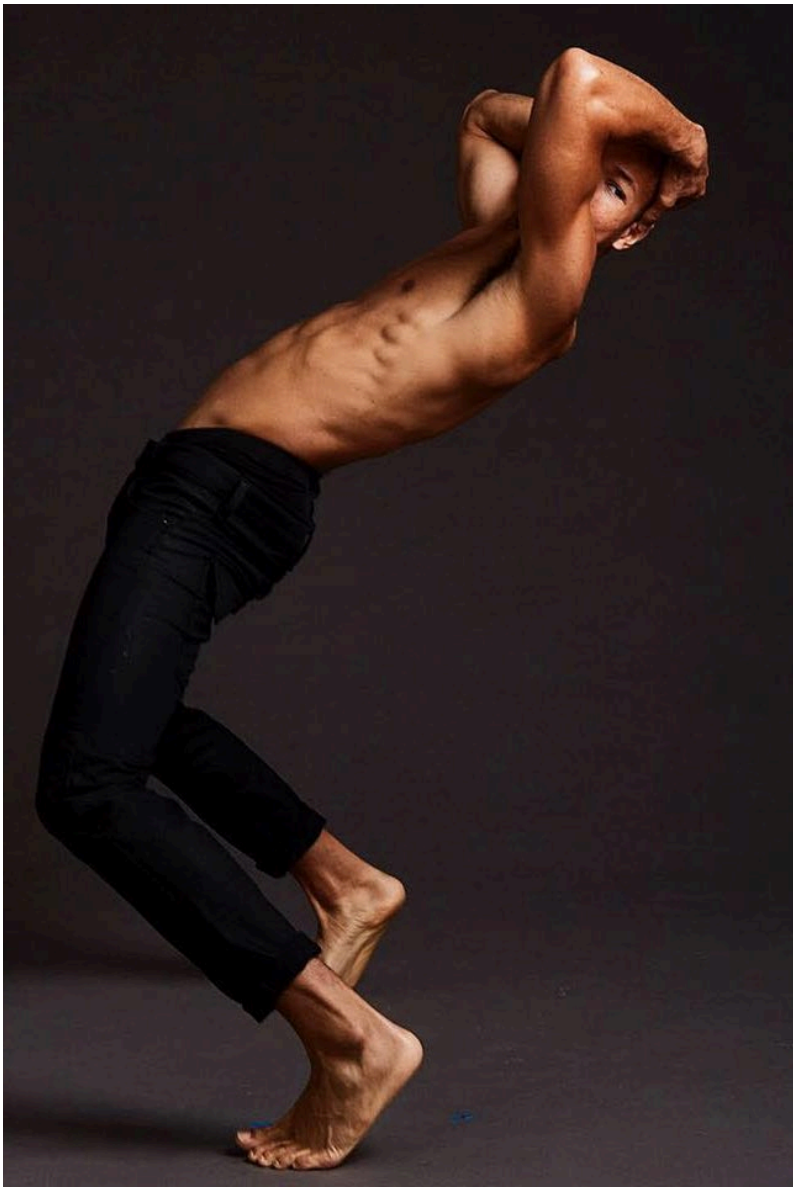








I was Born October 30th 1983. My mother loved all the hits! She had everything on vinyl: Purple Rain, Thriller, Cameo, and every Saturday while she wasn't looking, I would do my best Joe Cooley impression on my moms turntable. I got in a lot of trouble doing that but I found my passion and at the age of 15 I met my biggest influences DJ Abel and DJ Mark luv at a B-Boy competition my crew entered. I found myself spending more time watching the DJ's than the battles going on around me! The way they blend funk, breaks and Hip Hop into this beautiful stew changed my life! So I saved up and on my 16th birthday I got my first set of turntables. They weren't the best but I made them work and after a few gigs I saved up for a real set of "technics 1200's" and the rest is history. From touring with Mob deep, spinning at Rock the Bells in front of 40,000 people or a Hugo Boss runway show, nothing beats going back to my roots and playing for the dance community. All over the world from Paris to London and Japan, my love is music and Music creates moments that bring us together.



Accomplishments

Credits:
Madonna,
Tinashe,
Alicia Keys,
Britney Spears,
Demi Lovato,
Nicki Minaj,
Dancing with the Stars,
Good Morning America,
Tonight Show
with Jay Leno,
America's Got Talent,
X Factor, The Waackers,
etc.

J

P

L

Jian Pierre Louis

Los Angeles, CA

About me:

Born in Queens, New York where his earliest exposure to music began, Jian Pierre-Louis grew up training in classical jazz sax and piano, entering and placing top at many national competitions in his region. While living in Miami, he featured as an in-house producer for Miami music label, Drudge Entertainment, There, he began to brand artists with his influence and, most importantly, form his own sound identity.

Fast forward to present-day living in Los Angeles, Jian's hands are on multiple decks and he feels he hasn't even begun. Surprisingly, the DJ started his LA career touring the globe, as a dancer, with artists such as Alicia Keys, Britney Spears and Nicki Minaj amongst many others. His travels allowed him to start Djing on the side in other countries. On the road, he hit the British, Dutch and many more music scenes with live sets. Tapping back into music so heavily pushed Jian to get back into the producer seat, working with a slew of upcoming and well known icons such as Crystal Waters and Deborah Cox. He has also recently has started an events company in Los Angeles called the Bridge Underground, bringing European meets New-Yurocian vibes to the LA nightlife scene.

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WEBSITE
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INSTAGRAM
ELECTRICPUNANNY

SOUND CLOUD
ELECTRICPUNANNY



Dj Jasmine Solano

Photo by: Rachel Topping

From creating and touring worldwide as half of the DJ Party Duo Electric Punanny with MeLo-X, to hosting her own MTV series "Scratch the Surface", Jasmine Solano has solidified her career as an international music influencer across multiple media platforms. Her resume as VJ and DJ host to a range of clients including MTV, Apple, Maison Martin Margiela, W Hotels, Nike, Adidas, Cosmopolitan, NYLON magazine, and many more. Embarking on two World Tours with Electric Punanny spanning Tokyo, Australia, Germany, Sweden, London, Paris, South Africa, Shanghai, Manila, Bali and Singapore - Jasmine has not only performed worldwide but also studied music anthropology and culture across various continents.

I recently launched a non profit artistic, humanitarian project called Unity In Color (https://www.unityincolor.org/). This photo series represents solidarity for Women's Rights. Each photo shoot includes people from all different backgrounds, coming together in unison to support Women's Rights. The series has since taken off with production in 8 US cities and 3 international cities! Very excited to see where it goes next.





Deena & Kumari

DJ Deena Bee

For the past 17 years, Deena Bee has been a DJ and stalwart purveyor of good music in the ever-changing Portland music scene, and currently Urban Music Director at KBOO community radio. She hosts "The Soundbox" Saturday Nights, on KBOO 90.7fm, which they describe as "Music and Mayhem via downtempo, hip hop, rap, drum n bass, beat breaks, and everything else EXCEPT the kitchen." Deena Bee holds down the party vibe locally at Jack Knife and White Owl Social Club, as well as a monthly in Bend, Or. She also throws a monthly party—"Do Right Sundays" at Dig A Pony, and guesting at great parties: Get Down, TWERK, DUG, Nostalgia PDX, Waackfest and YGB.

Click here for Soundcloud - Click here for KBOO





RjKoolRaul

“Raul “RjKoolRaul” Navalta is a performing artist with an affinity for teaching and event production. Now with almost two decades of experience in event production; Raul first experienced his craft as a record carrier/Dj apprentice.

This would lead him to performing at music festival, open for artists such as the Father of Hip Hop Dj Kool Herc and producing his own events such as All The Way Live.

-Philippines-

In dance, he’s gained international recognition by competing on MTV’s America’s Best Dance Crew with his crew Supreme Soul. Recognition from the show took Raul around the world for two years and on tour with sponsors Adidas and Sheikh shoes. He’s currently project managing a redevelopment project called Eden Night Live in the Bay Area. Though he continues to perform, compete and teach, most of his efforts to make an impact are in community organization & creative solutions.



FACEBOOK - YOUTUBE - BANDCAMP - SOUNDCLOUD - EMAIL



Koh M. B. Gayondato

About me:

I started dancing in 2000 and have not stopped since. Over the years, I have been blessed with the opportunity to learn and train in the styles of Popping and Hip Hop under world-renown dancers such as Dominique (Electric Trouble / Wrecking Crew Orchestra), Mr. Wiggles (Electric Boogaloos / Rock Steady Crew), ACKY (3D Crew), Snow (Street Monsters / MM), Henry Link (Elite Force Crew), Buddha Stretch (Elite Force Crew), Bobby Mileage (Elite Force Crew) and many more. 16 years later, I've grown to love music and dance more and more, so much that it's a part of my everyday life. Creating music and reacting to music by dancing has become so natural to me, and it is, to me, the greatest form of self-expression. In 2010, I released my first album, "As And When Vol. 01". All copies made were sold out and the album is available for download at http://psyk.bandcamp.com. I am blessed to have my music featured in battles and events and also being used by dancers all around the world, including BAD QUEEN (Japan -IBUKI + YUMEKI), Popin Pete (USA), Kite (Japan), Poppin John (USA), Madoka (Japan), Poppin J (Korea), Di Moon Zhang (USA), Mike Song (USA), Daniel Kwan (USA), AKA Kin (Korea), Bidu (Brazil), TF Star (Vietnam), Kokoba Crew (Indonesia), SoulRhythm Crew (Malaysia), VIHO (China), HOZIN (Korea), DANDY (Korea), Come To Popa (Taiwan), Kinjaz Crew (USA), Maika (Japan), and many, many more. To date, my music has also been featured in broadcast shows such as "Diversity" for SkyTV (Subsidiary of BBC), "Asia's Got Talent 2015", "Super 24". I am always inspired by music and movement, and I live by these mottos and teachings: "Music is the Teacher" "The competitor is always ourselves" "Dance Before Style" "Always be a Student" I hope to inspire people, dancers or not, through my music and my dance. PSYK -Please Share Your Knowledge.

Kumari Celebrates Malinder Tooray



A powerful, balanced Queen who wouldn't be who she is without the love and support of her best friend, Malinder Tooray.

Malinder Tooray, also known as MTooray, is a unique entertainer, composer, recording artist and musician. MTooray, has been dominating the Indian drumming scene for the past 17 years. Born into a Sikh family, and a native of Los Angeles, her artistry was heavily influenced by her lively Indian culture. Known as the first female dhol player in North America, MTooray, is a trailblazer in the music industry.

Malinder's career began at the age of 16 with the first brother and sister group of dhol players called, Dholnation. Self taught percussionist, MTooray, has traveled around the US performing with many artists such as A.R. Rahman, well-known DJs-Rekha (basement bhangra), Jay Dhabi, Jasmine Solano, experienced choreographers like Kumari Suraj & Kavita Rao and musicians like violinist Esther Anaya. She has participated in high profile events like: World of Dance, LA Fashion Week, LA Indian Film Festival, Vancouver International Bhangra Celebration (VIBC) and AirBnB Music Festival. MTooray, recently caught the attention of Walt Disney. She was brought into Capitol Records to record her dhol beats for the broadway rendition of The Jungle Book (2016).

Malinder Tooray

Over the years, MTooray, has developed a greater understanding of various genres of music including World Music, EDM, Dancehall, Latin and Hip Hop. Most recently, MTooray, has been performing with Afro R&B Soul band, The. Wav.

Her performances with The.Wav expanded her influence as an Indian drummer by allowing the incorporation of Indian beats to Afro Beat, Afro Trap, Afro Pop music. As a multi-talented artist, MTooray, is famous for fusing universal tribal beats to many genres of music building bridges that bring cultures together.

MTooray, continues to develop her musical skills while focusing on her career as a unique entertainer, model and recording artist. Being a member of the LGBTQ community, MTooray, strives to be a role model for other queer female musicians.

In particular, female descendants of the Indian diaspora who struggle with societal gender barriers and sexuality. In the coming year, MTooray is looking forward to taking her career to new heights.

This year MTooray's goal is the be the first female dhol player to perform with major pop artists like Missy Elliot, Major Lazer, MIA, Nucleya, Pitbull, Ape Drums, Calvin Harris and more.

Follow Mtooray on her social media platforms as she continues to share her gifts with the world.



Mya & Kumari

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

Dance Mogul: How was your experience working with Kumari?

Mya: My experience working with Kumari was so awesome! She's a beast in several styles with not just polished, seasoned dance skills, but with the knowledge of each dance style's history, origin & meaning. After a 1 day audition, she assembled several dancers of different styles, and also choreographed the performances to feature in the Choreographer's Carnival followed by Angel City Ball 2014 & in Los Angeles.

Dance Mogul: Was it enjoyable for you? Would you do it again?

Mya: Heck yeah! Art is in my blood and a part of my spirit. It's what keeps us alive inside!



Dance Mogul: Energetically what did you get out of it?

Mya: Surrounded by over 20 dancers at a time, it was like being in an FAME intensive or camp with all of this information & choreo being thrown at you in a very competitive, sweaty environment. The rehearsal spaces were always sauna hot, with foggy mirrors. Every day, I woke up feeling so excited like I was a teenager on my way to a dope dance camp, with so many fly, underground styles that aren't really taught in traditional dance settings or schools.

Dance Mogul: What did you observe in the way Kumari works or what she creates?

Mya: From jump, Kumari made sure I had private session with her first to soak in the history, origin & meanings, technique of each style, along with research links & homework which speaks volume in respecting the craft of any art form first & foremost. Not only did I get to see her creative eye & versatility in several styles as a choreographer, but it was clear that she was a real performer merging the many cultures of her decades of travel & craft into her demonstrations when relaying to the cast of dancers embodiment & delivery.






MILLENNIUM





Dance Artist & Friends

Dashaun Wesley (King of Vogue)
Lockeroo (Muse Intensive)

Buzz Feed
Voguing is back

Huffinton Post
Candy Boiz

Vogue Italy
Uomo Vogue

Now Ness
Deep in Vogue

Out Magazine
Dashaun Wesley

Vogue Magazine
Behind the scenes
Behind the Scenes Empire
TV show

UK News Paper
Voguing is back

Advocate
Magic Mike XXL

Website:
www.dashaunwesley.com



Dashaun Wesley

Legendary Father House Of Lanvin

A lifelong dancer & performer, Dashaun has wowed crowds with his outstanding unique vogue dance style & charismatic personality! His dedication, talent and ambition has landed Dashaun on MTV's America's Best Dance Crew, in international commercials for Coca Cola and inspired the creation of the Hip Hop dance "The 5000" making him an Internet and media sensation, garnering millions of hits on Youtube. Born in Brooklyn, NY Dashaun was introduced to the underground NYC Ballroom scene in High school where the dance phenomenon vogue was created; from that initial introduction it captivated his attention. August 2009 marked Vogue performance's return to mainstream attention when Dashaun competed on the fourth season of MTV's America's Best Dance Crew as 1/5 of the dance group Vogue Evolution. The crew's showcase of different elements of the vogue performance alongside popular urban dance moves took them to the top five in the competition. In January 2010 Dashaun was invited back to host the behind the scenes specials for "ABDC" season 5 interviewing & guiding new competitors on their journey. Dashaun also took voguing to new heights in recent booking with voguing on NBC's The Wiz Live the followed by his recent Tour with Rihanna for the Anti World Tour in 2016. He currently travels the world touring with his dance company & hosting international dance competitions in Helsinki, Finland, Stockholm, Sweden, St. Petersburg, Russia & Hong Kong, China. When Dashaun isn't performing, he is passionate about speaking to school age kids about acceptance also a passionate advocate of HIV/AIDS awareness.



INTERNATIONAL DANCE ICON

Princess Lockerooo

International dance icon Princess Lockerooo popularized & restored the former glory of the expressive 1970's disco dance style, "Waacking," debuting her unique propeller style on "So you think you can dance?" She has spread Waacking across Asia & Europe, teaching workshops & judging international competitions. (Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Viet-Nam, China, Taiwan, Indonesia, Brazil, Russia, Siberia, Poland, Greece, Italy, Czech Republic, Finland, London, Kazakhstan, Korea, Canada, Vietnam, Poland). A native New Yorker with a background in Musical Theater & Opera, Princess Lockerooo uses her multitude of talents to create thrilling & captivating performance experiences. Her dramatic costumes, vibrant stage presence and innovative propeller Waacking style, puts an extraordinary twist on the dance, celebrating feminine power, enlightenment, purity & sensuality without objectification!

Princess Lockerooo's majestic channel of entertainment proves that urban expressions deserve to be held with the same level of respect & appreciation as classical art forms. Alongside inspiring the world through dance empowerment, she is creating a global vegan / organic movement by educating her students about the health benefits of "going green." And the deliciousness of a vegan diet.

>>>


Samara



Princess Lockerooo

Celebrating Kumari Suraj

“When I first began working with Kumari, not only had I met my match, but I met my MUSE. I’ve always had the utmost respect and admiration for Kumari. She is a rare visionary artist with a work ethic and drive, that matches her talent. After crossing paths for short periods of time over the years, in spring of 2016 we came together. As she describes it, we had a creative spontaneous combustion. Ideas were overwhelmingly flying left and right, and it felt like, “FINALLY, someone understands me.” Creatively Kumari and I speak the same language… “GO ABOVE AND BEYOND.. or GO HOME!” Our visionary likeness allows us to work together effortessly. We are an impeccable team because we dream the same dreams, and believe whole heartedly in each others capability of achieving them. We support each other, keep each other grounded, and constantly inspire each other.



MEMORABLE MOMENTS IN DANCE

Xclusive:

Sharing the same passion for waacking, and having led quite parallel lives; traveling around the globe, continuing the Waacking movement, it only made sense that we come together to create something Magical. During our time together in Portland, which was spent shooting videos, steeling the show at local gay clubs, and twirling for our lives at her fabulous Nostalgia Dance party, the idea for MUSE was birthed. Muse really is symbolic of our friendship and working relationship because we instantaneously became each other Muse. Being around Kumari and witnessing the way she works, inspired me to keep going nonstop and to step my game up even more. More importantly, knowing Kumari and seeing reflections of myself in her, made me recognize and truly appreciate my own strengths, and love myself more. “

- Lockeroo



Pan Pan Nakprasert

Waacking:

The sound of its title may raise many eyebrows, but waacking is a daring street dance style that emerged during the disco era, and is highlighted by the wild flailing of arms hitting every beat of the music. Now, this form of dance is coming to town and will change the way the dance floors of Bangkok used to be.

Aspiring artist and dancer Pan Pan Nakprasert is the man behind this movement's rising popularity in Thailand. Although his background is rooted in hip hop dance, as he is one of the D Maniac Crew, a dance group that represented Thailand at the Hip Hop International 2011 dance contest, held in Las Vegas.

Flying back and forth from Bangkok to the US, Pan Pan garnered his skills from top waacking dancers, including Kumari Suraj and Princess Lockeroo, who appeared on the US television program So You Think You Can Dance. Visit his page at www.youtube.com/WaackingP, and check out his up-and-coming workshop in town.

- Yanapon Musiket



















Video Link

Dolores' Choreography

Teaching Reel

Concept Videos
Video 1
Video 2

Class / Workshop
Video 1
Video 2

Commercial Reel

Vogue Reel

Dolores "Ninja" Parisi

House Of Ninja Italian Chapter....

HOW I MET KUMARI

The first time I met Kumari was in 2011. I was in LA for a month for dance training and I knew her only from seeing her choreographies on youtube. She has always been one of my Dance Idols and I was so excited to take her class and to learn from her in real life and not from Youtube. I can still remember the Choreo that she taught!!! With my travel in Italy to take care of my dance studio, and all her travel, it was hard to study regularly with Kumari, but every time I was in LA I didn't miss one of her classes. In the mean time, I've become more into this culture/style called Vogue. I have also had the opportunity to be in Los Angeles more often and to participate in all the events that Kumari was organizing and get closer to her. I was so happy she asked me to be part of her new project THE MUSES with other great dancers that I admire. She is a strong and wise woman and I'm very proud of what she is doing for the dance community. I am blessed that I can call her friend.





Dolores is the Father Of The House Of Ninja Italian Chapter and Pioneer of the Italian Ballroom scene.

Dolores Parisi was born and raised in Bergamo, Italy. She started dancing at the age of 4. She moved to Milan to pursue her dance studying career. Once she obtained the diploma at Academy M.A.S. Music, Art & Show in Milan, she opens her own studio, B.Music School, in Bergamo. She moved to New York, where she graduated with great results (obtaining the diploma as the best student) at Broadway Dance Center. In the United States she has participated as a performer and choreographer in: music videos, shows and tours with artists such as: Diane Birch, Marina Star, Jline, Kent Odessa and Robbie Rosen from American Idol. She also became a dancer for the Princess Lockeroo Dance Company. While she moved to New York she found the culture of VOGUING and she started training with the House of Ninja and in 2013, Benny Ninja asked her to join the house. She won several Vogue Balls as Freestyler in Womens Vogue, Vogue Femme and Runway Categories; she judged many competition in Italy, London, Los Angeles and Mexico. She began her career as teacher and choreographer at the age of 17, and she had taught classes in Los Angeles at Debbie Reynolds Studios and Movement Lifestyle. She is the creator of the Kiki House of U Betta and the U Betta Work Crew, they won several contests in International Competitions, and the perform at Carnival La And Broadway Underground Nyc. She Continues her artistic journey working between the US and Italy spreading the culture of Voguing.

Dance Festivals & Intensives

Nostalgia
Muse Intensive with Lockeroo
LA's International Waack, Punk, Pose,
Festival (Waackfest)





Kumari Suraj & Princess Lockeroo are Muses of the world who shocked everyone by teaming up to create a new brand of summer art camps. Muse Artistry Intensive was created by Kumari & Lockeroo to cultivate each artist's individual potential for transformative change.

Purpose:
To develop unbridled creativity through professional skill building & creative channeling workshops. These workshops are designed to enhance the full package of artistry, complementing the artist's external transformation with internal self worth and confidence.

Invitation to All Artists:
Step into your best self and consistently grow in the direction of your dreams with confidence and persistence. Allow the MUSES to inspire and motivate you to actualize your goals.

LOOK BETTER:
Learn to be more fashionable and professionally presentable, onstage and in life.

DANCE BETTER:
Learn entertainment industry tips and tricks to better your business. Enhance your skill set. Learn to dance with more confidence and personality that get's you booked.

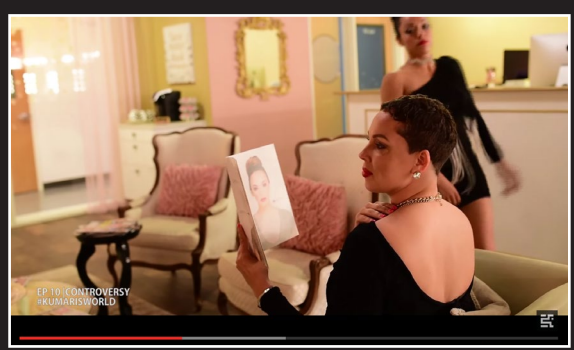
FEEL BETTER:
Learn how to overcome the negative effects of bullying and discouraging life experiences.

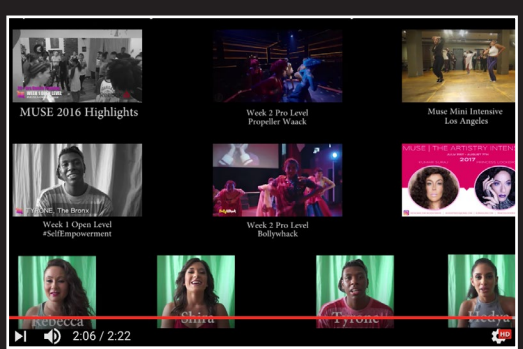
This artistic transformation leaves students with a strong sense of fulfillment in life as they step into their power and become a muse of the world.

"We give you permission to EMBRACE YOURSELF!"

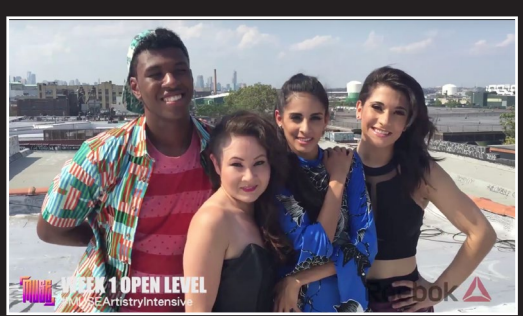
MUSE











Muse Videos:
Click titles to see video.
Muse Artistry Intensive Highlights
Why Muse? What is Muse about?
Self Love: Muses of The World Week 1
Propeller Waack - Princess Lockeroo
Muse Intensive Week 2
Bollywhack - Kumari Suraj Muse Intensive Week 2



LA's International Whack/Punk/Pose Festival (Waackfest) is a Disco & Ballroom Culture based dance brand curating festivals, events, workshops, outrageous costume themes & fashion for the masses.

Waackfest has been to Poland, Amsterdam, New York & Portland, Oregon. This August 2017, Waackfest returns to Los Angeles for it's 9th season. Waackfest was the first festival in the world dedicated to Waacking, Disco & Ballroom culture. Since it's creation, numerous unrelated festivals have popped up worldwide created by Waackfest attendees and followers inspired by the event. Waackfest was the first event to introduce 2vs2 Waacking battles. The next year, Street Star Sweden implemented 2vs2 a waacking category. Waackfest was the first festival to gather important historical figures in the community. Introducing some like Dallas Zieglar and Viktor Manoel to new generations for the first time. The follow -ing year both Dallas and Viktor were invited to teach and judge abroad. Waackfest was a major catalyst in the global expansion of the culture.

LA's International Waack/Punk/Pose Festival (Waackfest) was created by Kumari Suraj in 2010 as a positive response to the negative bullying and social turmoil of the global Waacking community. Kumari saw the scene was missing common unity. There was no place for the leaders and younger generations to safely congregate in order to share history, experiences, ideas and dance moves. Punking & Whack-ing are dances created, by a multi-ethnic gay community during the 1970's in Los Angeles, as expres-sion from oppression. Oppression being, in addition to bullying, the burdensome stigmas of homosexu-ality created by mainstream heterosexual society.

Waackfest was designed as a neutral event to bridge the social divide, dispel misunderstandings and falsehoods and end the bullying that had pulled everyone apart. Waackfest is more than just a celebra-tion of Disco, Waack, Punk, Vogue, Gay, Straight, Trans, Drag, Black, White and Unicorned! Waackfest is a celebration of life!









Through the hard work and vision of Kumari Suraj to bring people together, Waackfest has become just that! Waackfest is devoted to preserving, promoting, evolving and celebrating the dance styles known as “Waacking, Whacking, Punking, Vogue and all genres related to Ballroom/Club/Disco culture.”

Drawing an international crowd Waackfest spans multiple days and includes Q&A panels, parties, battles, costume contests, Balls and a full slate of master classes taught by dance pioneers and modern day prodigies.

The festival is a must-attend event for both beginner and advanced enthusiasts, fusing history, experience, technique and education together seamlessly for a weekend of growth and celebration.

Past Waackfest legendary guest include: Grammy Winning Artist Jody Watley, Grammy Winning Recording artist Mya, Dashaun Lanvin, Steve “Sugafoot” Notario, Flame, Angel Ceja, Viktor Manoel, Javier Ninja, Mercury Xtravaganza, Archie Burnett, Mark Starrman & Dallace Zieglar (RIP), Princess Lockeroo, Waackeshia, Imperial House of Waacking, P*Fect/House of Ninja (Sweden), House of Vineyard, International House of Artistic Punking & The Waackers.


WAACK
FEST
LOS ANGELES
2018
WAACKFEST





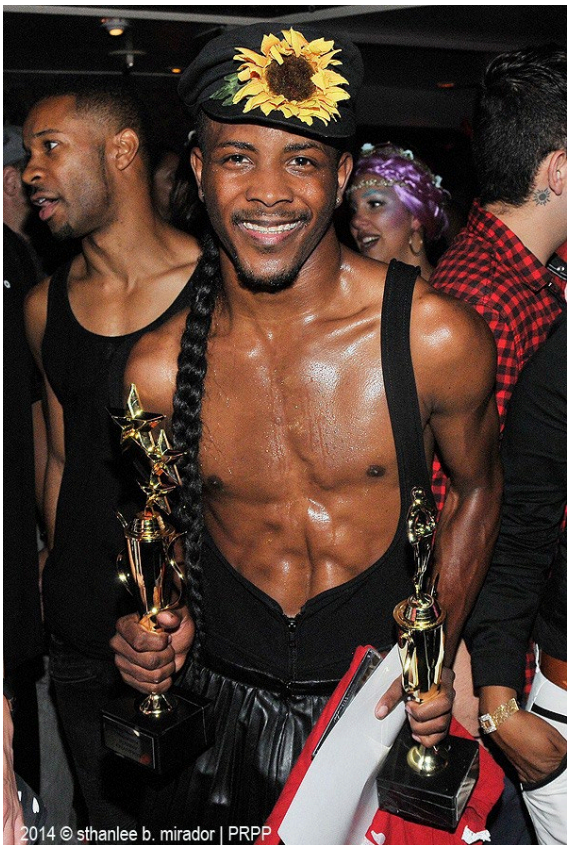
Photo by: Sthanlee B. Mirador




EXIT


WAACK
FEST




2014 © sthanlee b. mirador | PRPP




WAACK FEST
NEW YORK CITY
JULY 14, 2013
LADIES OF HIP HOP FESTIVAL
michele@ladiesofhiphopfestival.com
US & EUROPEAN
PRELIMINARIES
Hosted by
KUMARI SURAJ
POLAND
JULY 18, 2013
FNF SUMMER DANCE INTENSIVE
info@fnfsummer.com
30€ ENTRY FEE FOR NON POLISH WAACKERS

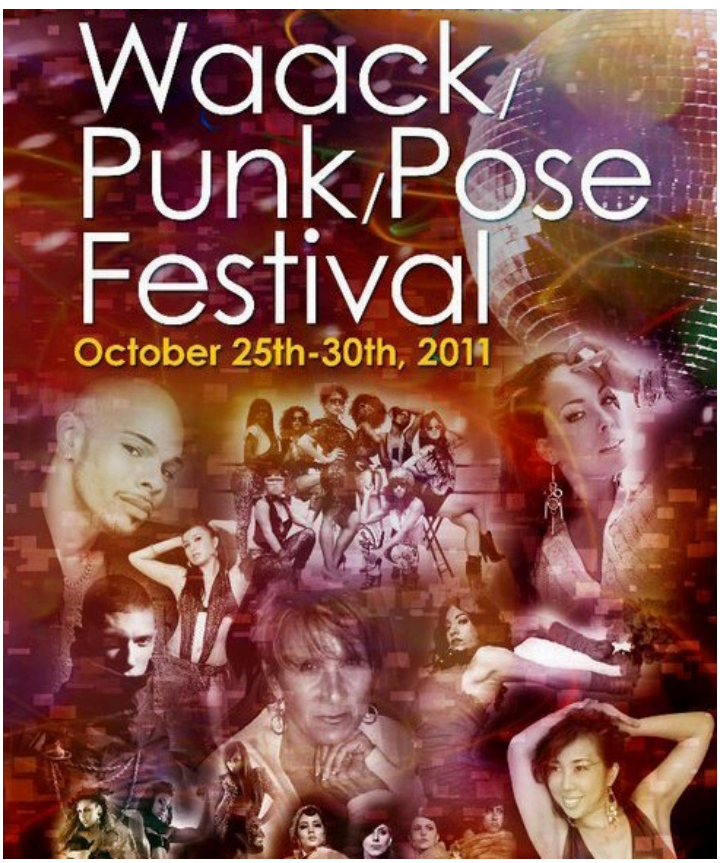



Disco


WAACK FEST

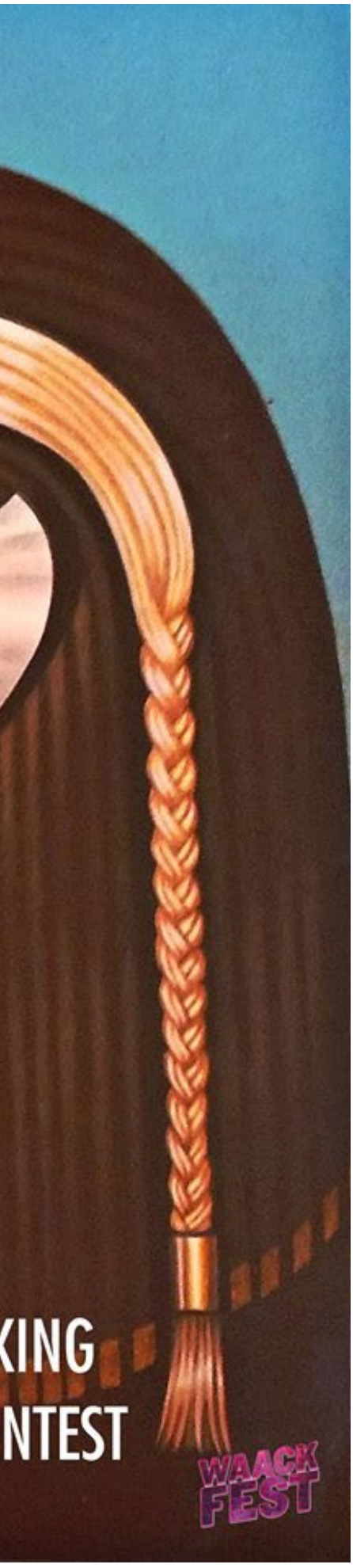

Hosted by: Kumari Suraj
Cashmere Nightclub
6757 Hollywood Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90028
GUEST PERFORMANCE BY: MYA
JUDGES:
Jody Watley
Viktor Manoel
Archie Burnett
Tricia Miranda
Andye J
Dashaun Wesley
Derrell Bullock
Mercury Xtravaganza
Lockeroo
IN LOVING MEMORY OF
DALLACE ZIEGLAR
Angel City Ball
MT. OLYMPUS
AUGUST 31, 2014
DJ ComputerFam
& DJ Jian Pierre
CATEGORIES
WAACKING 1VS1 • VOGUE ELEMENTS • RUNWAY COSTUME
PUNKING DRAMATICS • BEAST IN HEELS • SEX SIREN
DOOR 6PM, SHOW 7PM 18+ $20 / CONTESTANT
$10 RSVP TICKETS, $15 DOOR RSVP: TheWaackers@gmail.com
THE WAACKERS
The Fly Ball
The Carnival
KUMARI SURAJ

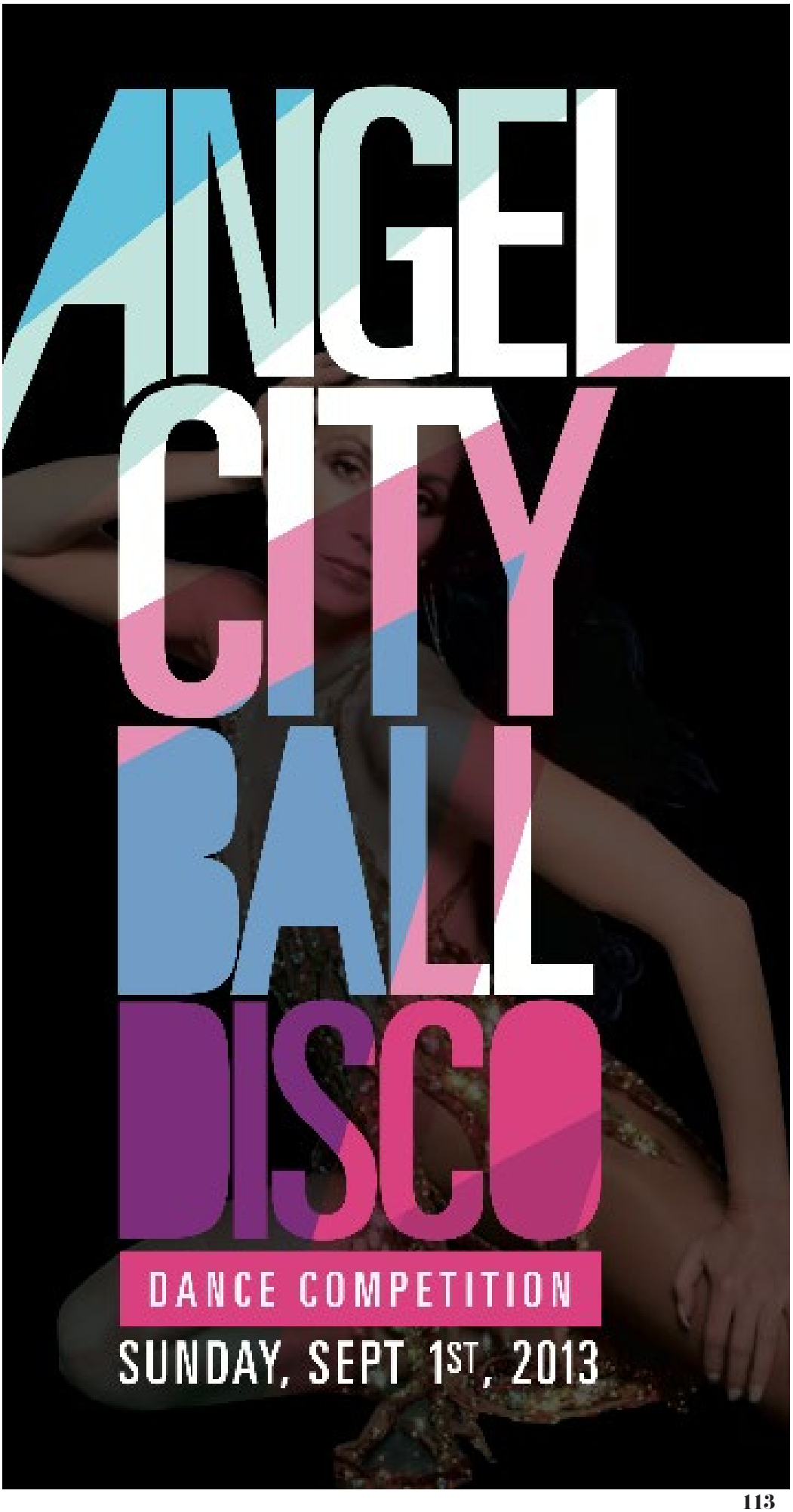

LA'S 1ST ANNUAL
INTERNATIONAL
WAACKING/ PUNKING FESTIVAL
OCT 29-31ST
WAACKING JUDGES:
FLAME / DALLACE / STEVE "SUGARFOOT" NOTARIO
VOGUE JUDGES
JASON XTRAVAGANZA / JAVIER NINJA


Waack/ Punk/Pose Festival
October 25th-30th, 2011


6TH ANNUAL WAACKFEST PRESENTS:
TIM BURTON BALL
OCT 20TH, 2016
@HOLOCENE
9:30PM-2AM
BALL COMMENTATOR KUMARI SURAJ


JUNGLE
SPACESHIP
BALL
OCTOBER 29th
@HOLOCENE
CATEGORIES
VOGUE DRAGKING WAACK
SEX SIREN FANCY DRESS CO

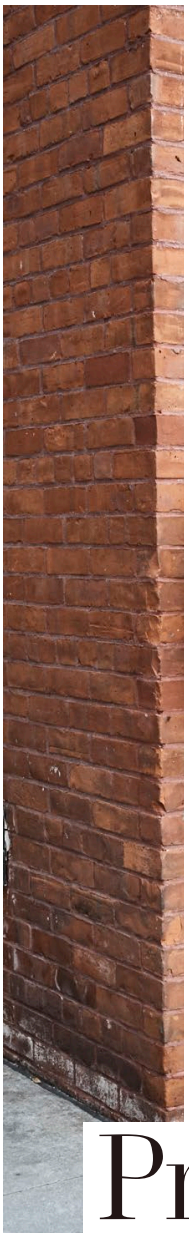

KING
NTEST
WAACK FEST


ANGEL
CITY
BALL
DISCO
DANCE COMPETITION
SUNDAY, SEPT 1ST, 2013

Fashion & Beauty
(Kumari's industry picks)

FAV MAKE UP ARTIST
Marji Livingston (Anastacia Beverly Hills)
Nimai Marden

FAV STYLIST
Monte Cristo
Prentis Anderson Wardrobe



TheOnlyPrentiss

Prentiss Anderson is a New York based Fashion Stylist and Costume Designer (United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829, IATSE) whose credentials vary among multiple platforms. He is currently the Fashion Director for The Tenth Magazine. His editorials have been featured in i-D, T Magazine, BlackBook, Purple, Four Two Nine, Fucking Young!, and Dazed & Confused.; and he's styled media campaigns for Nike, New Balance, Citizen Watches, Ciroc, and Mohegan Sun Casino and Resort. Additionally, he's used his wardrobe talents to dress a list of celebrities as well as several short films.



Photo by: Harvey Jackson

Prentiss Anderson

Fashion Stylist & Costume Designer

The Morehouse College graduate brands himself "THEONLYPRENTISS" and hails from Edgard, Louisiana. His self-proclaimed aesthetic is a refined "country-boy-realness"- a chic blend of bohemian-soul street wear paired with the sleek, edgy functionality of a New York City sophisticate. Prentiss's congenial personality and untiring work ethic are additives that provide for impeccable desired out comes and an overall experience specific to the task, the occasion, and the time.

Social Media: @prentissandersonwardrobe (Instagram); @THEONLYPRENTISS (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)

www.prentissanderson.com



Nimai Marsden >>>>

Make Up Artist

Nimai Marsden

Nimai Marsden is a self taught, freelance Make Up Artist based in Los Angeles. Her work has been featured in magazines such as Vogue Brasil, Elle, LadyGunn, Imagista and more. Her brushes have touched the faces of a variety of models and industry women including long time client and friend Dawn Richard, Draya Michele, Chloe & Halle, and Solange who has also featured her work with Dawn and other artists on her blog Saint Heron.

Booking mostly photo shoots and music videos, Marsden has proven herself as a well rounded freelance artist. Her skill set includes glam make up, natural make up, "no make up" make up, and creative fantasy make up. One of her strengths is her ability to work with darker skin tones. Although skilled in working with all skin tones, this strength has resulted in a clientele of mostly medium to deep skin. Because women with darker skin have been (and still are to some degree) neglected in the beauty industry, she is proud to be among the many artists and companies who believe beauty is to be celebrated from all perspectives equally.

Marsden is a child of immigrants, her mother hailing from New Zealand and father from Trinidad & Tobago. This is a major factor in her choices when it comes to fashion, beauty, spirituality, and life in general. She is a complex blend of love, art, and creativity. Hell bent on doing things her own way, she has faced many obstacles on her journey as a make up artist. However, she is confident she is on the right path and will continue to create her own lane in the industry. In the future she hopes to add special fx make up to her skill set and travel more as a make up artist.

Social media: @makeupbynimai on Instagram



MC

Monte Christo

Fashion Designer & Creative Director

Monte Christo is a LA based Fashion Designer whose talents and credits stretch far beyond his sewing machine. He is currently preparing the launch of his brainchild / Fashion line DVSN4. His Designs have been worn by artist like Kehlani, Tinashe & Salma Slims and have appeared on networks such as MTV, VH1 & BET. Christo has been a long time contributor to the Entertainment world lending his expertise in Design / Styling, Trend Forecasting, Photography and Creative Direction to various artists and brands. He has organically created a lane of his own which has been described as a modern twist on the 80's - 90's Ghetto Fabulous style. The self-taught Designer is quoted as saying "The gold-er the better" he has gone on the record to say his style is "every bit of high fashion street wear, picture Lil Kim & Foxy Brown as Crystal & Alexis" from the 80's daytime drama Dynasty. Aside from Designing Christo enjoys bridging the worlds or Fashion and Music during a once a month dance party he curates in Los Angeles called The Majors. His parties are described as a blast from the past. He say's "When you attend parties in LA no one really dances anymore, I want to bring that old thing back" consider his parties a scene cut straight out of the 90's classic House Party. With the New Year here and goals set in place Christo is determined to create, educate and inspire through his years of experience, helping to build a network of creative individuals that can thrive and lift each other through Fashion, Music & Art. The future is now.

Work flow continued on next three pages >>>







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Makeup Artist

Photos by Kate Singh Photography

Marjorie Livingston

Marjorie is a professional makeup artist, aesthetician and image consultant. Her passion for her clients, pulse on current trends and background as an educator in the cosmetic industry sets her apart. Marjorie began her career in 2004 with Anastasia Beverly Hills, after six years she transitioned into Philosophy skincare. Her passion for makeup artistry led her to Armani Cosmetics and It Cosmetics. In 2012 she returned to Anastasia Beverly Hills. She currently is the Regional Account Coordinator and is responsible for sales and training in the Pacific Northwest market. Marjorie's makeup artistry has been used in film, editorial shoots, commercial shoots, print ad campaigns and runway fashion shows. Her true passion is working closely with her clients. She has been the facial stylist behind Kumari's most icon looks of 2016. Styling her face for modeling, public appearances and her youtube blog series, "Kumari's World". " Kumari is my muse. Her versatility, creativity and spirit allow me to create and experiment freely." Marjorie recently launched Empowered & Pretty, Personal Styling for Your Face. Empowered & Pretty allows her to do what she does best; provide exceptional, relationship based consulting with her clients.

Leadership & Ambitions







BREAKDANCE PROJECT UGANDA (BPU)
ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Breakdance Project Uganda (BPU) is a non-profit voluntary organization founded in February 2006 to empower young people and communities by bringing them together through hip-hop and promoting positive social change.

BPU offers free dance, visual arts, rap, public speaking and beatboxing lessons at the Sharing Youth Centre Nsambya, Gulu Youth Centre, Kitgum Youth Centre, Kimaanya Hall Masaka among other places. BPU encourages, empowers and teaches people to pass on their skills and take on leadership roles within their communities. The organization is centred on the belief that everyone can learn and everyone can teach and has the capacity to be a positive role model to others.

Mission: To engage young people in elements of the hip-hop culture to provide, education, leadership skills and promote social responsibility.

Bridging the gap between the privileged and under-privileged and bringing people of different religious, tribal and social backgrounds together: Promoting positive social responsibility Building peoples' self esteem and leadership skills. Increasing access to formal and informal education. Generating employment opportunities. Connecting local and international artists

Over the years, BPU has partnered with local and international organizations including; Oxfam, MS/ Actionaid, Brave Kids Project (Poland), Danish Centre for Cultural Development, H.E.A.L.S (Gulu), GAM3 (Denmark), San Patrignano (Italy), Uganda Prison Service, Product of Prison (POP), Global Youth Partnership for Africa, Uganda FDNC, InterAid/UNHCR, People Concern Children's Project, USAID/NUTI and carried out activities in orphanages, juvenile and adult prisons, refugee centres, drug rehabilitation centres, local and international Schools plus youth and community centres in the Central, North, East, West and Southern Uganda.





Between 2009 and 2011, Breakdance Project Uganda opened up branches in Northern Uganda (Gulu and Kitgum) and Masaka partnering with other organizations from within these regions to provide an opportunity for youth to become BPU members and access regular free dance lessons, formal and informal education opportunities plus other activities that the project offers.

BPU runs free weekly classes Luzira prison (Central Uganda), Gulu prison (Northern Uganda) and Jinja main prison (Eastern Uganda). These classes/sessions have been running for over 6 years now. Breakdance Project Uganda does this in partnership with Product Of Prison (POP).

Through dance workshops, discussions, documentary film screenings and educational performances across Uganda, Europe and America, the Project has reached a wide range of young people and provides an equal platform for people to build mutually beneficial relationships regardless of background or status. Project members can also benefit from direct and indirect employment opportunities through paid performances and teaching.

BPU supports formal and non-formal education opportunities by advocating the importance of education and partnering with organizations to increase members' access to educational services such as multimedia skills, visual arts training, Voluntary Counseling and Testing, peer mentoring,. Through the sale of BPU t-shirts and donations from supporters, the Project also sponsors schools fees for under-privileged members.

"It takes the strength of a lion to build your people from nothing. Abramz and his partners at Breakdance Project Uganda are dance warriors. Earth Angels. People who fight for the mental, physical and social health of the men, women & children of Uganda through Breakdance. They are the epitome of dance movement therapy in action. I want others to be aware of their beautiful work in Africa. https://vimeo.com/11938213. We met on myspace when I started my grass roots project, Dance for Peace in South Africa. They have continued to do something I wish to be apart of in the future. Tangible Change."

-Kumari Suraj

BREAKDANCE PROJECT UGANDA
"breakdance for positive social change"
www.bouncingcats.com

BREAKDANCE PROJECT UGANDA



Tekya "Abramz" Abraham is a Ugandan Hip Hop artist, educator, motivational speaker and creative facilitator who uses his skills to entertain, educate and inspire change. He is a member of Ugandan veteran, socially conscious Hip Hop duo, Sylvester & Abramz, and a member of the legendary Rock steady Crew (RSC). He is the founder and director of Breakdance Project Uganda (BPU), a voluntary non-profit organization that uses breakdance, Hip Hop, arts and education (formal & non-formal) for empowerment as well as promoting positive social change and social responsibility.

Abramz has worked with schools (kindergartens, primary, secondary, colleges and universities), community centres, festivals, orphanages, prisons (juvenile and adult), drug rehabilitation centres, children's homes, seminars, educational events, companies, ghettos/slums, on the streets and other organizations. His methods include rap, dance, motivational speaking, interactive/participatory discussions, creative facilitation, team-building games, community events, exchange programs, and integrating other art forms and self-esteem-building activities.

Abramz grew up in Makerere, Makindye and Kasubi Kampala suburbs, Uganda. He empowered himself through Hip Hop and formed a rap duo with his brother Sylvester in the 90's, and then Abramz went on to found Breakdance Project Uganda in 2006 to empower other Ugandan youth, for which he has been recognized around the world.

Abramz was the major focus of the international award-winning documentary film "Bouncing Cats," released in 2010, which was directed by Nabil Elderkin and sponsored by Red Bull. It was narrated by Hip Hop artist Common, and featured Crazy Legs of the Rock Steady Crew, K'naan, Mos Def and Will.I.Am.

Abramz has traveled around the world and become one of the best-known Ugandan artists abroad for his social relevance. Abramz has been featured on BBC, CNN Breaking News and CNN African Voices, The Huffington Post, The National Geographic, Discovery Channel, and others. He and BPU were also featured in the documentary film "Shake The Dust," produced by the American Hip Hop artist Nas and Adam Sjoberg.

Abramz believes in empowering and practically challenging disadvantaged people in both third world and first world countries to be part of the solution to their own problems. He has traveled to perform, teach, speak and facilitate workshops across Uganda and in several in other countries.






WHO WILL YOU MAKE PEACE WITH?




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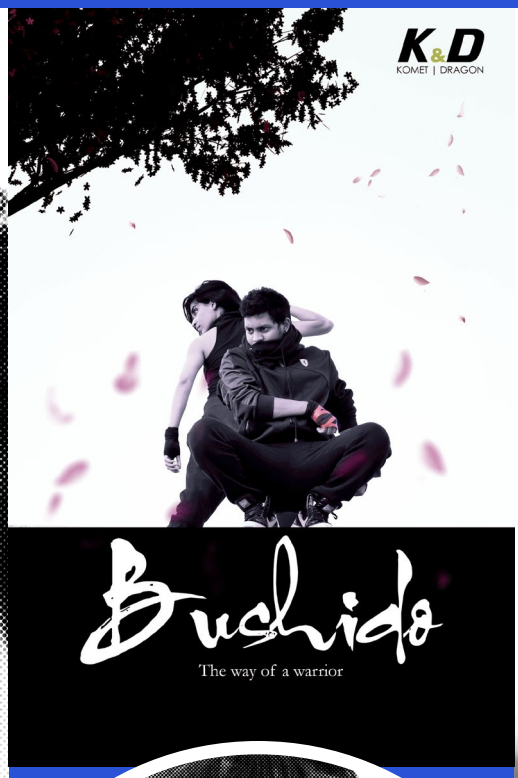
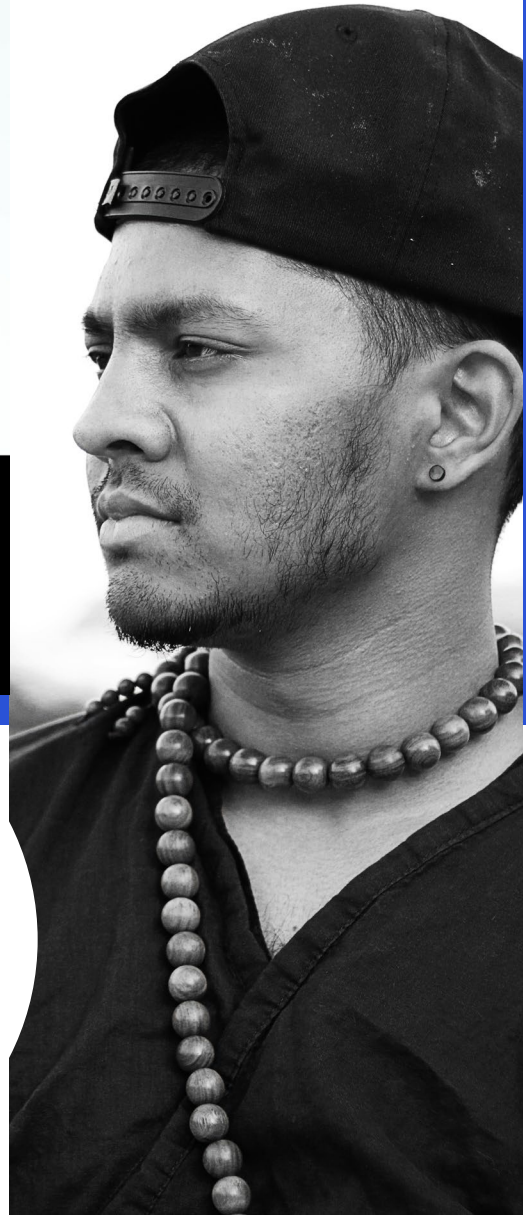






K&D

Harsha Maheshwari aka Komet and Nirmesh aka Dragon started a company called K&D which has a strong motive to empower women through dance, especially Hip-hop. We understand especially in a delicate fabric of Indian Society, women are stereotype & suppressed. Thats the biggest milestone set for us; Break these stereotypes. We were glad we extended it to the under privileged people who need hip-hop more than anyone else. We believe in them and vice versa. We (K&D) together launched some 'first of its kind' international workshops of House and old school hip-hop in hyderabad, Battle series called Soul Invasion, which is just a building block for the Hip-hop scene in Hyderabad, India. This is not the end, just a start of something more beautiful. We are very lucky to work with Kumari in one of our workshops called Soul Invasion- II, where her beautiful soul filled the air with energy and strong vibrations. She taught some of her techniques to the kids in orphanages and even the very talented dancers in Hyderabad, India. She guided us to build a better scene especially with her wise words to empower women and kids in the Indian Hip-hop scene. Thank you is a small word for what you are doing Kumari.





CLICK TO SEE Video

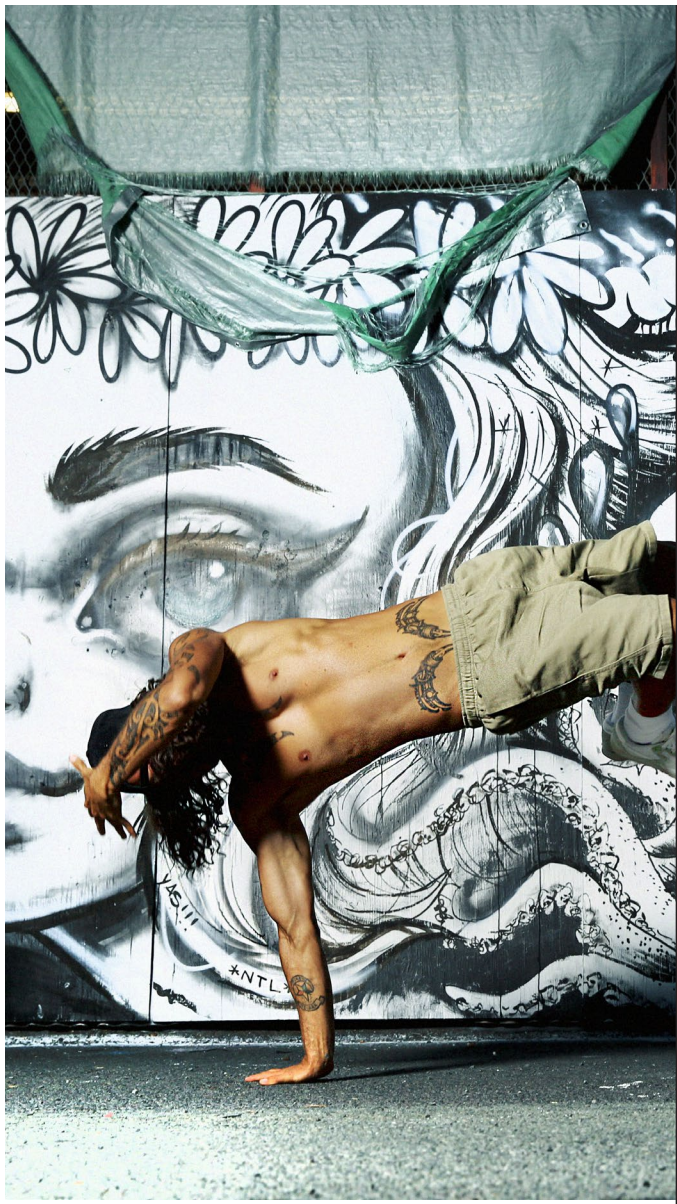
CLICK TO SEE Video

KUMARI HONORS GLOBAL LEADERS

HYDRABAD, INDIA

I **met Komet & Dragon 48** hours after being engulfed by food poisoning. It was not the first impression I wanted to leave with them. Honestly, I had no clue how I was going to make it on the plane and teach given the pain my body was in. 24 hrs prior to my flight I asked if the dates could be changed. They said over the phone they had put so much into this event that it couldn't be changed. At that moment I knew these people had put so much effort and waited a long time to exchange with me. I knew I couldn't disappoint them. Canceling wasn't an option. They told me I would be able to rest after being picked up from the airport. When they picked me up they told me I had one thing to do before I could sleep. Yo! I wanted to die. My body was screaming at me. The balmy weather and heat were knocking me down for the count. We drove what seemed like quite a ways to an orphanage. Everything in me was fighting the residual pain of food poisoning. Each step to the door I was dreading. But, with a smile on my face. I didn't want to be a disappointment to these kids. When I walked into the room of almost 100 young humans dancing it suddenly took my breathe away. I was instantly choked up by the smiling faces, the bboy steps and the happiness. I knew that feeling. It was Hip Hop, plain and simple. I know that euphoric feeling of learning confidence through culture. So many brown shining faces. Watching Komet & Dragon teach them steps and keep them engaged and joyful was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. It was healing to my body and my soul. There was so much trans-formative power through dance in that room. It brought the pain to it's knees and released the healing inside. Everything in me wanted to cry with happiness. I felt these people. There is a pulse in Hip Hop dance the world over that no one can deny. I learned such a life lesson of gratitude to the culture and intentions of the culture that raised me. Oppression into art. I appreciate these two for what they allowed me to feel during this experience. The whole weekend was fire. The dancers of the city came together to take my classes and battle. Had no idea I was the only judge for every category. I LIVED! So much raw street talent. It was gorgeous. It strengthened me mind body and soul. The work these two do is appreciated on so many levels. If anyone wants to get involved with their giving please do so.





Rush Wepiha

Mission: To deliver health through creative self-expression and performance; while enhancing the conscious connection of body and mind, built on the foundation of the four pillars–mind, body, spirit and community.

Rush Wepiha, is an established and respected figure in the Hip Hop world with a story that spans over 18 years. From his humble beginnings on the streets of New Zealand, native of the Maori tribe, learning Breaking fundamentals and Hip Hop culture, Rush has taken his craft to another level with career highlights including: Being a member of three world renowned crews – Fresh Sox (Australia), 7 Dollars (Switzerland) and Mighty Zulu Kingz (New York) and has trained under Bboy pioneers Alien Ness (Bronx), Poe One (Los Angeles), Storm (Germany) & Break Ezy (Brooklyn). Forever a student and keen to spread his knowledge, Rush has a fresh, unique and intimate teaching style that passes on to his students not only his knowledge but also his love for the dance and Hip Hop culture. He is also Co-Director of a project based in the Pilbara called 'The Hood', which uses Hip Hop Culture as a tool to engage Indigenous youth and help over come social barriers. If anyone knows the history of colonization in Australia and the inhumane treatment of Indigenous people, who weren't recognized by the government as human beings until the 1990s, you would understand how important his work with the youth really is.

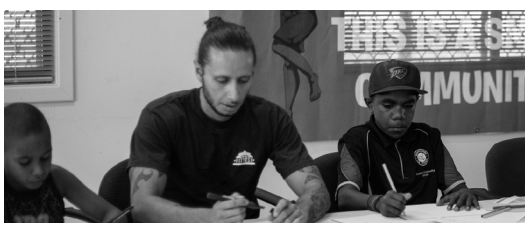






















BREAK DANCE UGANDA SUPPORTING DANCE FOR PEACE









From 2006-2008, Kumari Suraj created and spearheaded a budding non-profit called, Dance For Peace: One Step at a Time. Dance for Peace is a dance organization that fosters life skills programs through urban dance workshops to youth in post-conflict countries.

In 2007/8 Kumari organized a theater production in Cape Town, South Africa called The Temple of Hip Hop. The show used dance as a form of storytelling by focusing on proactive ways for the community to address AIDS/HIV, racism and drug abuse.

Kumari held a free audition and selected 20 dancers to be apart of the production. The cast learned history/ movement foundation of Hip Hop culture, choreography and production development. They had creative writing sessions, shared personal fears, connecting through trama and developed an honest family bond amongst the cast. Working together and learning about dance, the students improve their self-esteem, learn to solve problems and share in each others creativity regardless of their differences. From the best of neighborhoods to the worst, dancers traveled from all over the western cape to attend rehearsals and be in the show.

The cast were encouraged to give back by participating in outreach jams and performances in, public schools, the Cape Flats and the Township of Gugulethu to inspire their communities. These young artists are just few of many who feel that dance is a catalyst for their voices and opinions to be heard in their communities. They feel dance is a influential outlet to evoke social change while empowering themselves in the process.

This two month process was a definitive milestone in the lives of the entire cast including Kumari. Members of Dance for Peace have gone on to become some of South Africa's most successful choreographers, studio owners, dancers and artists. On the 10 year anniversary of the Temple of Hip Hop production here are a few testimonies from some of the cast.

Click here for video

Logo Design: Khan Magne
Photos: Kate Singh Photography


TEMPLE OF

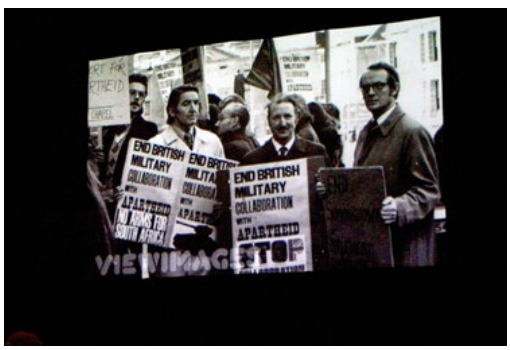








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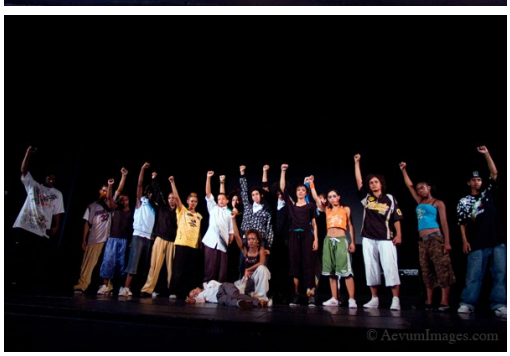
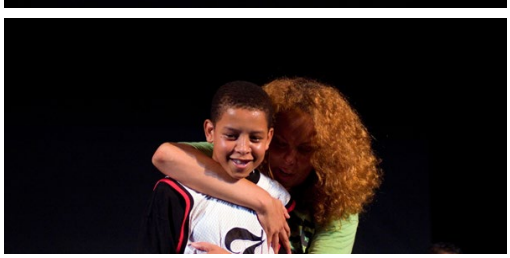
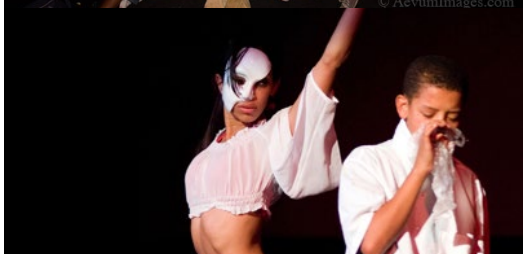
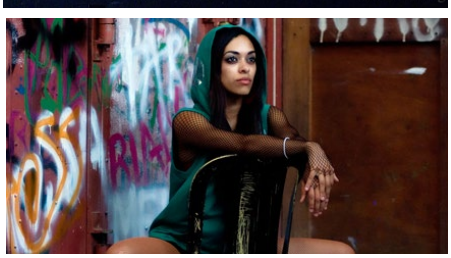














-Rudi Smit-

Dance For Peace provided me with a proper introduction to Hip Hop dancing and all the funkstyles that fall under the Hip Hop umbrella. It was also the very first form of dance training I had ever received and been exposed to.

Dance For Peace helped me realize who I want to be and what I want to do as far as dance goes. Given that you are exposed to so many different styles of dance, you really get to find your niche, focus on it and go with it. At least, thats how it was for me.

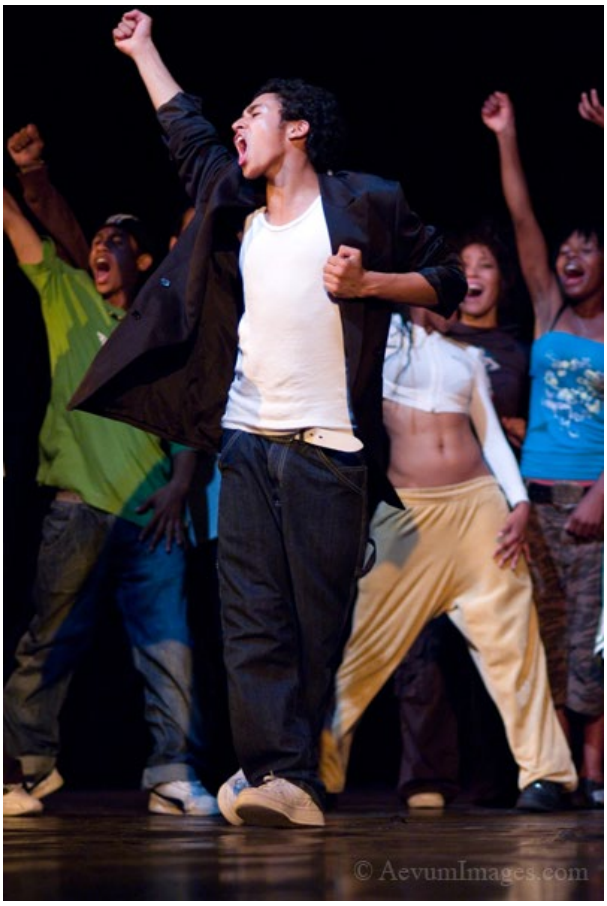


Through Dance For Peace I also learned the genuine importance of perseverance and pushing through tough situations. There was a period of time where I felt so out of my comfort zone that I just wanted to quit and give up, but luckily I pushed through at the thought of how much I had already done and what I would be giving up if I left. It would have been a huge mistake to leave because I would have never had the chance to see how my hard work has eventually paid off. Staying on and pushing through was what I needed in order to respect the process of growth and how we must always remember that we cannot become better by the click of a finger. It takes time and hard work. That coincides with NOT being in your comfort zone and being okay with that.





Lastly and most importantly, Dance For Peace taught me the importance of consistency. You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink - even though you have a leader figure/ mentor who believes in you and pushes you, you can't stop facilitating that process for yourself once they are gone, and expect to grow. You absolutely have to invest in yourself and you need to believe in what you are doing. If you become dependent on the external support system of having a mentor/teacher push you, you will never be able to function without it. Take the knowledge that they give you and apply it. Observe what they do. Observe how they function. Educate yourself further whilst you are being educated by them. It is so important to remain consistent once they have instilled knowledge into you, and it's time for them to go. Not doing so is a slap in their face. They are putting so much time and effort into helping you because they want you to succeed. Show them your appreciation by soaring and using the tools that they gave you to further your career and achieve what you want for yourself.







Robin Myles

Dance for Peace was an experience and journey, a period in my life that showed me more about myself than I could have imagined. But more so, it made me respect both my art and myself as an artist. 10 years ago, I was a very troubled fifteen year old. The problems of my life at that time made me feel numb to it's situation and pulled me into it's reality. A reality that I thought was something I had to live by. Kumari, a person that now I can call a good friend and family, played a mentor to me and guided me into understanding how important I am and that I should treasure both my talent and my heart. Dancing was the perfect outlet for me to express my mind and emotions. I was given knowledge that will forever be dear to me. Dance for Peace also made me push myself as both an individual and as an artist. It made me believe in my potential. I studied, got a degree in animation and is the field in which I work now. I was choreographing before that and teaching other young dancers how to feel pride in their dance. I also started to take my music seriously and am currently working on my own music and music career. So in a nut shall Dance for Peace was the most important stage in my life, the first step of many that followed that made me into the man I am today. I have nothing but the utmost Love and Respect for Kumari... she gave me the opportunity to believe in my dreams and to never lose sight of it. Thank you Kumari, Love you dearly.

>>>





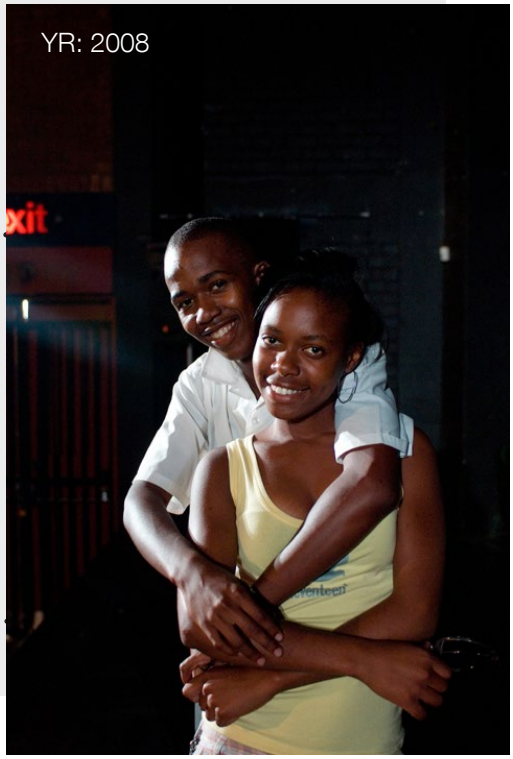
Anuq Wilson

Dance For Peace sparked the beginning of a crazy dance journey if I can be completely honest. Not only did I take part in a show that Dancers in Cape Town still talk about to this day, but it opened up my mind to a whole new chapter! I learned a lot more about the history of the hip hop culture, how to understand music and the best part was learning and being exposed to different dance genres! It's the one place where I found the love for House Dance and was told by Kumari herself, that this is a style that comes naturally to me and perhaps should pursue. The group of dancers picked for the show are amongst the very few in our country that have been trained and in essence, like the mandate and story line of The Temple Of Hip Hop, we were soldiers and students to our sensei, Kumari. Once we had been deemed fit to have mastered all the styles, we were equipped to go out into our dance communities and pass down our knowledge. And that is exactly what we did and today styles like Waacking, Vogue, House are integrated into our dance DNA!! I am eternally grateful for the knowledge I have gained and the ability that I now have to teach others. It has been an even bigger blessing to call Kumari family when the world looks up to her and I have the privilege to talk to her and to have been trained by her!!

Commercials: McDonalds Edgars (clothing store)
Owner of my own dance academy called The Cypher SA Dance Academy Judge for South African Body Of Dance and Hip Hop International South Africa.



Since "Dance For Peace" I have achieved the following: Co Founder of WeDFy Entertainment with Simone Chantelle and Keegan Mitchell. Reality Dance TV show in SOUTH AFRICA and place 3rd. Choreographed music video's for well known Africa's musician such as LLOYD CELE & EMMY GEE etc. Featured in International TV commercials such as ADIDAS, HSBC Hong Kong , 3G MOBILE, HUNTERS DRY South Africa. Performed on TV shows such as South African Idols , SA's Got Talent, Big Brother Angola ,Big Brother South Africa etc. Nominee for Best Hip Hop Male Dancer in South Africa (SOUTH AFRICAN DANCE AWARDS).



Tylor Spelman

At 15 years old, I was given an opportunity to partake in an organization project called "Dance For Peace" which was aimed at fighting crime and drug abuse, inspiring and uplifting the youth through performing arts, and giving youngsters suffering from oppression a voice and platform to express themselves. This is where I met KUMARI SURAJ (CEO of Dance For Peace) who has contributed so much to the dance culture and the hip hop culture internationally. During her stay in South Africa (4 months), I got the chance to learn different Skills / Tools and industry knowledge that is still relevant in my career field. Most importantly, I got to learn more about myself as a teenager, what makes me happy and what I'm passionate about. In a nutshell, I'll be forever grateful to one of my mentors, Kumari Suraj, for the contribution she has invested in my dance career and in my life as a person. No amount of words can express my appreciation and the gratitude I have for her.

Lindiwe Rose

Kumari Suraj has been my teacher, mentor and sister since 2008, when I got a role in her production Called "Temple Of Hip Hop" run by her non profit organization "Dance for Peace". Since then Kumari has opened my eyes to so many possibilities. I had dreams before I had met her but she made me believe that these dreams could actually come true. I was a very shy girl who got teased a lot at school for my looks. Dancing, acting and music helped me escape from it all. I would watch music videos and movies and visualize myself in them to the point where it was all I could see. There was still bit of doubt in my mind that any of it could happen mostly because I was surrounded by a lot of mindsets who did not believe things like that could happen to a South African girl like me. Then Kumari came and showed me what was beautiful about me. She constantly reminded me that my individuality was special and that my dancing could be just as great as those in the industry. My mind then started to expand and I slowly started making plans to move to "LA LA LAND".



Kumari made one last visit to Cape Town, South Africa in 2010 where she reminded me one last time that these dreams of mine were possible. I then graduated College, worked professionally as a singer/dance/actress/model, put up a production to raise funds for my flight ticket and finally made the big move in 2012.



You can now see me in MTV music videos with artists such as Will.i.am, The Chainsmokers, Mali Music ft Jhene Aiko, Karmin and Major Lazer. I have been teaching dance, acting in TV series and writing my own music.

Kumari Suraj has been a great part of my motivation for me pursuing my dreams. I can't thank her enough for believing in me. She constantly told me as a young African girl that I was enough and that I could achieve my goals just as anyone else could. For that I am forever grateful. I now intend to share the same encouragement with many more young African girls with big dreams.

Thank you Kumari.

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