Dear MOJA ARTS FESTIVAL Guests,

Welcome to the 2022 MOJA Arts Festival, Charleston’s annual celebration of African-American and Caribbean arts and culture! Proudly produced by the City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs with the year-round assistance of the all-volunteer MOJA Arts Festival Planning Committee, MOJA remains true to its founding mission to build bridges of understanding and respect for the beauty of artistic and cultural expression among people from all parts of our community.

Each year, MOJA brings together an impressive calendar of festive performances, exhibitions, and events that enrich and enliven our community, offering locals and visitors alike the opportunity to immerse themselves in the cultural heritage and artistic vitality of the South Carolina Lowcountry.

This year, MOJA renews its commitment to longstanding partnerships while launching new collaborations and looking to the future, with the full calendar of uplifting music programs, compelling dance and theatre productions, and vibrant visual arts offerings. It is a fantastic line-up that is certain to reward return guests and equally inspire new attendees, all made possible by the talents and vision of artists from across the Lowcountry and the Southeastern United States.

We extend our thanks and appreciation to the members of the MOJA Arts Festival Planning Committee, chaired by Robert Sanders. We also recognize the tireless support of Charleston City Council, and the contributions of individuals, foundations, government agencies and corporations who together help keep MOJA accessible to all while making a lasting, ongoing impact in our community. And of course, we salute the audience members and community participants who make this such a special event every autumn.

A round of applause, as well, to the Office of Cultural Affairs staff and to the various City departments that make MOJA possible: Parks, Recreation, Legal, Finance, Budget, Police, Traffic & Transportation, Information Technology, Human Resources, Public Services, Public Information, Special Facilities, and the Mayor’s Office.

We look forward to joining you, your family and friends at this year’s MOJA Arts Festival, as we once again come together to celebrate the arts here in Charleston. Enjoy!

John J. Tecklenburg
Mayor
“That was where I first got interested in African music and dance,” said Frank, who serves as Harambee’s executive director. Sandella joined him in Ghana. There, the duo learned firsthand the traditional African dance styles that have become the calling card of their company.

Coming home … and leaving again

They returned to Charleston in 1992 as husband and wife, and opened a gallery and art store on King Street. Two years later, they founded Harambee Dance Company, with Sandella handling choreography and Frank playing music.

“Fortunately and unfortunately, we started branching out,” said Frank. “We started traveling because we were really motivated and inspired to reach as many artists as possible and to learn as much as possible.”

This branching out led the company to relocate to New York City in 1996, where they have remained for over 20 years. During the pandemic, they also took their dance company to Atlanta, Georgia, and have maintained the two companies since. But there has always been a desire to come back to where it all started.

“That is a long time to want to do a hometown gig and it not have it happen,” said Frank. Harambee Dance Company did not return to Charleston for a performance until 2019, when it celebrated its 25th anniversary with a show at their old high school on James Island. Being in town for that show and meeting city arts officials laid the groundwork for this year’s big performance at MOJA. “So we are just doing cartwheels every day.”

This year’s show

Origin digs deep into the rich traditions of African and African-American dance and music, as well as speaking directly to the experiences and history of the Malloy family, which includes son and musical director Frankie Malloy. Sandella’s choreography draws on African-based movement, modern dance, original music and live percussion, and the show includes storytelling aspects, too.

“There’s just a lot of history, a lot of culture in Charleston,” said Sandella. It was only upon arriving in West Africa that she realized just how much African heritage
The MOJA Arts Festival is a multi-disciplinary festival produced annually and directed by the City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the MOJA Planning Committee, an all-volunteer community arts and cultural group. Additional assistance and guidance is provided by the less formal networks of the MOJA Advisory Board, a group of civic leaders who assist with fundraising and advocacy, and the Friends of MOJA patron circle, representing individual and corporate donors.

Moja, a Swahili word meaning “One,” is the appropriate name for this festival celebration of harmony among all people in our community. The Festival highlights the many African-American and Caribbean contributions to western and world cultures. MOJA's wide range of events include visual arts, classical music, dance, gospel, jazz, poetry, R&B music, storytelling, theatre, children’s activities, traditional crafts, ethnic food, and much, much more. In addition to its myriad arts presentations, MOJA also includes an active and busy educational outreach component of workshops in the public schools and senior outreach in community centers.

FESTIVAL STAFF

MOJA Arts Festival is produced and directed by the City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs and the MOJA Planning Committee

CITY OF CHARLESTON

John J. Tecklenburg
Mayor

CITY COUNCIL

Boyd Gregg
District 1

Karl L. Brady Jr.
District 5

A. Peter Shahid Jr.
District 9

Kevin Shealy
District 2

William Dudley Gregorie
District 6

Stephen Bowden
District 10

Jason Sakran
District 3

Perry K. Waring
District 7

Ross A. Appel
District 11

Robert Mitchell
District 4

Michael S. Seeking
District 8

Caroline Parker
District 12

OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Scott Watson
Director

Basil Punsalan
Associate Producer,
MOJA Arts Festival

Katie LaPorte
Cultural Projects Coordinator

Mindy Manziano
Box Office Manager

Anne Quattlebaum
City Gallery Manager

Ray Swagerty
Production Manager

Harrison Chapman
Farmers Market Manager

Rachel D. Workman
Finance Manager

FESTIVAL STAFF

MOJA ARTS FESTIVAL PLANNING COMMITTEE 2022

Robert Sanders
Chair

Reginald C. Graham
Vice Chair

Elease Amos-Goodwin
S. Johari Andika
Cheryl Brown
Carl Campbell
Karo Campbell
Cheo Chandler
M. Jeffrey Fielding Jr.
Thuane B. Fielding
Joseph Frasier Jr.
Brittany Gaillard
Isaac Gaillard
Jonathan Green
Radia Heyward

Reginald C. Graham
Franklin R. Hilliard
Theresa J. Hilliard
Vertelle Amos Kenion
Jazze Clay King
Veronica McDaniel
Rev. Randolph Miller
Ellen Moryl
Earline Nelson
Yvonne T.Orr
Noelle Orr-Blaney
Toni Parnell
Clifford R. Polite Jr.
Terri Prince-Gaillard

Edna Edwards Williams
Secretary

Bev Prince-Muhammad
John S. Purvis
Angel R. Quintero
Edmund S. Robinson
Annabell Seabrook
Cherry Seabrook
Charles Seabrook
Latoya Vickers
Alishia Ward
Kelvin B. Williams
Carolyn Wright-Porcher
Every day

Juried Art Exhibition, City Gallery, 34 Prioleau St.
More than 40 artists with wide-ranging media are part of this year’s juried exhibition selected by juror Dana Coleman.

NEA Big Read
The Charleston County Public Library and MOJA will officially kick off the NEA Big Read for African-born writer Yaa Gyasi’s novel Homegoing on Sept. 29 and will offer community programs and special events through March 2023.

3 p.m. Oct. 4: NEA Big Read Book Discussion on Homegoing by Yaa Gyasi.
Bees Ferry West Ashley Library, 3035 Sanders Rd.

6 p.m., Oct. 5: NEA Big Read Book Discussion.
Main Library, 68 Calhoun St.

Sept. 30

6 p.m. to 11 p.m. MOJA Reggae Block Dance, Brittlebank Park.
Reggae at Brittlebank Park returns to feature the internationally known reggae artist Monsoon as well as South Carolina reggae royalty the Ras Bonghi Reggae Allstars featuring Papa Robbie and Ric Mystic. Food and artwork will be available. Coolers not permitted. Free.

CANCELED

7 p.m. Cuba dentro de un piano,
Dock Street Theatre, 135 Church St.
Cuban-American soprano Elaine Alvarez is joined by Rolando Salazar on piano for an intimate evening celebrating the classical musical traditions of Cuba & Spain. Special guests; The Gino Castillo Quartet. Shows also on Oct. 2 and 3.
Tickets are $35-$70.

Oct. 1

Noon 2nd Annual Gullah MOJA Arts Experience,
Cannon Street Arts Center, 134 Cannon St.
Bring chairs, drums, ancestral tribute items and the entire family for this Gullah/Geechee intergenerational gathering of arts, education, music, dance and culture. Free.

Noon Junior Tennis Round Robin,
Charleston Tennis Center, 19 Farmfield Ave.
Free.

1 p.m. Black Biz on the Block,
Philip Simmons Park, 64 Columbus St.
The event offers a space for black-owned small businesses to sell their products and services as well as for community members to get various resources. Entertainment and food trucks will be on site.

7 p.m. An Evening of Jazz with Momentum and Da’rrell Ravenell,
Dock Street Theatre, 135 Church St.
MOJA Arts Festival favorites Da’rrell

Note Schedule is subject to change. Be sure to check back with MOJA Arts Festival and the City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs for the latest up-to-date information.

The most up-to-date calendar information can always be found at:
MojaFestival.com  mojafestival

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22
Ravenell & Peace of Mind Band will grace the stage of the historic Dock Street Theatre for an evening of soul-stirring jazz and soul. Charleston Jazz’s own Momentum will open the evening and features the lowcountry’s most skilled players. **Tickets are $25.**

**Oct. 2**

**3 p.m.** When I First Remember, Old Bethel United Methodist Church, 222 Calhoun St. **Tickets are $30.**

**4 p.m.** The Back Home Gospel Hour, Second Presbyterian Church, 342 Meeting St. This show features Howard Brown and the Voices of Deliverance, Minister Mario Dessausure, Elder Javetta Campbell and Rev. Randolph Miller. **Tickets are $15 (seniors/students) to $25.**

**Oct. 3**

**7 p.m.** Lowcountry Voices presents Hymnology II, a Lowcountry worship experience, Greater St. Luke AME Church, 78 Gordon St. **Free.**

**Oct. 5**

**9:30 a.m.** Harambee Dance Company, Main Library, Charleston County Public Library, 68 Calhoun St. Harambee Dance Company pulls together the essence of African and African-American dance and music, presenting it from an innovative and exciting new contemporary perspective. **Free.**

**Oct. 6**

**4 p.m.** One Love: A Celebration of African-American and Caribbean Culture, Enston Homes, 900 King St. Presented by The Housing Authority of the City of Charleston, the event featuring the sounds of Spiritually Yours, Mystic Vibrations, and Black Diamond Band. **Free.**

**6 p.m.** Jazz on King Block Party, Ann at King Streets. Enjoy outdoor dining at participating restaurants, shopping at your favorite retailers, and musical performances by Tonya Nicole and Latoya Renea. Tonya Nicole and her expert band of musicians will be paying tribute to two icons of Jazz Nina Simone and Billie Holiday. Live painting performance by painter kolpeace. **Free.**

**8 p.m.** Harambee Dance Company presents Origin, Dock Street Theatre, 135 Church St. Harambee Dance Company pulls together the essence of African and African-American dance and music. **Tickets are $25.**

**Oct. 7**

**1 p.m.** Gullah storyteller and local historian Theresa Hilliard, James Island Arts and Cultural Center, 1248 Camp Road. Gullah storyteller and local historian Theresa Hilliard speaks about her childhood on Edisto Island. Hear how Gullah sounds. **Free.**

**8 p.m.** WonderVerse: The Music of Stevie Wonder, Festival Hall, 56 Beaufain St. From the “Classic Albums Period” of the ’70s into the ’80s to songs written for other artists Charlton Singleton and Friends will draw from his massive catalog for a night of high energy and sing-a-longs! Doors open at 7 p.m. **Tickets are $25.**

**Oct. 8**

**7:30 p.m.** Joey Morant – All That Jazz concert, Festival Hall, 56 Beaufain St. The inaugural concert features internationally renowned piano virtuoso Danny Mixon with special guest Antoinette Montague, celebrating the life and legacy of Charleston icon Joey Morant. **Tickets are $25.**

**Oct. 9**

**11 a.m. to 8 p.m.** MOJA Finale, Hampton Park, 30 Mary Murray Blvd. Close out the Festival in style at this day-long celebration of Lowcountry culture and Charleston history, culminating in a knock-out mainstage performance! Black Diamond & LaFaye will join forces as The ZD Experience Presents “Simply the Best” a tribute to Tina Turner & “Queen of Soul” a tribute to Aretha Franklin. **Free.**

**1:30 p.m.** Metropolitan Opera Singer Edward Washington II, Unitarian Church, 4 Archdale St. Washington will be presenting a program of Spirituals and Art Songs. **Free.**

**3 p.m.** Oh Happy Day, Circular Congregational Church, 150 Meeting St. Celebrate Charleston’s rich gospel music heritage with the creators of The Sound of Charleston. **Tickets are $28 adult; $26 senior; $16 student with ID.**
S.C. artist’s poster displays RICH, MOVING TEXTURES of festival

By Andy Brack

This year’s MOJA Arts Festival poster vibrates with emotion and texture. Although it’s a two-dimensional image, it seems to throb with a pounding drum rhythm. You can feel the movement of dancing. Vibrant colors pleasantly sting your eyes.

The piece, commissioned this year, offers a rich multidimensional texture created by Bluffton artist Amiri Gueka Farris that shimmers, haunts and spins.

Called “MOJA Dance: Past, present and future,” the work was created in September for the Festival, which runs Sept. 29-Oct. 9 in Charleston.

“The piece is about moving from the past into a positive future,” Farris said. “So you can see elements of dance and celebration and also elements of Gullah Geechee and Caribbean culture.”

Farris, an accomplished 47-year-old artist who has a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree from the Savannah College of Art and Design, said viewers should look for different symbols in the piece, such as the Ghanaian sankofa, swirls, snakes and more.

“There’s a sweetgrass basket at the top and there are the three faces that represent MOJA from the logo,” he said. “There are dancers and music symbols and different things that I thought would emulate and talk about the festival.”

Farris, who uses a wide range of media in his contemporary works, has been getting a lot of exposure in the Charleston area lately. In March, the Medical University of South Carolina opened a year-long exhibition on the hospital’s second floor that includes several works from Farris’s Indigo series as part of Heirlooms: The Black South Collection.

“The collection begins with ‘The Stories We Define,’ a collaged painting depicting a mother reading to her child,” said MUSC art collection assistant Noah Williams. “This piece anchors the collection and encourages viewers to resort back to a place learning, hearing a story and embracing traditions passed down.

“At the very end of the space, you see two of Amiri’s self-portraits, ‘Yellow American’ and ‘Magenta American,’ are painted on top of layered and rich cultural references ranging from sweetgrass baskets to comics.”

Next month on Oct. 24, Farris will start a five-week residency at the Gibbes Museum of Art in downtown Charleston. He’s going to work on a piece using older paintings and clippings to depict the rhythm of life.

“I’ll be working on a big piece in the study that people will be able to come in and see me working,” he said. His residency will end Dec. 5.

Through the years, the artist’s work has been featured across the country in more than 50 solo exhibitions and juried museum exhibitions. He’s been shown in past MOJA Arts Festival shows and once served as the judge of one of its juried exhibitions.

For more information, visit AmariFarris.com. You can view this year’s poster for free at the City Gallery, 34 Prioleau St., Charleston. Hours are noon to 5 p.m. from Sept. 29 through Oct. 9.
MOJA Arts Festival salutes its sponsors

The MOJA Arts Festival Presentation of Harambee Dance Company is funded in part by a grant from South Arts in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the South Carolina Arts Commission.

NEA Big Read is a program of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest.