



Memphis Jookin': The Show featuring Lil Buck



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Jeremy Geffen

Pelcome to this evening's eagerly anticipated West Coast premiere of *Memphis Jookin'—The Show* featuring Lil Buck, a rousing evening of dance and music that received its world premiere only two weeks ago at Memphis' historic Orpheum Theatre. Tonight's performance will take us on a journey to that fabled Tennessee city—home of nicknames as various as Bluff City, Home of the Blues, Birthplace of Rock 'n Roll, and Barbecued Pork Capital of the World—to chronicle how a singular artform grew from local street dance to international phenomenon. As Lil Buck told the *Memphis Flyer* earlier this month, "It's a show about the culture in general, Memphis dance and Memphis music. This show was inspired by a lot of the pivotal people that helped elevate Memphis jookin' to the place that it is now.... You see the whole development through our lens."

I also want to make sure you know about another upcoming season highlight (Mar 12), the West Coast premiere of *Place*, Ted Hearne and Saul Williams' bold meditation on the topographies of gentrification and displacement. One of this season's *Illuminations* "Place and Displacement" events (see our website for more information), *Place* was a finalist for the 2021 Pulitzer Prize for Music; it's a remarkable work and something I don't think you'll want to miss. (The recording for the New Amsterdam label captured the attention of the music world, earning two 2021 Grammy nominations—for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance and Best Contemporary Classical Composition.)

February marks the time each year when Cal Performances' schedule shifts into high gear. From now through the beginning of May, the remainder of our 2021–22 season is packed with ambitious and adventurous programming. You won't want to miss...

- sensational dance events like **The Joffrey Ballet** (Mar 4–6), back in Berkeley with a program that includes three West Coast premieres; and the **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** in its ever-popular spring campus residency (Mar 29—Apr 3; Ailey programs have just been announced, so make sure to check our website for details)
- the peerless London Symphony Orchestra (Mar 20), appearing under the direction of superstar conductor Sir Simon Rattle in a program of orchestral masterworks
- early-music masters **Jordi Savall** and **Le Concert des Nations** (Mar 4) performing selections from the beloved 1991 film soundtrack to Alain Corneau's *Tous les matins du monde*
- the renowned English Baroque Soloists with conductor Sir John Eliot Gardiner in a transfixing program of works by Mozart and Haydn (Apr 10)
- pianist extraordinaire Mitsuko Uchida playing and directing Mozart with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra (Mar 27)
- Angélique Kidjo, our 2021–22 artist-in-residence, in her brand new music-theater piece *Yemandja* (a highly anticipated Cal Performances co-commission and *Illuminations* event, Apr 23).

Fasten your seatbelts; we have all of this—plus much more—in store for you!

We're very proud of our new and updated winter brochure and know that a few minutes spent reviewing our schedule—in print or online—will reveal a wealth of options for your calendar; now is the perfect time to guarantee that you have the best seats for all the events you plan to attend.

I know you join us in looking forward to what lies ahead, to coming together once again to encounter the life-changing experiences that only the live performing arts deliver. We can't wait to share it all with you during the coming months.

Jeremy Geffen Executive and Artistic Director, Cal Performances





Friday and Saturday, February 25-26, 2022, 8pm Zellerbach Hall

Memphis Jookin'—The Show featuring Lil Buck

Producer, Co-Choreographer Charles "Lil Buck" Riley

Director Amy "Catfox' Campion

Writer Ameenah Kaplan Malcolm Barrett

Choreography Terran Noir Gary Marico "Dr. Rico" Flake

Music Marshall and Parker Mulherin

Dancers

Charles "Lil Buck" Riley Eric "Surf' Taylor Ierame "Dome De Geai' Braden Draem Hines

Jadyn "Smooth' Nathan Larrat Curry Walker

Bradley "Geno' Davis Ryan Haskett Elise "DanceBeastElise" Landrum Jasina "Sina' Tate Wes Stewart

Dai'Vian "Stro" Washington

Production

Technical Director Matthew McKim

> Video Producer Joe Mulherin

Director of Photography Eric Swartz

> Camera Operator Michael Perry

Lighting Designer Helena Kuukka

Production Manager Jean Egdorf

Photographer Louis "Ziggy' Tucker

Costume Manager Kathy Caradine

Company Manager/Producer/Music Craten "Jai Pro" Armmer

This performance will last approximately 80 minutes and be performed without an intermission.

The world premiere of Memphis Jookin'—The Show featuring Lil Buck was performed at the Orpheum Theatre, Memphis, TN on February 11, 2022.

Produced by CAMI Music LLC & Lil Buck Entertainment

Co-produced by the Orpheum Theatre Group, Memphis, TN

Funding for Memphis Jookin'—The Show dance education programming is underwritten by Jody and John Arnhold and the Arnhold Foundation.

These performances are made possible, in part, by Patron Sponsors: Maris & Ivan Meyerson.



CREATIVE TEAM

Charles "Lil Buck" Riley (dancer, choreographer, producer)

Charles "Lil Buck" Riley is a movement artist known for bringing Memphis jookin'—a freestyle-based street dance involving intricate footwork—to mainstream audiences across the world. Raised in Memphis (TN), he was introduced to the urban street dance style around the age of 13; after moving up in the jookin' ranks, he studied ballet for two years on scholarship. He quickly made a niche for himself by adding his own style and imagination to create signature moves—which include gliding across space as if gravity doesn't exist.

In 2011, Lil Buck performed with Yo-Yo Ma to his rendition of Camille Saint-Saëns' *The Swan.* Spike Jonze happened to be in the audience and was so taken by the performance that he taped it on his phone and posted it on the internet. The video quickly went viral with over 3 million views on YouTube. Since then, Lil Buck has performed with Cirque du Soleil, Benjamin Millepied, Janelle Monáe, and Madonna. to name a few.

The combination of Lil Buck's dancing abilities with his unique sense of style has also made him a fashion icon. He was awarded the *Wall Street Journal*'s Innovator Award in 2014. In 2015, he collaborated alongside Mikhail Baryshnikov in a campaign for Rag & Bone's fall/winter campaign and he has appeared in ads for brands including Jordan, Karl Lagerfeld, Chanel, Kaporal Jeans, and Gap. He also designed a capsule collection for Versace.

Lil Buck continues to defy gravity in Apple's AirPods commercial, which garnered over 8 million views on YouTube within two weeks. He also starred in Lexus' 2017 Super Bowl commercial, and you can see some of his moves through the role of the "Mouse King" in Disney's feature film *The Nutcracker and the Four Realms*.

Buck is co-founder of Movement Art Is, an organization focused on using movement artistry to inspire change in the world. Lil Buck collaborated with dancer Jon Boogz and artist Alexa Meade to create *Color of Reality*, a short

film addressing gun violence. The film won CNN's *Great Big Story* Art as Impact Award, was selected the Toronto Short Festival's Best Experimental Film, and was nominated for World of Dance's Concept Video of the Year. Lil Buck also starred in the nature-inspired short film *Honor Thy Mother*, which addresses the need for humans to take better care of our planet. He continues to share his art, activism, and one-of-a-kind style of movement with the world.

Amy "Catfox" Campion, director

Amy "Catfox" Campion is a dance art maker, activist, and educator who empowers people through hip-hop culture. Her work crosses artistic and cultural boundaries, transplanting hip-hop dance from street to stage; remixing street dance vocabularies; and telling stories through a multimedia intersection of dance, theater, film, poetry, graffiti art, and music. Through a collaborative creative process, Campion partners with performers to create choreography that is both virtuosic and expressive. Her work showcases the innate capacity of hip-hop art forms to advocate for positive social change.

Campion's dance art experience spans two decades and involves multiple dance styles, most prominently breaking, hip-hop, and *capoeira*. In 2006, she graduated from UCLA's Department of World Arts and Cultures with an MFA in choreography. From 2007–19, she founded and directed Antics, a multimedia hip-hop dance theater company. Campion's work has been presented internationally, nationally, and extensively throughout greater Los Angeles. She is a part-time faculty member at the California State University Long Beach Dance Department. For more information, visit Anticsperformance.com.

Ameenah Kaplan, writer

Ameenah Kaplan holds a BFA in directing from the Academy of Art University Film School. She also studied acting at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Kaplan has served as Resident Director for Disney's *The Lion King* on Broadway and on the show's North American



tour, and appears on the ABC+ show Encore! as a choreographer and director. She spent her early career working as an actor, choreographer, and drummer. Her acting credits include Avengers: Infinity War and guest-star and recurring roles on The Office and Grey's Anatomy, and she was in the original American cast of Stomp. Kaplan has been a drum coach with Blue Man Group for 18 years and has played drums for Rihanna, Macy Gray, Adam Lambert, and Rod Stewart. Other directing credits include The Wiz for First Stage Milwaukee, Our Country's Good at American Players Theatre, By the Way, Meet Vera Stark at Purdue University, How to Break for the Village Theater Seattle, The Royale at ACT Theatre Seattle, and Bash'd for Los Angeles' Celebration Theatre. She directed Molodi: Up Close and Personal for Las Vegas' premiere body percussion group and consults for Antics Performance, a hip-hop theater company in Los Angeles. Kaplan has twice directed for Noah Wylie's Young Playwright's Festival. Her short film Man with a Movie Camera premiered at Hollyshorts Film Festival in 2014. She also directed an award-winning short, The American Failure, which was shown at multiple film festivals. Kaplan has choreographed more than two-dozen shows for stage and television, including Dancing with the Stars. She originated the choreography for The Royale at the Kirk Douglas Theatre in Los Angeles and for The Dancing Granny by Ashley Bryan at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta. Kaplan is the recipient of Gregory, Ovation, Sherwood, Queen of Angels, and multiple NAACP and LA Weekly awards for choreography, fight choreography, and directing.

Malcolm Barrett, writer

Malcolm Barrett is a veteran stage and screen actor/playwright who can be seen, most recently, in the Emmy-nominated series *Genius: Aretha Franklin* opposite Tony-Award winner Cynthia Erivo. Known for television series like *The Boys, It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia,* and *The Sopranos,* and as a series regular on *Better Off Ted, Preacher,* and *Timeless,* he has also made numerous film appearances in movies like Tom Hanks' *Larry Crowne, Dear White People, Pee-*

ples, and the Academy-Award winning The Hurt Locker. More recent credits include Disney Plus' Just Beyond and Shudder's Black horror anthology Horror Noire. A former Nuyorican Poetry Cafe national team member, Barrett also wrote, produced, and acted in the play Brain Problems (The Pico), which was nominated for an Ovation Award and produced by Ammo Theatre, of which he is a founding member and former artistic director.

Barrett's short plays include *Trial by Fury* (MCC Theatre) and *The Board Room* (Acme Theatre). He is also an Ovation Award-winning actor for the play *The Recommendation*. Barrett is thankful to the performers who gave their whole spirit to this production, as well as to the creative team behind *Memphis Jookin'—The Show*, including Lil Buck, Jai, Amy, the Mulherins, Helena, Terran, Dr. Rico, co-writer Ameenah Kaplan, producer Alex Barnes, the Orpheum's Jen McGrath, decades-long friends, and family.

Terran Noir Gary, choreographer

A native of Memphis, Terran Gary is currently the dance team manager for the Memphis Grizzlies NBA basketball team, where she is responsible for the management, direction, choreography, and staging of Grizzlies dance entertainment teams including Grizz Girls, Blue Bunch, and Grannies & Grandpas.

In addition to her work with the Grizzlies, Gary is owner and artistic director of SubRoy Studios in Memphis, where she is responsible for the development of aspiring professional performers in the greater Memphis area. Sub-Roy Studios offers a diverse dance curriculum, preparing performers for the commercial market. As a dance collective, Subculture Royalty fosters the development of dynamic choreographers and performers. SubRoy requires calculated marketing and promotional strategies as well as athletic training for performances.

Marico "Dr. Rico" Flake,

jookin' choreographer/movement creator

Memphis native Marico "Dr. Rico" Flake is one of the most influential dancers and teachers in urban dance, especially known for helping develop and promote Memphis jookin, a street

style that carries the spirit of the Blues City. Dr. Rico has been featured on Fox's So You Think You Can Dance and Dancing with the Stars, and was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Choreography for his work with Janelle Monáe on her music video "Tightrope." He choreographed the first Memphis jookin' dance tour and is a founder and leading member of the legendary jookin' crew G-Force, responsible for establishing the first known jookin' academy. He also helped form the international dance crew The Assassins—Warriors of Light. Dr. Rico is the co-author of The Jook, the book that codified jookin, and he authored an online Memphis jookin' certificate program with the International Urban Dance Academy. He's particularly known for his focus on learning and exploring what dance teaches us about life, and what life teaches us about dance. Now, as a member of Urban Artistry, based in the DC area, his goal is to further the Human Genome Project through study of the anthropology of dance. He has traveled to a number of countries around the world, sharing the various cultures of dance in a quest to simultaneously keep traditions alive and innovation ever present.

Marshall and Parker Mulherin, composers and music directors

Marshall and Parker Mulherin are twin brothers from Memphis, where they grew up surrounded by music—their father is a professional musician and their mother a knowledgeable fan with wide-ranging musical tastes. While marinating in the rich musical environment at home, they grew up as percussionists in their middle school and high school bands. Early in their college years at Loyola New Orleans, they discovered their vocations as composers, songwriters, and singers, and they soon began releasing original songs online as Mulherin and playing live in New Orleans clubs and college venues.

Lil Buck entered the Mulherins' lives when they were commissioned to create music for his performances with Memphis' New Ballet Ensemble in 2014 and again in 2016. The brothers moved to Los Angeles the next year to pursue their musical career, but stayed creatively engaged with Buck, contributing music to *Love*

Heals All Wounds, the first production from his Movement Art Is organization, and a composition for the Vail Dance Festival. They've toured nationally and were finishing up their next Mulherin EP and music video when Buck invited them to join the creative team for Memphis Jookin'—The Show. Delighted to dive back into Lil Buck's unique creative world, they began composing and producing a wide stylistic range of music for the show.

Today, their career as Mulherin also continues full steam, with a new EP and plenty of other songs available on all the music streaming services (Spotify, Apple Music, etc.), videos on YouTube, and more live performances on the horizon.

Joe Mulherin, video producer

Joe Mulherin's diverse career has served up video projects, music, writing, live events, and other adventures that have arisen over the decades. He has written, produced and directed 40+ years of video projects for live shows, television, corporations, nonprofits. and other clients. He has probably written most of the things there are to write—articles, scripts, speeches/presentations, ads, all-purpose prose, and even a TED Talk (but no book yet!). His eclectic array of gigs as a trumpeter/arranger cover broad musical territory, from Jackie Wilson to The Band, Jerry Lee Lewis, Brenda Lee, Levon Helm, Keith Richards, and Toots Hibbert, among many others. He has served as music supervisor, consultant, composer, or score producer on over 50 feature films, documentaries, and television shows. As a music director, Joe Mulherin has logged at least that many live events and stage musicals. His live productions have likewise run the gamut, from Fortune 500 corporate events to award shows, galas, NBA halftime shows, music and dance concerts, and much more. His work has taken him to many countries on three continents. But as productive as all these years have been, by far Joe Mulherin's finest productions are Marshall and Parker (see above).

Craten "Jai Pro" Armmer, producer, tour manger, music

Jai Pro is a Memphian first and foremost. He has an extreme love for his city and all it has con-



tributed to the world. His love for Memphis and his desire to protect its assets was the major motivation for his work in helping spread Memphis jookin' around the world.

Jai Pro began his career in television and music early on. By the age of 20, he had worked "hands on" in the television industry for more than six years, creating his own music from the age of 15. By 2008, after seeing many fly-bynight dances become popular, Jai Pro scoured the city for anyone involved with jookin. "I couldn't find anything on the web about anyone involved with Memphis jookin, gangsta walking, anything."

In 2006, Jai Pro released *Memphis Jookin*, *Vol. 1* featuring the premier jookers of the city. Thanks to the DVD—and to promotion on an emerging new platform called YouTube—Memphis jookin' instantly took the city and the world by storm. By 2010, jookin' had spread to all continents and was beginning to be recognized by the wider dance industry.

Since 2010, Jai Pro has continued to promote this dance style, which has now taken him all over the world. He has booked Memphis jookers on commercials, music videos, and movies, and managed the career of the most influential jooker of them all, Lil Buck. Months before the pandemic shut down virtually all live performances, Jai Pro and Lil Buck were introduced to CAMI Music in Paris; two-and-a half years later, they are here in Berkeley tonight. Keep an eye out for the nonprofit Memphis Jookin' Arts Academy, which will open later this year, and for more big news involving Memphis jookin' globally. @MemphisJookin' Everywhere!

CAST

Dai'Vian "Stro" Washington (JJ)

Washington, a 22-year-old native Memphian, has been dancing since he was six years old. A ninth grade theater class revealed a talent for acting that he has since developed by performing in plays in high school and college. He followed jookin' on the internet, but developed his own style (in the spirit of Chris Brown and Michael Jackson), and only began to learn

jookin' seriously during the past several years. Working with top-flight jookers in the show has been very motivating: "I've gotten so much advice from them, so much inspiration about how to be myself and incorporate that into the way I dance." @Stro.901

Eric "Surf" Taylor (Double OG), rehearsal director

Thirty years old and one of the show's real OGs ("original gangstas"), Taylor was born and raised in Memphis. He was all about sports until dancing captured his attention at age 15—first in hip-hop and then, for the last 13 years, as a jooker and inspired by his older brother, Memphis jookin' pioneer (and the show's co-choreographer) Dr. Rico. Taylor has been a member of the seminal Memphis jookin' groups G-Force and 2 Live Crew. "I've been in the game so long, I'm not just involved with Memphis jookin' for myself any more," he says. "I'm doing this for the ones who couldn't make it to this point in their careers or in their lives. I put them in my heart and just move forward with that." @Surf_Taylor

Bradley "Geno" Davis (DJ Fly)

Davis is 28 and grew up dancing for fun. By the mid-2000s, with jookin' all around him in Memphis and on the brand-new YouTube, he started teaching himself through videos, practicing on his own. His independent approach gave him a unique style, and he wound up competing on the twelfth season of Fox's So You Think You Can Dance. Davis is a member of 901.ent/The DreamTeam and says that jookin' has taught him vital lessons: "I learned the best thing you can do in life is be yourself—one hundred percent," he says. "And you have to work hard at anything that you're serious about, because it's only going to give you what you give it." Now he's passing along those lessons to his five-year-old son Ethen. @LGENO901

Jerame "Dome De Geai" Braden, ensemble

Braden is only 18 but he has been involved in jookin' since he was a toddler. His father, DJ Kojack DJ'ed jookin' events around Memphis and Dome tagged along: "I was that little kid just sitting in the back, just watching," he says. "I got

inspired." Soon he was dancing himself, studying at several studios, and joining the M Town Image crew, where his freestyle flourished. He is also active as a photographer/videographer, painter, and clothing designer, all while studying graphic design. "But," he says, "there's a certain type of love that I get from dancing that I don't get from anything else." uuglyalien.com @domedegeai

Ryan Haskett, ensemble and social media manager

A 29-year-old artist and entrepreneur from Memphis, Haskett has studied dance since he was 10 years old—tap, jazz, ballet, hip-hop. He joined the Memphis Grizzlies junior dance team before he hit his teens, but he says, "Memphis jookin' is my home." He met Lil Buck in 2007, when jookin' was just hitting YouTube, and he jumped headfirst into the jookin' scene. Haskett is also one of Memphis' top DJs and an active photographer, videographer, and musician. A budding entrepreneur in all his fields of interest, he credits his spirituality and his daily practice of meditation for the balance and success in his life. @RyanTheMindTV

Draem Hines, ensemble

A 19-year-old Memphis native, Hines was inspired to dance by his father, an amateur gangsta walker. He showed his son the basics and took him to his first jookin' sessions. He says, "I've been inspired by every jooker, old and new, as I was introduced to the culture." Hines is a member of the crew 901.ent/The Dream Team, and appeared with them in a Kerwin Frost Adidas television commercial. He is committed to meditation as a daily practice and feels it has made a great difference in his life: "When you get on the floor after meditating, it's like you're in the flow. Meditating is definitely the way to go."

Elise "DanceBeastElise" Landrum, ensemble

Landrum earned the title Queen of Memphis Jookin' in 2019. She fell in love with the dance style at age seven, watching YouTube videos, and once she started her lessons, she never looked back. Home-schooled, she spends time practic-

ing or "labbing" every day. Landrum won the Heavy Hittas Battlefest Tournament and competed in the national finals in Washington, DC. For her, this tour puts it all together: "I'm getting paid to do what I love to do with people who I've been dancing with for years...people who've helped me. It's really lovely." @GangstaE901

Jadyn "Smooth" Nathan, ensemble

Nathan's family moved from Boston to Memphis when he was three years old, and the city's dancing culture caught his interest right away. He started taking lessons, and by age six was training at one of the first jookin' academies, learning from the city's finest. Soon. Nathan was competing in local battles, and now, at 18, he's one of the city's finest young jookers. Nathan won the 2021 Memphis regional Red Bull Dance Your Style event and competed in the national finals in Washington, DC. He feels that *Memphis Jookin'—The Show* is the next step: "I'm ready to just to keep going. Any opportunity that's after this, I'm ready for it!" @iamjadynsmooth

Wes "King Wes" Stewart, ensemble

Wes has danced since he was three years old; now, at 23, his broad dance background includes studies at almost every hip-hop and jookin' studio in Memphis (plus a couple of ballet academies!). He has worked professionally for the past nine years, most recently as a member of the Memphis Grizzlies dance team. Stewart also has entrepreneurial plans, especially as a clothing designer. After dancing in choreographed styles, returning to jookin' has been a liberating experience for him: "It's an empowerment thing—it's freedom!" @Kvngs.island_

Jasina "Sina Trendin" Tate, ensemble

Tate began dancing jookin' eight years ago and now, at 22, she has found her creative path. Like many, she first learned from YouTube videos, but found that live sessions with experienced jookers were more important: "they know how to move and flow with the music. It's all different live." As one of the few women jookers, she encourages more women to get involved, if only for the creative and the personal benefits: "I learned from jookin' to be confident within

yourself...you know, love yourself and love the craft and what you do." @Sinatrendin901

Larray Curry Walker, ensemble

Walker says his family noticed his budding dance ability when he was only two years old, but he started taking things seriously at age 12, when he joined one of the top Memphis dance studios. The key was taking home what he learned in class, practicing and practicing some more. Now 18, Walker describes his personal style as a combination of hip-hop, freestyle, and jookin'. He also appreciates the life lessons he has learned. "Jookin' has taught me a lot, especially to have a mind of my own and take the path that I want to take." @larraycurry

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Merging the worlds of live event production and artist management, Columbia Artists Music LLC (CAMI Music) has swiftly become an international leader in the performing arts. CAMI Music specializes in the general management and touring of prominent musicians and performing artists, as well as providing production and consultation services for large-scale events and festivals worldwide. Recognizing the global stature of the performing arts, CAMI Music has allied many of its artists and events with distinguished global brands through endorsement and sponsorship opportunities.

Established in 2004 by Ronald A. Wilford, Founder and CEO of Columbia Artists Management, and Jean-Jacques Cesbron, then EVP of Columbia Artists Management, CAMI Music is an independently owned and operated management company. CAMI Music's dedicated booking and production departments specialize in the fulfillment of the roster's touring specifications while satisfying the demand for performances around the world.

Orpheum Theatre Group, co-producer

Orpheum Theatre Group is a Memphis-based, four-time Tony Award-winning nonprofit performing arts institution under the leadership of President & CEO Brett Batterson. With a mission to entertain, educate, and enlighten, the organization presents year-round entertainment featuring concerts, Broadway, dance, and special events as well as accessible education and community engagement programming.

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In Memoriam:

Willie Drake Allen, aka O.G. Willie

For more information, visit:

tour.memphisjookin'.com



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Artistic Planning

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