

Dance at the National Black Arts Festival

(provisional title)

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The flourishing state of concert^t-theatrical dance in the African world, both on the continent and in the Diaspora, is brilliantly illustrated by the range of dance presentations offered by the National Black Arts Festival during the two decades of its existence. Those who have attended the Festival have had numerous opportunities to experience high quality and striking diversity in dance, as well as to come to know virtually all of the major figures in the world of black dance.

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The festival celebrated the two major pioneer figures of black dance in the twentieth century, Katherine Dunham (1909-2006) and Pearl Primus (1919-19⁹4). In 1988, the opening year of the festival, "A Tribute to Katherine Dunham" was co-hosted by two stellar Dunham associates Josephine Premice and Julie Belafonte and presented performances by youthful ensembles from the performing arts center in East St. Louis, founded by Dunham. Dunham returned to the festival in 1996 for further recognition and honors. The Dunham Institute of Atlanta, founded by Carol Lloyd, participated in the Festival program of 1990.