

***RHAW***

**at The New Victory Theater**

**May 17-26, 2013**

**Press Report**

## Press Attendance

	<b>May 16, 2013</b>	<b>11:00 AM</b>
	Elizabeth Zimmer	Bessies
	Leigh Witchel	The New York Post
<b>Friday</b>	<b>May 17, 2013</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
	Brian Seibert	The New York Times
	Robert Johnson	The Star-Ledger
	Solomons Gus	Solomons Says
	Stacey Menchel Kussell	Dance Enthusiast
	Lisa Jo Sagolla	Back Stage East
	Margaret Hart	Motherhood Later
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>May 18, 2013</b>	<b>2:00 PM</b>
	Tara Oolie	Macaroni Kid
	Kim Chan	Bessies
<b>Friday</b>	<b>May 24, 2013</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
	Elka Samuels Smith	Bessies
	Gia Kourlas	Time Out
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>May 26, 2013</b>	<b>12:00 PM</b>
	Robert Greskovic	The Wall Street Journal
	Fatima Kafele	Bessies
	Adam Gertsacov	Clownlink
	Susan Reiter	Dance Mag/freelance
	Eva Heinemann	HI! DRAMA

## Press Clips

### Features

- TimeOut New York (print) – “Rennie Harris: The famed hip-hop choreographer gets RHAW” – May 16, 2013
- TimeOut New York (online) – “Rennie Harris talks about hip-hop and RHAW, which performs at The New Victory Theater” – May 13, 2013
- Dadapalooza – “Rennie Harris’ RHAW at The New Victory” – May 21, 2013

### Reviews

- The New York Times (print) – “So Powerful, It Stands In For Sound And Light” – May 21, 2013
- The New York Times (online) – “So Powerful, It Stands In For Sound And Light” – May 20, 2013
- The New York Post (print) – “Rah-rah-rah for family-friendly RHAW” – May 20, 2013
- The New York Post (online) – “Rah-rah-rah for family friendly RHAW” – May 20, 2013
- The Star Ledger (print) – “Finding art and grace in the world of hip-hop” – May 21, 2013
- The Star Ledger (online) – “Rhaw, yet refined: Rennie Harris’ new hip hop company debuts on Broadway” – May 21, 2013
- The Dance Enthusiast – “Impressions of Rennie Harris’ RHAW” – May 21, 2013
- Motherhood Later – “Show Review: Rennie Harris’ RHAW – Review by Margaret Hart” – May 21, 2013
- Solomons Says – “‘RHAW’ Material” – May 20, 2013
- HI! DRAMA – “Eva Heinemann reviews New Victory’s RHAW and The Girl Who Forgot to Sing Badly” – June 7, 2013

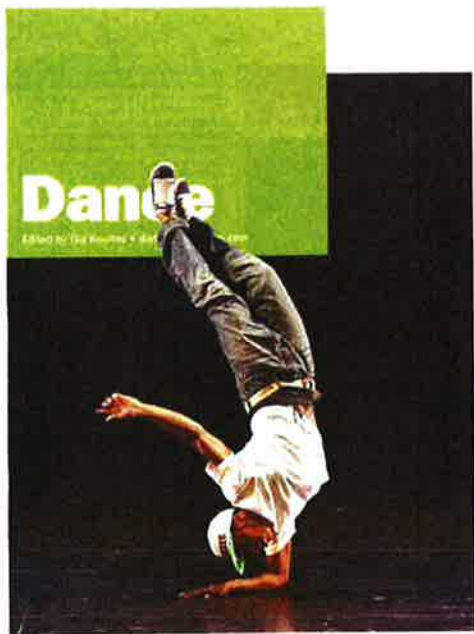
### Featured Listings

- The New York Times (print) – “Spare Times For Children May 17-23” – May 17, 2013
- The New York Times (online) – “Spare Times for Children for May 17-23” – May 17, 2013
- The New Yorker (print) – “Dance: Rennie Harris’ RHAW” – May 20, 2013
- The New Yorker (online) – “Goings on About Town: Dance – ‘Rennie Harris’ RHAW” – May 17, 2013
- The New York Times (online) – “Spare Times for Children for May 24-30” – May 23, 2013
- NYC Arts – “NYC Arts Top Five Picks” – May 14, 2013
- Mommy Poppins – “Best NYC Kids’ Theater Shows Spring 2013: 14 Family Shows at Non-Broadway Prices” – April 16, 2013
- Big Apple Parent – “14 Fun Things To Do With Kids in Manhattan This May” – April 25, 2013
- NYC Kids Arts – “This Week’s Picks” – May 13, 2013
- Broadway World – “Rennie Harris’ RHAW to Groove at New Victory Theater, 5/17-26” – April 17, 2013
- Broadway World Dance – “Rennie Harris’ RHAW to Groove at New Victory Theater 5/17-26” – April 17, 2013

### Social Media

- **Facebook:** (<https://www.facebook.com/newvictorytheater>)
- **Twitter:** (<http://www.twitter.com/newvictory>)

# Time Out New York



## Rennie Harris

The famed hip-hop choreographer gets RHA.W. By **Gia Kourlas**

Rennie Harris Awe-inspiring Works is not a statement, but a company. Formed in 2007 by the award-winning hip-hop choreographer as a training group for Rennie Harris Puremovement, the company shows dancers in the RHA.W. With the group, Harris has found a way to teach young dancers professionalism and dance history, while getting back to the basics of hip-hop. Beginning Friday 17, the company performs at the New Victory Theater; in honor of the occasion, Harris spoke about his vision of hip-hop.

**How did RHA.W come about?**  
There were a lot of younger dancers who wanted to dance with the company, but they needed to be trained in how we operate as a hip-hop concert-dance company. It was a way for me to be able to access dancers that were already in the mind-set of hip-hop as a concert dance, so that I wouldn't have to go through the process of having to train someone on the spot. There aren't that many hip-hop dance companies in the States at all, so there's really no reference. There's nothing teaching street dancers the basics of theater

and theater etiquette, and what it means to be in a company versus a crew and the whole nine. This helped that process for me, of having to wait six months to a year to have a dancer recultivated into a different culture and then *hope* that that dancer is able to deal with it. Everything is a little bit more regimented in a company. It's not as loose as a crew. It's not as democratic as a crew.

**How long does it take to make a Puremovement dancer?**  
I would say from three to five years. And not to say that I don't put them out—a lot of times, I'll put them out onstage just to see how they deal with it. Some swim or drown. There's always one person you might see and think, What's wrong with this guy? Or, Why did he pick this guy? And it's probably someone I decided, Okay, you're going to get your chance onstage today. *[Laughs]*

**When you choreograph, do you invent new movement, or do you focus on now ways to put movement together?**  
Both. Plus, I use old stuff. When I was a kid, I asked [a dancer], "Why

are you doing that? That's old shit." And they were like, "Look, there's no such thing as old movement. As long as you do it well, it's good." And I remembered that for some reason as I decided to become a choreographer or realized I was one.

**Can you give me an example of something old that you use now?**  
Breaking is old. Anything from locking or popping is old. That was in the '70s. Those vocabularies—the majority of it is over 30 years old, but it's still used as if it was brand-spanking-new.

**Have you seen Lil Buck?**  
I saw a video.

**Do you have an opinion?**  
From what I've seen, I'm not a big fan. It's just funny how the mainstream jumps on something—how they're *last* to get something and then all of a sudden, it's this brand-new thing: Lil Buck and Yo-Yo Ma. All the stuff that they are discovering had already been done in the '90s. The first thing they did was juxtaposition as soon as hip-hop became the thing. So not to take from him, because that's great for him. That was more my initial issue—it's about media and Euro-American culture. Like it doesn't exist until they discover it.

**Until you put a swan on it, it doesn't exist.**

Right. As far as style, I'm trying to decipher. The gliding and the wave—all of that is from funk style, it's from popping, that era. So I haven't been able to really decipher what part of his movement or that particular type of movement is turfing or turf dance or is actually something different, other than a hybrid and a misunderstanding of how to do it. I'm just responding to what I'm seeing. If that's a wave, then that wave is not as developed as it should be. If this is a glide, then let's *glide*! It's that kind of thing.

**Why is hip-hop a universal movement language?**  
I don't think it's specifically about hip-hop. Anything that allows you a freedom or a voice is universal. Before Fosse, Luigi and Jack Cole and Gus [Giordano], and when jazz was just jazz—a street dance—it was free. What we see today in jazz is no freedom. So it's that freedom and when kids feel that freedom—what it was supposed to be—it's the same spirit coming back to remind us that we have freedom of choice and freedom of voice. It comes back with different generations, but it's the same message: You're free.

RHA.W is at the New Victory Theater Fri 17–May 26.



# Time Out New York

**Rennie Harris talks about hip-hop and RHAW, which performs at the New Victory Theater**

*Rennie Harris talks about hip-hop and RHAW—Rennie Harris Awe-inspiring Works—which performs at the New Victory Theater*

**By Gia Kourlas** Mon May 13 2013



Rennie Harris, RHAW Photo: Brian Mengini

Rennie Harris, the hip-hop choreographer, presents his company [RHAW](#), or Rennie Harris Awe-inspiring Works, at the [New Victory Theater](#). In this interview, he talks about the challenges of choreographing hip-hop, as well as his views on [Lil Buck](#), the jookin sensation, and his recent work for [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#).

Rennie Harris Awe-inspiring Works is not a statement, but a company. Formed in 2007 by the award-winning hip-hop choreographer as a training group for Rennie Harris Puremovement, the company shows dancers in the RHAW. With the group, Harris has found a way to teach young dancers professionalism and dance history, while getting back to the basics of hip-hop. Beginning Friday 17, the company performs at the New Victory Theater; in honor of the

occasion, Harris spoke about his vision of hip-hop.

**Time Out New York: How did RHAW come about?**

**Rennie Harris:** There were a lot of younger dancers who wanted to dance with the company, but they needed to be trained in how we operate as a hip-hop concert-dance company. So it's sort of a training-performing company. But it was a way for me to be able to access dancers that were already in the mind-set of hip-hop as a concert dance and theater form, so that I wouldn't have to go through the process of having to train someone on the spot and to get that person to think a certain way. There aren't that many hip-hop dance companies in the States at all, so there's really no reference. There's nothing teaching street dancers the basics of theater and theater etiquette, and what it means to be in a company versus a crew and the whole nine. This helped that process for me, of having to wait six months to a year to have a dancer recultivated into a different culture and then *hope* that that dancer is able to deal with it. Because everything is a little bit more regimented in a company, as you know. It's not as loose as a crew. It's not as democratic as a crew.

**Time Out New York: How long does it take to make a Puremovement dancer?**

**Rennie Harris:** Before they really come around, I would say from three to five years. And not to say that I don't put them out—a lot of times, I'll put them out onstage just to see how they deal with it. Some swim or drown. There's always one person you might see and think, What's wrong with this guy? Or, Why did he pick this guy? And it's probably someone I decided, Okay, you're going to get your chance onstage today. *[Laughs]*

**Time Out New York: I love seeing those moments.**

**Rennie Harris:** Yeah! Let's see if you can fly if I throw you off the cliff. We have gotten some amazing dancers that way. But even in the company there's still a three-year process. In our eyes, they're not full company members until after the third year. The first year we're getting to know you; the second year, the truth is going to come out; and then the third year, we'll know if we want you or not. *[Laughs]* A dancer gets comfortable in that second year, and the real person comes out. This is not Broadway, this is not a video, and you're not on tour with a rapper. Some have those delusions when on the road. We have rules and regulations and docking systems have to be in place in order to control any craziness that could happen because they think they're on a world tour.

**Time Out New York: Tell me about the name, RHAW or Rennie Harris Awe-inspiring Works. What does that mean?**

**Rennie Harris:** It was a twofold thing. One was to have them so I could actually work on some crazier stuff; two, I wanted them not to make that much of a statement politically. To not have to worry about, Is this too racy for the audience? I wanted them to be family-friendly and to go back to the basics of hip-hop; I wanted to choreograph hip-hop works that were definitely hip-hop or street dance—there was no denying it—and to present it in the traditional street-dance way. But with a slight twist in regard to dynamics of structure. The choreography has to change in order to cover the space. I still wanted to do that, but I wanted to do it to hip-hop music, to house, to street-dance music. You're going to feel like you saw a hip-hop show with a twist. With RHPM [Rennie Harris Puremovement], we're pushing more of the boundaries; most of our music is not hip-hop at all. It's Marvin Gaye, it's Zap Mama; the closest we come is maybe a house song. So the way I see it is that we're pushing the vocabulary to go beyond how we

understand hip-hop should be presented. Maybe it's a house piece in silence. Maybe it's not all about pushing the energy or the spirit of hip-hop, but rather pushing the vocabulary to be viewed differently than it has been.

**Time Out New York: I love that because it broadens it.**

**Rennie Harris:** Yeah, it just makes you think. Right now I'm working on a piece with RHAW, actually, called *Love, American Style*. It's evening-length, and it's all rock music. You know you're watching hip-hop, but when you see hip-hop done to rock music you know you're watching something different. It just looks different because of the music.

**Time Out New York: What rock music are you focusing on?**

**Rennie Harris:** We're using Chicago and Nirvana and maybe a few songs from Queen. It's not ready. I just did its third workshop; we're going to do one more and then we're going to start marketing and see if anyone takes a bite.

**Time Out New York: Is that what you mean when you said you could do crazier stuff with RHAW?**

**Rennie Harris:** Yeah. Let's put it this way: crazy for hip-hop, not crazy for me.

**Time Out New York: Right. Can you experiment with them more because they're younger?**

**Rennie Harris:** Yeah. I feel like I can do more and the mentality is different. They're younger, and it's not because they're younger that it makes them sharper, but just the way they think is on a different wavelength than the older RHPM dancers. They're just quicker. Everything's quick; everything's instant. They come in and they're of the age of now, now, now. So the return is quicker. I can literally go in and set three different works in a week on these guys; with RHPM, it's just a longer process. It's not that they're not quick, but they're just older and as we both know, as we get older we start to create lots of boundaries and limitations. We need a lot more information. When they're younger, they just do. The questioning is not as much. When you're older, everyone has questions.

**Time Out New York: And they just want to please you as well.**

**Rennie Harris:** Yeah so the process is different. And I like both. RHPM challenges me mentally, and RHAW challenges me viscerally.

**Time Out New York: Do they perform together?**

**Rennie Harris:** RHAW dancers dance with RHPM as part of their training process, so you'll see dancers that are in RHPM and in RHAW—they do both. When they move up, they have to learn the repertory for RHPM and then eventually they'll move completely over. I am working on a piece where all of them are involved and for *Love, American Style*, I may use some RHPM dancers.

**Time Out New York: At the New Victory, the first work is *Brother*. Can you tell me about it?**

**Rennie Harris:** Well, you know honestly there's really nothing to it—most of the stuff I choreograph, there's no plot or no straight narrative; it's just more or less about being respected—that's what the song says, but the movement doesn't necessarily reflect that. The movement is just the movement and to me it's really dance for dance. There's not major narrative.

**Time Out New York: What is the music?**

**Rennie Harris:** I can't even remember right now. *[Laughs]*

**Time Out New York: That's hilarious.**

**Rennie Harris:** If you think about it, I'm choreographing every day. I'm choreographing on other companies, I'm choreographing on students, I'm choreographing on both companies, and I'm creating stuff for a project for me and a collaborator. I just don't remember. Plus it was choreographed three or four years ago.

**Time Out New York: That's fine. Isn't there an excerpt from your dance *Bohemian Rhapsody* on this program?**

**Rennie Harris:** I don't think so...well, here's the thing: RHAW is run by the company manager. I choreograph and then I'm done.

**Time Out New York: Oh! I got it.**

**Rennie Harris:** *[Laughs]* Sorry about that. I don't know the program, I don't know who's going, I don't know even when they go.

**Time Out New York: Are you comfortable giving up that control?**

**Rennie Harris:** Yeah. I had to. I'm 50. At some point, I had to figure out what I'm going to do with the rest of my life. I don't know if I want to spend my next 20 or 30 years before I leave the planet doing this. At the end of the day, I had to slow down and try to enjoy life as much as I can, and this part of it.

**Time Out New York: Take me through your general choreographic process. Do you teach phrases—are you the one in the front of the room?**

**Rennie Harris:** I just come in and start choreographing as if I was teaching a class. I don't think about the music, I don't think about the piece or the narrative or any of that. Once I do the choreography, I'll start to think about the music and creating the blocking and the spacing and the patterns. And after I do that, I go into, Is this dramatic? Is there a narrative in this piece at all? Do I want to create one? If I decide there is a narrative, I start creating the narrative with the dancers after I'm done choreographically and spatially. And drama and production—I think about that. Basically I start off with choreography and then I start to layer and think about other stuff. I can't think about those things too early; it confuses me and stops me from creating. I'll be worried about, Am I following the narrative? If you tell me, "Here's a story; make a piece," I'm not necessarily that good at that. If you give me three or six months, I could probably do it. But in the time that people want work to be created, it just takes me a while. I have to really, really think about it and see if anything comes out of the music or whatever it is.

**Time Out New York: As a former street dancer, when did the word *choreography* enter your vocabulary? When did you put it together that that's what you were doing and that you were good at?**

**Rennie Harris:** We didn't call it *choreography*. We called it *routines*. I didn't know there was a word to describe what I was doing, but I created routines from the time I was 12 or 13 years old with my crew. It wasn't until 1991 that someone actually said the word *choreography* to me—I'd heard it by then, but I never said, "I'm going to choreograph" or "I'm the choreographer." By this time, I already had done commercial tours with rappers. I heard *work* and *commission*, and those two words were actually the ones I didn't know what the hell anyone was



talking about. "So when you do your work..." and I was like, What do you mean about work? When I go to work? I didn't get it. And someone said, "We'll commission you," and I didn't know what that meant. I knew *commissioner*, but that's about it. [Laughs] So in '91 or '92, my vocabulary began to change, but I stayed in context with hip-hop. I didn't use those words with my dancers. I became bilingual. Later, I really made an effort to teach myself the vocabulary of ballet; I was already teaching kids who were taking dance, and so I taught myself plié and chassé and sous-sous and jeté.

**Time Out New York: Did that affect your work?**

**Rennie Harris:** Not at all. At the end of the day, we were doing the same thing. They just have different names for it. It wasn't anything different than me doing the West Coast and doing a move and that move was the same that they do, but they just call it something different. A plié means "bend your knees." [Laughs] Great. So that's pretty much it, but I have to say being bilingual helped when I started to set work on dancers who weren't hip-hop dancers or street dancers. I could explain to them, "This is like when you do so-and-so."

**Time Out New York: When you choreograph, do you invent new movement, or do you focus on new ways to put movement together?**

**Rennie Harris:** Both. Plus, I use old stuff. When I was a kid, I asked [a dancer], "Why are you doing that? That's old shit." And they were like, "Look, there's no such thing as old movement. As long as you do it well, it's good." And I remembered that for some reason as I decided to become a choreographer or realized I was one.

**Time Out New York: Can you give me an example of something old that you use now?**

**Rennie Harris:** Breaking is old. Anything from locking or popping is old. That was in the '70s. Those vocabularies—the majority of it is over 30 years old, but it's still used as if it was brand-spanking-new.

**Time Out New York: Have you seen Lil Buck?**

**Rennie Harris:** I saw a video.

**Time Out New York: Do you have an opinion?**

**Rennie Harris:** From what I've seen, I'm not a big fan. It's just funny how the mainstream jumps on something—how they're the *last* to get something and then all of a sudden, it's this brand-new thing: Lil Buck and Yo-Yo Ma. All the stuff that they are discovering had already been done in the '80s. The first thing they did was juxtaposition as soon as hip-hop became the thing. Do you know how many ballet dancers and modern dancers I've danced with in my time? So not to take from him, because that's great for him. That was more my initial issue—it's about media and Euro-American culture. Like it doesn't exist until they discover it.

**Time Out New York: And until you put a swan on it [Lil Buck's most well-known piece is set to *The Dying Swan*], it doesn't exist.**

**Rennie Harris:** Right. As far as style, I'm trying to decipher. The gliding and the wave—all of that is from funk style, it's from popping, that era. So I haven't been able to really decipher what part of his movement or that particular type of movement is turfing or turf dance or is actually something different, other than a hybrid and a misunderstanding of how to do it. To me, the waves are not—they're weak waves and the gliding is okay, but when I look at other dancers with the same style, it's the same thing and they call it something different. They call it turfing.

But at the end of the day, it is what it is for them. You know what I mean? *[Laughs]* And no one has ever asked me about it. I never have really spoken about it; I don't want to take thunder from these guys, and I don't want to hate, because I'm not hating; I'm just responding to what I'm seeing. If that's a wave, then that wave is not as developed as it should be. If this is a glide, then let's *glide*! It's that kind of thing. It's that kind of thing. Especially when we're moving to an age where street dance is being processed through academia now.

**Time Out New York: This is interesting. After seeing him perform, I understand what you're saying.**

**Rennie Harris:** There are maybe one or two movements where I would say, "Okay, that's different. I can see that as part of the vocabulary." I don't think the vocabulary has completely developed. It's in the same space that hip-hop was in, in '75. And by 1985, it was completely developed. Not completely, but as far as a style—you could see that it was clearly something different even though there was borrowing from others. It borrowed from the styles before it, but then it had its own voice.

**Time Out New York: Do you have a school? Is it something you would want?**

**Rennie Harris:** I don't. It would be nice. I'm not thinking about it though. It's just another...

**Time Out New York: Responsibility?**

**Rennie Harris:** Yeah. And I could do it, but I'm just saying that it's a monster. You have to make sure that you're prepared for it. It feels like we should have a school.

**Time Out New York: Why does concert dance work for you? Or does it?**

**Rennie Harris:** Oh, it doesn't really. That's the problem. Everyone's like, "Rennie's hard to deal with—he's difficult." And it's not that, it's just that I'm willing to speak your language, but you're not willing to speak my language. I have to do things the way they would want it done before I can get cookie. And it's not the way I'm used to working, which is fine, but again I'm the one that has to cover my ass all the time. They get upset if they say, "I need a photo," and I say, "I haven't signed a contract." But we have to sign a contract! So the concept of that doesn't work. I'm in hip-hop, which is like being in an industry—it's business. They get upset about that kind of stuff because they think that you're...I have to call people and say, "I'm not coming until I get my itinerary" or "I'm not coming until I get the contract. I already bought the flight." They get upset. I had someone say, "Well Rennie, it's like you don't trust us," and I had to say, "I *don't* trust you. I don't know you! How can I trust you?" It's like, What are you talking about? It's that kind of stuff. Basic business stuff where everything is peace and love and hippie; then you get someone who says, "I need my per diem in cash when I get there, and I need to have my money at the end." They think you're being a diva, but really you're like, "No, it's business."

**Time Out New York: Why is it so difficult to put hip-hop in a theater? So much concert hip-hop is unsuccessful because it seems like choreographers look at the stage two-dimensionally. It's flat. That's not what I see when I see your work. So what are some of the issues in putting hip-hop on a conventional stage?**

**Rennie Harris:** The first issue is them. *[Laughs]* They're not willing to do something different. They're taking hip-hop and presenting it in a traditional manner. And that's the traditional way, where it's flat and, as you say, two-dimensional, and it's more about the dynamics and the tricks. So that's one. And they want to all be on ten. If hip-hop was on a scale from one to ten, the best would be ten, but no one wants to explore one or two. So because they're unwilling to be less—they feel like if they dance less, people will think they're wack or not good dancers.

Where we would often do a show and then go into the lobby and battle because they think our show was wack because we weren't killing it. Do you know what I mean? *[Laughs]* So one is the mentality and culture of hip-hop. Now hip-hop can be anywhere—we can be in a parking lot or wherever, but the one thing I think, and I don't know why because by law, they should adapt to the theater. Every other place, they will adapt to. You can be in a parking lot, and they'll be flipping off the cars; you could be in a place where there's just a wall, and they'd be flipping off the wall. They use everything around them, but when they get in a theater, for some reason, they think that just being onstage is hip-hop in the theater versus the marriage of hip-hop and theater.

**Time Out New York: How do you do that?**

**Rennie Harris:** You have to marry the movement, and you have to use the elements around you, which are the lights, the production, the whole nine. Now some of them do that, but they still do it in a traditional hip-hop fashion. They don't take it past anything that's abstract. Everything is right in your face. If they don't get it, they don't get it. I have people tell me—there are hip-hop cats in New York who can't see *Rome and Jewels* [Harris's award-winning dance based on *Romeo and Juliet*] and at the end, say, "That was interesting. I didn't get it though." For me, it's like, How do you not get the story of *Romeo and Juliet*? I can see getting lost in some of the monologue, but how do you not get at least some of it? So it's the mentality, and second they're not willing to push the vocabulary past anything that's, to them, abstract. I've had people call me an abstract choreographer. *[Laughs]*

**Time Out New York: That's funny.**

**Rennie Harris:** I don't think I'm abstract. And here's the other part to this: If they really understood the laws of hip-hop, hip-hop as a concert-dance form would be booming right now in the States. The laws of hip-hop are individuality, creativity and innovation. You cannot go out and do the same shit over. You always have to look to do something different. If they just give back to attempting to be different, then hip-hop dance theater would boom. Then you have another issue—street-dance movement is not made to travel. It was all done in a circle, a cipher, and because of that, it means you have to investigate the movement—the vocabulary of the dance style itself—to figure out what actually will get you across the floor. When you do that, what happens is that it's a lot of fucking work. It's more work than dancing still in one spot. A lot of the dancers who come and dance for me can't believe how hard it is. Their bodies are not ready, they're not conditioned to be able to dance—and on Marley, not a wood floor. So the whole thing starts to change for them because they are having to deal with texture on a floor; the vocabulary is not conducive to traveling across anything. You have to investigate everything—house, locking, popping, breaking, whatever it is. You have to identify movement that's going to allow you to travel across the floor. Once you do that then you can create movement. It's the actual process of using the space, and it's harder for them because the movement is not conducive to it. The only style that is conducive to possibly utilizing that space properly would be breaking and that is done in a circle. And literally all the movement is done in a circle; it never goes laterally.

**Time Out New York: Did it take a while to figure that out?**

**Rennie Harris:** Yes. The one thing I did know was to use the space. But I got that from hip-hop, because we always used the space we were in. We adapted to the situation we were in. So I figured, How do I adapt to the situation, my environment in this theater? And how do I take advantage of the theater? When I saw people up there doing modern dance, and they were breathing and huffing and puffing and standing in one spot and doing minimal movement, I remember thinking, Wow, how much did he get paid to do this? I can do nothing and breathe. And once I realized that, I was like, It's on. If I could, I'd be a fucking Butoh artist and not move at all, but because I'm hip-hop, I do want

to bring it at a certain point. Closer to the end of shows, it like, Okay, let's go all out. But at the end of the day when I realized that you can have some good shit and people buy into your minimalist movement, man, you're right on track. You don't have to do anything. That's a good day for me. One of the things that happened with me was that I stopped being afraid of losing. And once I stopped being afraid of losing, I was able to move forward. I'm not afraid of anyone saying, "That's wack," because I know that we can battle, and then we'll see how wack I am. You don't have to like what I'm doing, but you will *know* that I come from it. I do have the right to play with it as I want. It's better than having a modern dancer say, "I'm hip-hop," when they're not. It's better to have me than have someone who doesn't come from the culture. My thing is as long as you know your history, you should be good. You have the right to do whatever you want. When you know the history, that means you're acknowledging all of those people who created it. That's more or less the issue. You can do what you want. And that's the problem we're having with this commercial stuff.

**Time Out New York: In what sense?**

**Rennie Harris:** No one wants to talk about the pioneers—they'll talk about them in private or at a certain event, but they're not going to talk about them on television. Even Michael Jackson didn't tell them the names. He just said, "Some street kids."

**Time Out New York: Were you pleased with *Home*, the piece you made for Alvin Ailey?**

**Rennie Harris:** No. I thought it was all right. I had a lot more work to do. Here's the deal, and it's not fair to say it specifically about *Home*, but I don't like pretty much anything that I do. When I put it up, it's never the time for it to go up. I'm always under pressure to put stuff up. I'm always under pressure to get things done, and at the beginning when I started Rennie Harris Puremovement, there was no pressure. We didn't have any gigs. I just created, and that's why I feel I came up with my best stuff. So I've never really liked most of the stuff I've choreographed. It's just hard. It's that pressure of trying to get it done. With Ailey, they did hook me up and give me a longer time. I had a month, which was great. And it was the best it was going to be in that month. But it could have been better; I could have gotten the dancers to be better. And they were at the best of their game. That group did it very quickly. It's okay. I like it. But I'm not really happy.

**Time Out New York: I know what you're saying, but it was still wonderful. It was good to see the company trying something different.**

**Rennie Harris:** That's the thing: It's good for their audience. And I often feel like what I have to say—my ex used to tell me as I came out of a show, somebody would say, "Did you like that?" And I'd be like, "It was the worst shit I've ever seen in my entire life." My ex used to say, "You can't do that to people!" [Laughs] "You burst their bubble!" So I learned to dip out before the show was over so that I couldn't tell them the truth because I can't lie. I figure if they don't see me, I won't be caught trying to lie to them, and I realized that everybody's story is their story. My story is the story that I created, but even though I have a story, you interpret the story totally different—unless I'm spoon-feeding you some Broadway stuff. Other than that, your experience is different. I had to realize, Wow—people see what they see, and I have to accept that. It's not about what I see. It's only what I see in the beginning when I'm creating it. So I get that and I realize it was about the audience having a different experience with them than they were used to having.

**Time Out New York: For you, being in the studio is the best part.**

**Rennie Harris:** Yes, the moment of creation—the aha moment—is the best part. After that, I’m done. I don’t even care about lighting, I don’t care about costumes. I don’t do that. People ask, “What do you want for lighting?” I have no clue. You make it up. You’re the lighting designer. If you ask me, I want a credit for it. *[Laughs]* If I tell you what I think about it, I want to be credited for lighting, I want to be credited with costume. Don’t ask me. I don’t go and ask people, “What do you want me to do?” I don’t ask the lighting designer what I should do for choreography. If you’re calling yourself a designer, you’re an artist. Do what you do. As long as I like it...at the end of the day, I say yes or no and that’s the best I can do.

**Time Out New York: Why is hip-hop a universal movement language?**

**Rennie Harris:** I don’t think it’s specifically about hip-hop. I think anything that allows you a freedom or a voice is universal. Before Fosse, Luigi and Jack Cole and Gus [Giordano], and when jazz was just jazz—a street dance—it was free. What we see today in jazz is no freedom. So it’s that freedom and when kids feel that freedom—what it was supposed to be—it’s the same spirit coming back to remind us that we have freedom of choice and freedom of voice. It comes back with different generations, but it’s the same message: You’re free. Whether it’s with rock & roll or rhythm and blues or the new version of the polka. *[Laughs]* Kids are susceptible to that because they know what that is. The idea of having limits on them doesn’t make sense to them. They have no limits, they have no fear; they just go. As adults, we develop all that stuff.

**Time Out New York: Do you look for that lack of fear in your dancers?**

**Rennie Harris:** No, I actually look for people who are committed. Professional. I tell them, “I’ll hire you for being professional, not because you have the skill set.” You can teach a monkey to dance, but I don’t know if you can teach a monkey to be professional. You call me when you say you’re going to call me, you be there when you say you’re going to be there and you communicate to me when you can’t, and then I’m onboard with you and I’ll teach you everything that I know.

**Time Out New York: Are you a tough boss?**

**Rennie Harris:** I don’t think so. They may think so. I give them so many chances that they wrap themselves up in the rope that I gave them and kidnap themselves. By the time I come down to fire them, they’re like, “You’re right.” *[Laughs]*

**Time Out New York: What else are you working on?**

**Rennie Harris:** Other than *Love, American Style*, I’m working on *Heaven*, which I’ve already mounted three times. I’m still working on it. It’s an all-B-girl piece to *Rite of Spring*, and it’s about a young girl who tells the story of her grandparents. The grandfather was so in love with heaven that the grandmother killed him so he could go to heaven. We won’t really see all that; he does get sacrificed and that’s how the story starts off and basically you see the chase and you see the grandmother when they were in love and when she has him killed.

**Time Out New York: Wow. Is that coming here?**

**Rennie Harris:** I would love it to. I have to get people to buy into it so we’ll see.

**Time Out New York: Plus, there aren’t so many opportunities for women in hip-hop as far as I can tell. I would really love to see this piece. Why did you decide to make a piece for all women?**

**Rennie Harris:** I did the same thing with *Facing Mekka*. There are guys in it, like three or four, but something like nine women and for me, I think it was just something different to do. And then to do it from a perspective of different understanding of a weight distribution and different understanding of application and movement. And the other thing was that we've always had women in the company, but most of the work was male-driven; especially in the beginning, it came from a male perspective although we had six women and three guys at the very beginning in '91. It was sort of like get-in-where-you-fit-in kind of thing. And then I started to make work that was specific to women. Or I felt like I wanted all women in a particular piece as a different way of challenging choreography. It was something different. There are two reasons why the idea of women and hip-hop is not as prominent as it should be. One is media and the world we live in and society. That's what we sell: We sell women, and we sell things. We objectify women to be a thing. And so that goes with the territory in regard to media and mainstream and popular culture. Second, I think the dynamics of women are different. Again, it's society. I had many women who stopped dancing for me because they got pregnant and had a baby, had a family and were convinced, Okay, I shouldn't do this anymore because blah, blah, blah. It wasn't about hip-hop; it was just, I have a family now—I have to be serious. Or I'm going to school. I have to get serious. And those societal pressures that are put on us culturally I think have a *lot* to do with it, and with men, for us we have the Johnny Appleseed mentality: I'm just going to travel and I'm going to do what I want to do. Culturally and as far as gender is concerned, we're just raised with different perspectives and different beliefs, and I think that all has to play a part in it. I've seen women in hip-hop all my life. I still see it. But the issue is that no one's taken a full stance and said, "Look, let's do this and there IS life after a baby. What are you talking about?" In France or overseas, you definitely see it. You see the whole family—the whole family is a hip-hop family breaking in a cipher. I saw the mother, the two kids and the father all breaking.

**Time Out New York:** That's amazing.

**Rennie Harris:** Overseas there's a different understanding. In the States here, no. It's like, I have to be serious now. I have to grow up. Shit, I'm 50 fucking years old, and the cats who are older than me are in their sixties created it. Hip-hop is not youth driven. Hip-hop is an urban thing. People confuse youth culture with urban culture. Or black culture. It's like no. They're two different things. If that's the case, there wouldn't be anybody over 50 in hip-hop. And most of those rappers are. No one's saying anything, but they are. *[Laughs]* But at the end of the day, again, it's a bigger issue than hip-hop. And I'm not making excuses for anything. It's a bigger issue, and it's an issue that can always be talked about as part of this beginning process to understanding and how to resolve it if we can do that as a society.

**Time Out New York:** Where would you like to perform that you haven't?

**Rennie Harris:** Dubai.

**Time Out New York:** That is such a great answer.

**Rennie Harris:** *[Laughs]* I came close once. It was around the time we went to war. We were booked to go to Dubai; we were in London performing and I was like, Shit we're going to Dubai. *All* my friends went to Dubai in the '80s and '90s to perform and they were like, "Man, you are like a king over there." It has always been my fantasy. They canceled that trip and it never came back around. I know I haven't been everywhere. But I feel like I have.



Tuesday, May 21, 2013

## Rennie Harris's RHAW at the New Victory



I first saw Rennie Harris perform in Philadelphia in 1993. He was pure magic then, taking street dancing to a higher and purer level than I'd ever seen. He had a real gift, both as a performer raising the energy and the heat in the room by about 50 degrees just by stepping on the stage.

I've seen his company a few times since, and each time I've been amazed. He continues to grow as a choreographer, and to build on his own personal strengths as a dancer, and to impart them on his company members.



His latest show **RHAW** (Rennie Harris Awe-inspiring Works) which is now appearing at the New Victory is the culmination of his work. RHAW started as an organization when young dancers came to Rennie hoping to be in his company. Not having a place for all of them, he created another outlet whose mission has since become to serve urban youth by preserving hip-hop dance culture, teaching its members professionalism, show production, street dance history and technique in various styles of movement including Campbell Locking, Popping & Boogaloo, Bboy/girl, House and Hip-hop. The organization has also become a performance company in its own right, showcasing the future Rennie Harris's.

The show features 9 very talented young dancers, and will feature 3 works choreographed by Rennie: "Brother," an emotional performance about less fortunate male figures in society who are often judged and condemned; "Three B Boys & A Girl," a love story told through nontraditional break dancing vocabulary; and an excerpt from "Bohemian Rhapsody," a dance musical featuring music by Queen, which tells a coming-of-age story about one young man's search for love, identity and justice.



Additional numbers in the show include the memorable "110th Street," featuring music by Bobby Womack and Peace, and "JAM/Hip Hop Bows," an ode to Michael Jackson choreographed by Rodney Hill that utilizes popping and hip-hop social dances of the 80s and 90s to create a buoyant show finale that summarizes the foundation and core of RHAW—youthful, energetic and ready at a moment's notice.

RHAW performs at the New Victory through May 26. Go here to get tickets.  
Find out more about RHAW: <http://www.rennieharrisrhaw.org/>



# The New York Times

## THE Arts

### So Powerful, It Stands In For Sound And Light

They could almost be dancing for one another, these kids on the street, in a club. Except that their circle is open at the front and they face outward, performing for the audience. Each gets a turn in the middle, and at first

**BRIAN** what they do isn't that impressive. But it builds, and soon enough the dancers are

**SEIBERT** balancing on their heads with legs like angular sculptures, swinging their arms like nutcrackers, creating strobe-light effects without strobe lights — inspiring awe.

Rennie Harris RHAU, which opened a run at the New Victory Theater on Friday, is the training company for Rennie Harris Puremovement, the Philadelphia-based troupe that has shown, better than any other, how hip-hop can bloom as concert dance. The acronym stands for Rennie Harris Awe-Inspiring Works, but what's most remarkable about the nine pieces on the New Victory program, mostly choreographed in 2010 by Mr. Harris, is how they don't settle for eliciting gasps.

There is more to them, that is, than showing off. The vocabulary embraces not just the full historical paucity of hip-hop styles but also salsa, tap and a veritable array of moving techniques nearly as old as the city itself. The music ranges from rock to Latin-jazz to smooth jazz. One song sounded like a Scottish reel.

The composition can be sophisticated, many-layered, opening up that circle further. In the funky "Brother," groups keep forming out of other groups, and their passage in and out of the wings suggests, as with some of the Trisha Brown dances, a field of action wider than we can see.

The hints of narrative in these works are foggy. In "Three B-Boys & a Girl,"

Performances run through Sunday at the New Victory Theater, 209 West 42nd Street, Manhattan; (846) 223-3010, newvictory.org.



**Rennie Harris RHAU** More than pyrotechnics: clockwise from top left, Joshua Culbreth; Shaheek Westbrook (left) and Brandyn S. Harris; Phillip Cutino Jr.; and, from left, Mr. Harris, Korie Cruz and Mr. Cutino at the New Victory Theater. The troupe, whose choreography blends hip-hop with salsa and other styles, performs through Sunday.

the relationships among the titular cast members are underdeveloped, though the opportunities for pasodoble occasion some gorgeous slow-motion cartwheel. The excerpt from "Peace and Love" is mystifying, but in a promising and unsettling experiment, a section of house dancing in the work is set to the chaos of traffic noise. In the dancers' bounce, you can see the missing beat. Acting is one area in which the inexperience of these talented young dancers

legues are excellent, too. Nekia French, the girl with the munchie arms, is fine.

Brandyn S. Harris, son of the choreographer, shares his father's ability to turn the hydraulic action of popping into something through which dark emotions course. The younger Mr. Harris is at the center of "Rahmama Rahmama," another excerpt and a dark-tinted point in a largely bright and family-friendly program. The music is by Queen, and

one revelation is how well popping fits a guitar solo. We see Brandyn get caught and cuffed. We see the compositional potential of a police lineup.

Although the dance turns cartoony, this snippet is tantalizing. That's a quality it shares with many of the excerpts from longer works, usually labeled "in progress," that the choreographer has brought to New York in recent years. Mr. Harris's work is important, and the city should be able to see it in full.

**ONLINE: SLIDE SHOW**  
More photos of the performance:  
[nytimes.com/dance](http://nytimes.com/dance)

ers shows. Yet in Raphael Williams's "10th Street," the dancer Shaheek Westbrook is able to project the aggression that is meant to motivate his dancing, which is marvelously elastic. His col-

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANJELICA GERVANTES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

# The New York Times

DANCE REVIEW

## So Powerful, It Stands in for Sound and Light

Rennie Harris RHAW, at the New Victory Theater

By BRIAN SEIBERT

Published: May 20, 2013

They could almost be dancing for one another, these kids, on the street, in a club. Except that their circle is open at the front and they face outward, performing for spectators. Each gets a turn in the middle, and at first what they do isn't that impressive. But it builds, and soon enough the dancers are balancing on their heads with legs like angular sculptures, swinging their arms like nunchucks, creating strobe-light effects without strobe lights — inspiring awe.

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There is more to them, that is, than showing off. The vocabulary embraces not just the full historical panoply of hip-hop styles but also salsa, tap and vernacular moves dating back nearly a century. The music ranges from pop to rock to Latin-tinged smooth jazz. One song sounded like a Scottish reel.

The composition can be sophisticated, many-layered, opening up that circle further. In the funky “Brother,” groups keep forming out of other groups, and their passage in and out of the wings suggests, as with some Trisha Brown dances, a field of action wider than we can see.

The hints of narrative in these works are foggier. In “Three B-Boys & a Girl,” the relationships among the titular cast members are underdeveloped, though the opportunities for peacocking occasion some gorgeous slow-motion cartwheels. The excerpt from “Peace and Love” is mystifying, but in a promising and unsettling experiment, a section of house dancing in the work is set to the chaos of traffic noise. In the dancers’ bounce, you can see the missing beat.

Acting is one area in which the inexperience of these talented young dancers shows. Yet in Raphael Williams’s “110th Street,” the dancer Shafeek Westbrook is able to project the aggression that is meant to motivate his dancing, which is marvelously elastic. His colleagues are excellent, too. Neka French, the girl with the nunchuck arms, is fierce.

Brandyn S. Harris, son of the choreographer, shares his father’s ability to turn the hydraulic action of popping into something through which dark emotions course. The younger Mr. Harris is at the center of “Bohemian Rhapsody,” another excerpt and a dark-tinged point in a largely bright and family-friendly program. The music is by Queen, and one revelation is how well popping fits a guitar solo. We see Brandyn get caught and cuffed. We see the compositional potential of a police lineup.

Although the dance turns cartoony, this snippet is tantalizing. That’s a quality it shares with many of the excerpts from longer works, usually labeled “in progress,” that the choreographer has brought to New York in recent years. Mr. Harris’s work is important, and the city should be able to see it in full.

## Rah-rah-rah for family-friendly RHAW

By LEIGH WITCHEL

**R**HAW (Rennie Harris Awe-Inspiring Works) is a training ground for dancers aiming for the Philadelphia-based choreographer's main troupe. He's conceived a high-

energy revue aimed not just at the teenager wearing jeans slung halfway down his boxers, but the whole family.

Most of the show is hip-hop and funk, but it also includes Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody" and, for the finale, Michael Jackson tunes. A few of the nine numbers have a story, but there isn't an overall plot.

The team of six women and five guys start out in a semicircle, as if it were a street corner. Each one takes a turn at the center, showing off his or her best moves. Harris'

son, Brandyn, bigger and taller than the others, seems like an unofficial leader. His specialty is a robot walk that suddenly shakes like he's been short-circuited.

The friendly competition ends up being a lexicon of hip-hop dance, from popping and breaking to voguing, and one of the most interesting things about the show is comparing the different styles. The kids in the audience loved the headstands and gymnastics, but screamed for the robot. For nostalgic grown-ups, a couple during the finale even snuck in the hustle.

Anger and violence are downplayed, but not scrubbed out. "Bohemian Rhapsody" includes a perp walk for the younger Harris. At the start and finish, he gets marched slowly toward the front, hands pinned be-

hind his back. It's handled like a dream — he breaks free and slowly marches away. The message isn't hammered home.

If the show doesn't preach, sometimes it could. In one number, all the women dance, ignoring the guys who spin and pop through them, trying to come on to them; but nothing's explored in the tension between the sexes. It evaporates into more dancing.

The show's weakness is that the numbers with a story look pretty much like the numbers without one, and that makes things drag toward the end. But then, everyone re- turns in trios and quartets. Each little group dances in unison — kind of. All the dancers are doing the same steps, but with their own style.

And that's what carries the show: the individual touches of each performer sparking within the team effort.



Brian Mengini

Shafiek Westbrook's hip-hop moves are a hands-down (hand-down?) favorite with kids.

### DANCE REVIEW

#### RHAW

The New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St.; 646-223-2010. Through Sunday. Running time: 75 minutes, one intermission.

## Rah-rah-rah for family-friendly RHAW

### DANCE REVIEW

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# The Star-Ledger

## TODAY

### Finding art and grace in the world of hip-hop

**NEW YORK** — "Keeping it real" has become an elusive goal for hip-hop artists, whose art is increasingly threatened by mainstream acceptance. How can a gangsta preserve his outlaw status when they're breakdancing in Topeka and the whole world wants to give him a hug?

For a while, choreographer Renne Harris thought he had the answer. He would exchange the urban No Man's Land for the concert stage, trading bullet holes and broken glass for grant applications. Modern dance is an outsider art, too, but one that promises to remain safely noncommercial. It confers prestige, yet allows the artist to keep his gimlet-eyed view of the world.

With "Rhaw," the company Harris introduced at the New Victory Theater on Friday, however, the choreographer seems to be taking a new direction. Despite the title, there is nothing unpurified about this show. With its multiracial cast of eager-to-please young men and women engaged in performing slick routines, "Rhaw" is 1 percent "AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted" and 99 percent "Jerome Robbins' Broadway."

Instead of hiring a deejay, Harris has assembled a musical score that ranges from world beat to Queen ("Bohemian Rhapsody") and from Latin house to Michael

ON DANCE  
**Robert Johnson**



Jackson. We are a long way from Harris' "Philadelphia Experiment," a reflection on police brutality and the legacy of slavery created in 2007 for Philadanco.

This choreographer's integrity shines through, however, both in the way he encourages his cast members' individuality and in the legerdemain with which he manages transitions and juggles the stage picture.

The show's roster contains some powerful talents. Chief among them is Shafek Westbrook, who has an uncanny ability to fold his body while balancing on one hand. Neka French glides with born ease. Phillip Cuttino Jr. lends his dancing a comic edge. Harris' son, Brandyn, has a towering physical presence that recalls his father.

After the opening circle dance, the traffic moves steadily across the stage, with different groups forming in juxtaposition to capture the viewer's attention. Dancers make sly entrances, insinuating themselves



BRIAN MENGINI  
**Shafek Westbrook, who has an uncanny ability to fold his body while balancing on one hand, stars in Rennle Harris' "Rhaw" at the New Victory Theater in New York.**

in situations that suddenly acquire dramatic weight. That's what happens in "Three B-Boys & a Girl — Part 1," when French's appearance reorganizes a male trio, drawing

#### Rhaw

**Where:** New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St., New York  
**When:** Friday at 7 p.m., Saturday at 2 and 7 p.m., Sunday at noon and 5 p.m.  
**How much:** \$14 to \$36; call (646) 223-3010 or visit [newvictory.org](http://newvictory.org).

Westbrook away from his buddies and subtly throwing the group off-balance. To Harris' credit, he can depict these events without stereotyping French as a femme fatale. She's able to hold her own and eventually integrates herself into the group on equal terms with the men.

Brandyn Harris bears the weight of social commentary, such as it is, in a skit in which he is caught and escorted, hands behind his back, to a place where he kneels and pleads for freedom. Yet darkness quickly gives way to high spirits, with a succession of brightly colored backdrops and flashy silhouettes as the cast slides, vibrates and spins its way to hip-hop nirvana.

And why not? Despite all the exposure and the dance studios offering classes in popping and locking, "Hip-Hop: The Musical" is still waiting to be born.

**Robert Johnson:**  
[rjohnson76@nyc.rr.com](mailto:rjohnson76@nyc.rr.com)



# The Star-Ledger

## Rhaw, yet refined: Rennie Harris' new hip hop company debuts on Broadway



By [Robert Johnson/The Star-Ledger](#)

on May 21, 2013 at 9:53 AM, updated May 21, 2013 at 10:09 AM



The cast of Rhaw, by Rennie Harris *Brian Mengini*

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How can a gangsta preserve his outlaw status when they're breakdancing in Topeka and the whole world wants to give him a hug?

For a while, choreographer **Rennie Harris** thought he had the answer. He would exchange the urban No Man's Land for the concert stage, trading bullet holes and broken glass for grant applications. Modern dance is an outsider art, too, but one that promises to remain safely noncommercial. It confers prestige, yet allows the artist to keep his gimlet-eyed view of the world.

With "**Rhaw**," the company Harris introduced at the New Victory Theater on Friday, however, the choreographer seems to be taking a new direction. Despite the title, there is nothing unpolished about this show. With its multiracial cast of eager-to-please young men and women engaged in performing slick routines, "Rhaw" is 1 percent "AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted" and 99 percent "Jerome Robbins' Broadway."

Instead of hiring a deejay, Harris has assembled a musical score that ranges from world beat to Queen ("Bohemian Rhapsody") and from Latin house to Michael Jackson. We are a long way from Harris' "Philadelphia Experiment," a reflection on police brutality and the legacy of slavery created in 2007 for Philadanco.

This choreographer's integrity shines through, however, both in the way he encourages his cast members' individuality and in the legerdemain with which he manages transitions and juggles the stage picture.

The show's roster contains some powerful talents. Chief among them is Shafeek Westbrook, who has an uncanny ability to fold his body while balancing on one hand. Neka French glides with born ease. Philip Cuttino Jr. lends his dancing a comic edge. Harris' son, Brandyn Harris, has a towering physical presence that recalls his father.

After the opening circle dance, the traffic moves steadily across the stage, with different groups forming in juxtaposition to capture the viewer's attention. Dancers make sly entrances, insinuating themselves in situations that suddenly acquire dramatic weight. That's what happens in "Three B-Boys & a



Girl—Part 1," when French's appearance reorganizes a male trio, drawing Westbrook away from his buddies and subtly throwing the group off-balance. To Harris' credit, he can depict these events without stereotyping French as a femme fatale. She's able to hold her own and eventually integrates herself into the group on equal terms with the men.

Brandyn Harris bears the weight of social commentary, such as it is, in a skit in which he is caught and escorted, hands behind his back, to a place where he kneels and pleads for freedom. Yet darkness quickly gives way to high spirits, with a succession of brightly colored backdrops and flashy silhouettes as the cast slides, vibrates and spins its way to hip-hop nirvana.

And why not? Despite all the exposure and the dance studios offering classes in popping and locking, "Hip-Hop: The Musical" is still waiting to be born.

Robert Johnson: **[rjohnson76@nyc.rr.com](mailto:rjohnson76@nyc.rr.com)**



## IMPRESSIONS OF RENNIE HARRIS RHAW

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Presented by: New Victory Theater, New York, NY

May 17th 2013

Choreographer and CEO of RHAW: Dr. Rennie Harris

Manager and Director: Rodney Hill

Performers: Amaryah Bone, Katia Cruz, Joshua Culbreath, Phillip Cuttino Jr., Neka French, Brandyn S.

Harris, Mai Lê Ho Johnson, Kevin S. Rand, Neha Sharma, Mariah Tlili, Shafeek Westbrook, Davion Brown

For ticket [information](#)

### Stacey Menchel Kussell for *The Dance Enthusiast*



Rennie Harris has a gift for blending the urbanity of the hip-hop experience with the formality of the dance concert stage. The recent performance of RHAW, his junior company, at the New Victory Theater on May 17th was action-packed. Harris curates the show to highlight the talents of his young street dancers, introducing his audience to both the heritage and evolution of the genre.

The show features nine vignettes, each piece a chapter in a hip-hop story. The evening's opener *Continuum* instantly transports the audience to a playground or parking lot where a dance battle is emerging. Encircled by a dancing crowd of their peers, each performer steps forward for a solo and presents their talents to one another as a rite of initiation.

*Continuum* immediately addresses the urban beginnings of the hip-hop form. Each dancer is dressed distinctively in bright sneakers, cargo pants, and jeans, playing a character that develops throughout the show. In this first piece, we are also given a preview of the diversity of street dance vocabulary. The striking Neka French flailing her arms at ninja speed is waacking; Shafeek Westbrook is breaking, fearlessly diving onto one forearm and spinning on his head;

Brandyn S. Harris's electric boogaloo vibrates, rolls, and pops in fits and starts.



The show flows from piece to piece with subtle blackouts, building on its momentum and fusing together different styles of hip-hop choreography. The excerpt from *Brother* has a '70s Motown feel. The jumps and spins reference Campbell locking, coined by Don Campbell of "Soul Train" fame. *Three B-Boys & a Girl* is set in part to Middle-Eastern music, and is potentially inspired by the company's recent residency in Israel and the Palestinian territories.

Although hip-hop is one of the more commercialized dance forms, Harris succeeds in avoiding gimmicks. His nuanced and thoughtful choreography displays athletic bravura, but it is not dominated by tricks. He staggers lines and alternates facings to create a full-bodied stage effect. His compositions emphasize the individualism of each performer instead of masking personal expression with overly synchronized boy band moves.

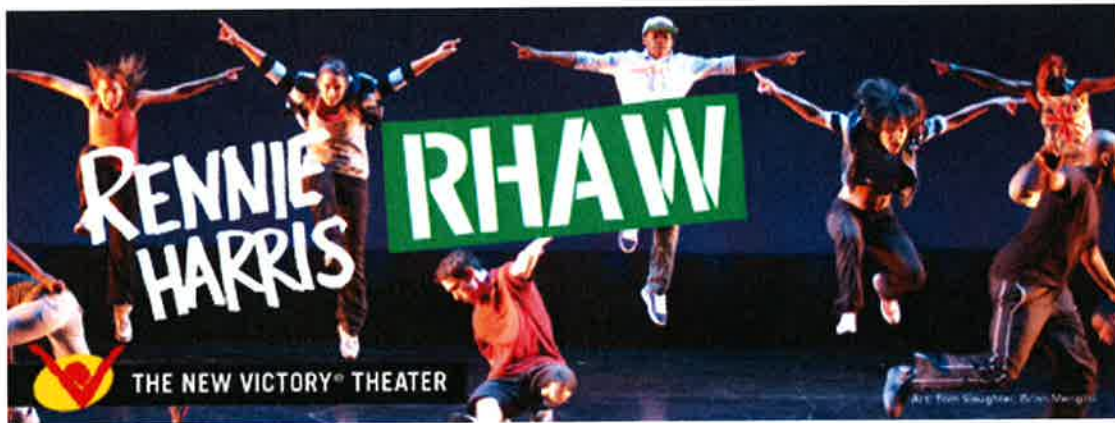
The second act is particularly strong and rich with dramatic content. The excerpt of *Peace and Love* integrates African dance vocabulary and takes the audience to the center of the Civil Rights movement. *110th Street* is a tangible urban tableau, and *El Barrio* features elements from salsa and samba, demonstrating the influence of Latin and Caribbean culture on the hip-hop form. The graceful, effervescent Neha Sharma shines in this piece, and Joshua Culbreath amazes with weightless backflips and countless head spins.

The New Victory Theater chose wisely in presenting RHAW. While the venue is geared toward younger audiences, this show is definitely not just for kids. RHAW is what a hip-hop show should strive to be – sophisticated, celebratory, and inspiring.





## Show Review: Rennie Harris' RHAW – Review by Margaret Hart



Rennie Harris' RHAW, currently playing through May 26th at the New Victory Theater in New York City, is 75 minutes of high energy, hip-hop dance that is exciting, fast-paced, breathtaking, and amazing, and makes you want to get off your seat and move your feet. On the Friday evening when I attended the show, adults were applauding and cheering as each dancer demonstrated their signature moves, and young girls and boys in the audience were bouncing on their heels, and trying to recreate hip-hop moves in the aisles. It was like a party.

The young kids in the audience might not have recognized some of the music ("Bohemian Rhapsody" from Queen), or understood why the adults in the audience were nodding to the lyrics from "Across 110th Street," by Bobby Womack & Peace, but that didn't matter. They were excited by the exhilarating dance movements and the energy and talent on stage. And that's what the New Victory Theatre does so well. It makes shows like RHAW available to all generations. The New Vic is, as stated so well in its promotional materials, "a place where storytellers reign alongside daredevils, puppets, rock stars, break dancers and—most of all—kids."

RHAW's founder, director, and CEO, Dr. Rennie Harris, is an Alvin Ailey Award recipient and a renowned choreographer whose previous works at the New Victory Theatre include Legends of Hip-Hop, and Puremovement. The current production, Rennie Harris Awe-Inspiring Works (RHAW), features a hip-hop dance theater company of talented young

dancers, performing fresh spins on classic street dance styles. The multi-talented cast performs as a group and individually, each displaying their signature dance hip-hop moves. Whether they are performing their “swiping layout,” “popping/boogaloo,” “Halo,” or “WindWalker,” the positions in which they are able to move their bodies, and the speed at which they communicate through dance, are truly awe inspiring.

RHAW features several stories told through dance and music: “Brother,” an emotional performance about less fortunate male figures in society who are often judged and condemned; “Three B Boys & A Girl,” a love story told through nontraditional break dancing vocabulary; and an excerpt from “Bohemian Rhapsody,” which tells a coming-of-age story about one young man’s search for love, identity and justice. Additional numbers include the memorable “110th Street,” and “JAM/Hip Hop Bows,” a grand ode to The King of Pop choreographed by Rodney Hill and featuring music by Michael Jackson.

Dr. Harris founded RHAW in Philadelphia to serve urban youth. RHAW cultivates hip hop culture and preserves its legacy by demonstrating discipline and focus through performance, dance education, outreach programming and mentorship. In a recent article in *Time Out New York*, when asked why hip hop is such a universal movement language, Harris replied: “I don’t think it’s specifically about hip hop. Anything that allows you a freedom or a voice is universal.”

RHAW moves you to feel that freedom. And then some.

To watch a video from RHAW, click on the link below:

<http://www.newvictory.org/Show-Detail.aspx?ProductionId=4292>

#### General Ticket Information

Tickets for RHAW at The New Victory Theatre (209 West 42nd Street) cost \$25, \$18, \$12, and \$9 for Members and \$38, \$28, \$18 and \$14 for Non-members based on seat locations. To purchase tickets online, visit [NewVictory.org](http://NewVictory.org), and to purchase by phone, call [646-223-3010](tel:646-223-3010). The Box Office is open Sunday and Monday from 11am-5pm and Tuesday through Saturday from 12pm-7pm. Tickets are available now for weekend performances through May 26th, 2013.



SOLOMONS SAYS



## ‘RHAW’ MATERIAL



Philadelphia-based hip-hop innovator, Dr. Rennie Harris, most notably turned hip-hop movement in all its many styles into a new language for dramatic expression. RHAW, an hour-long hip-hop show at the New Victory Theater (May 14-26), mixes moves from B-boying, popping, locking, waacking, and voguing styles into a new language that is as definable as ballet but speaks to a whole new generation of viewers.

The title is an acronym for Rennie Harris Awe-inspiring Works, and Harris bills himself as “Dr. Rennie Harris,” as if to elevate hip-hop culture to academic respectability. And he calls himself the founder, director, and CEO of his company Puremovement, of which this show is kind of a subsidiary. Raphael Williams and Crystal Frazier are listed as RHAW’s artistic director and assistant.

The agile crew keeps revealing more facets of their dancing chops; they crouch low, whipping legs around like mix-masters, twirl on their back and shoulders, swing their legs high like gymnasts on the pommel horse. From a standing start, they jump into the air, spin 360-degrees, and land, catlike, on their feet; they twitch their muscles and move like mechanical robots slow as molasses and lightning fast. They flap their arms overhead in that new-fangled semaphore called voguing in startling unison.

Some of the short pieces are excerpted from larger works and some choreographed by others and staged by Harris. The New Vic presents family-friendly attractions. But Harris's work does not talk down to youngsters and can be appreciated equally by audiences of all ages. The dozen performers – half men, half women – dance with the natural joy of kids who've found a passion, and their unforced joy makes it easy to see why they're so inspirational for other youngsters seeing them.

In the opening "Continuum" (conceived in 1997), the cast members introduce themselves by showing us their personal specialties in the center of a circle of the others – the cipher, as it's called – then they exit the stage and return for another round. Harris gave women equal stature with men in hip-hop. What had been a guy's game with a few token women became egalitarian with Harris's introduction of narrative and specific story telling to the form.

In the large group unison passages, six or eight dancers will be steaming along, and out of nowhere someone will do a series of aerial flips, forward or backward, or dive into a one-handed handstand with feet pumping in the air as easily as if they were arms, or do a scary slide on the top of his head. The virtuosity feels more like simply an eruption of exuberance than an applause-grabbing stunt.

The recorded music pumps so loudly you can't even hear when the audience applauds for a spectacular moment or the end of a section. Lighting by David Todaro keeps the mood changing simply but effectively, including some mysterious specials that pick Harris and Brown out of the darkness on their journey across the stage at the start of the "Bohemian Rhapsody" excerpt, set to the famous Queen music.

A big projection tells us the title of the show, as we enter the theater, and a colorful "peace" sign announces the excerpt from "Peace and Love" in the second half of the show. In other places, the cyclorama blazes with color, silhouetting the dancers against it. And the finale is titled "R.H.A.W. Bows." But it takes a while to realize it is the curtain calls, since the volume of the music and the steps, which now pull out all the stops, are indistinct from the rest of the proceedings.

The performers, who don't flaunt even their most gasp-inducing stunts, each have their own particular hip-hop gifts, and they deserve all the cheering they receive. Namely, they are Amaryah Bone, Katia Cruz, Joshua Culbreath, Phillip Cuttino Jr., Neka French, Brandyn S. Harris (Rennie's grown son), Mai Le Ho Johnson, Kevin S. Rand, Neha Sharma, Mariah Tili, and Schafeek Westbrook.

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# HI! DRAMA



EVA HEINEMANN REVIEWS NEW VICTORY'S RHAW AND THE GIRL WHO FORGOT TO SING BADLY

The last 2 offerings at The New Victory were: RHAW -Rennie Harris Awe-inspiring Works which lived up to its name and got down with an appreciative audience. His crew of: Davion Brown, Amarayah Bone, Katia Cruz, Joshua Culbreath, Phillip Cuttino Jr, Neka French, Brandyn S. Harris, Mai Le Ho Johnson, Kevin S. Rand, Neha Sharma, Mariah Tlili, Shafeek Westbrook performed feats of derring-do with their fast flying feet and arms and turned heads with spinning heads and other parts of their popping bodies. They were sassy and joyful and even though it closed May 26th if you ever get a chance to see these remarkable performers just hip hop over there.

Last chance this weekend to see from Ireland: Theatre Lovett's THE GIRL WHO FORGOT TO SING BADLY.

Louis Lovett performs Finegan Kruckmeyer's story of an exceptional packing family of Mom and Dad and only child, Peggy. Their routine is disrupted when the phone doesn't ring due to the fact that the entire city has disappeared and it is up to Peggy to discover why and to save everyone including her parents from the people-hating Peter. Lynn Parker directs this quirky tale with Paul O'Mahony's whimsical crate set with great suspense and excitement. Louis Lovett entralls us with his storytelling abilities.

Great Way to end the Season.



# The New York Times

## SPARETimes

May 17-23

### For Children

**'THE ADVENTURES OF MAYA THE BEE'** (Saturday) This feisty puppet heroine has buzzed back to the Culture Project, where her journey began a dozen years ago, and she's about to buzz out: the show closes on Saturday. Based on a children's book by Waldemar Bonsels, "The Adventures of Maya the Bee" relates the title character's flight in search of tastes more exotic than honey. The revival has new sets and props, but the same intricate rod and shadow puppets designed by Zofia Czechiewska. Adapted by Rachel Klein, with a score and lyrics by the jazz artist Nancy Harrow, "Maya" is a jazz musical for children, and how often do you encounter those? At 10:30 a.m., 45 Bleecker Street, near Lafayette Street, East Village, (888) 811-4111, cultureproject.org; \$25.

**'FAIRY DAY: ENCHANTED FAIRIES & ELVES'** (Saturday) Little people from folklore and myth will entertain little people of the human variety in this program, part of the Stories for All Ages series from Battery Park City Parks Conservancy. The storyteller Rita Auerbach will share legends about fairies and elves from around the world, after which children can make their own wings and build small homes — from materials like twigs, moss, flowers and acorns — that might attract some of the tiny visitors they've just heard about. At 11 a.m., Teardrop Park, accessible from Warren or Murray Street, Battery Park City, Lower Manhattan, (212) 267-9700, bpcparks.org; free.

**'JUNIE B. JONES'** (Sunday) Junie encounters several firsts in this show, including first grade and her first pair of glasses, but it is definitely not her first time onstage. Theatreworks/USA has revived its hourlong musical adaptation (with book and lyrics by Marcy Heister and music by Zina Goldrich) of the book series by Barbara Park. At 3 p.m., TriBeCa Performing Arts Center, Borough of Manhattan Community College, 199 Chambers Street, near Greenwich Street, (212) 220-1460, tribecapac.org; \$25; \$15 for 10Club members.

**KIDS 'N COMEDY: 'MONS AND DADS SHOW'** (Sunday) The class clown gets applause, not detention, at this series, in which tween and teenage comics perform stand-up. At this show the young performers will explore a topic always worthy of a laugh: Mom and Dad, and their embarrassing habits, tastes and displays of affection. The material is recommended for children 9 and older. Reservations required. At 1 p.m., Gotham Comedy Club, 208 West 23rd Street, Chelsea, (212) 877-4115, kidsnocomedy.com; \$15, with a one-item (soda or food) minimum.

**LOCO-MOTION DANCE THEATER FOR CHILDREN** (Saturday) When a troupe has a name like this, you know you can expect plenty of movement. But the dancers and choreographers, ages 5 to 18, also have lots of ideas. Their dozen original works have themes including the monster under the bed, relationships among vintage cartoon characters and the effects of technology on interpersonal communication. At 7 p.m., Miller Theater, Broadway at 116th Street, Morningside Heights, (212) 979-6124, loco-motiondance.theatre.org; \$15; \$10 for children.

**MONTFLORE TEDDY BEAR HOSPITAL** (Saturday) Hospitals aren't known for being fun, but this event promises to offer plenty of cheer while also educating young visitors about emergency room procedures in a nonscary setting. Children are invited to bring their teddies and other stuffed animals — those that are sick and injured, that is — to Montflore Medical Center, where the toy patients will experience triage and treatment. The day will also include a tour of the emergency department; a chance to explore an ambulance; safety information from firefighters and police officers; and refreshments and giveaways. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Wakefield Hospital, Montflore, 600 East 233rd Street, Wakefield, the Bronx, (800) 636-6663, montflore.org/community-events; free.

**NEW YORK CITY BALLET FAMILY SATURDAY** (Saturday) Children who know New York City Ballet mainly for its "Nutcracker" performances can see other sides of the repertory in this hourlong workshop, which introduces those 5 and older to classical dance. This program, to be hosted by the company soloist and choreographer Justin Peck, will feature dance excerpts complementing this final weekend of the troupe's American Music Festival, with selections from pieces like Balanchine's "Stars and Stripes," Robbins's "West Side Story Suite" and Mr. Peck's "In Crosses." At 11 a.m., David H. Koch Theater, Lincoln Center, (212) 496-8600, nycballet.com/educate; \$20.

**'RENNIE HARRIS' RHAW'** (Friday through Sunday) RHAW stands for Rennie Harris Awe-Inspiring Works, and that's just what this noted hip-hop choreographer plans to bring to the New Victory Theater. The young dancers in his company will perform a varied program, including an excerpt from Dr. Harris's "Bohemian Rhapsody," a coming-of-age production done to the music of Queen, and Rodney Hill's "JAM/Hip Hop Bows," a dance celebration of Michael Jackson that features Jackson's music. (Through May 30.) Fridays at 7 p.m.; Saturdays at 2 and 7 p.m.; Sundays at noon and 6 p.m., 209 West 42nd Street, Manhattan, (646) 223-3010, newvictory.org; \$14 to \$38; \$8 to \$25 for members.

**'SING-A-LONG-A "SOUND OF MUSIC"'** (Sunday) There will be a lot more do-re-mi's than those trilled by Julie Andrews in this screening of the 1965 classic "Sound of Music." Viewers are encouraged to come in costumes (the event will include a costume contest) and prepared to sing. A host will give everyone bags of props to use during the film, which will be shown with subtitles (so not recalling the lyrics is no excuse). At 1 p.m., Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, Brooklyn College, Flatbush and Metrand Avenues, Flatbush, (718) 951-4500, brooklyncenter.com; \$15.

**SOLAR ONE FAMILY DAY: N.Y.C. WILDFLOWER WEEK INTERACTIVE PLANT FAIR** (Saturday) Color a plant, pot a plant, portray a plant — they're all possible in this celebration for ages 3 and older at Solar One, the solar energy arts and education center. Part of the city's Wildflower Week (further events are at nycwildflowerweek.org), the day will include making wildflower costumes, potting real wildflowers to take home and putting together wildflower seed bombs: peaceful forms of bombardment consisting of balls of soil and seeds. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Stuyvesant Cove Park, 23rd Street and the East River, Manhattan, (212) 595-6050, solar1.org; free, but registration is advised via an e-mail to daisy@solar1.org or dina@solar1.org.

**SPRING KIDS FEST 2013** (Saturday) Sponsored by the Madison Square Park Conservancy, this annual event offers all the usual pleasures of a park outing, along with a few unusual ones: yoga lessons from Karma Kids Yoga, a visit from Field Station: Dinosaurs and a pie-in-the-face activity with Hill Country Chicken. Other attractions include live music from the band Roie Polie Guacamole and hip-hop from Secret Agent 23 Skidoo. From 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Madison Square Park, 23rd Street between Madison and Fifth Avenues, madisonsquarepark.org; free.

**SUNDAYS UNDER THE WHALE** (Sunday) It's nowhere near as uncomfortable as it sounds: this whale happens to be the artificial one suspended over the Milstein Hall of Ocean Life at the American Museum of Natural History. The hall is the location for this set of family programs in the museum's Milstein Science Series, which this Sunday will also focus on whales. In conjunction with the museum's new exhibition "Whales: Giants of the Deep," young visitors can hear scientists speak about their marine research, learn about whale anatomy and behavior and go inside a 40-foot model of a humpback whale. From 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Central Park West and 79th Street, (212) 769-5200, amnh.org. Free with suggested admission: \$19; \$14.50 for students and 80+; \$10.50 for children; free for members. LAUREL GRAEBER

# The New York Times

## Spare Times for Children for May 17-23

### For Children

**‘Adventures From Ezra Jack Keats’** (Friday through Sunday) Characters of all ethnicities came to modern children’s books largely through the efforts of the beloved author and illustrator Ezra Jack Keats, and now his creations have come to the stage in this inspired production from Tada! Youth Theater, closing this weekend. It consists of a dance-theater adaptation of Keats’s “Apt. 3,” a book about two boys following the haunting music they hear in their tenement, and a musical based on “Maggie and the Pirate,” the story of a girl and her missing pet cricket. Friday at 7 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday at 2 and 4 p.m.; Tada! Theater, 15 West 28th Street, Manhattan, (212) 252-1619, Ext. 5, [tadatheater.com](http://tadatheater.com); \$20; \$8 for 16 and under; \$25 and \$15 for premium seats. Reservations advised. (On Friday the theater is also offering a Parents’ Night Out package, from 5:30 to 9 p.m., in which children can be dropped off for a preperformance theater workshop and pizza party; after the show they meet cast members and play games; \$60; \$55 for Kid Club members; registration required.)

**‘The Adventures of Maya the Bee’** (Saturday) This feisty puppet heroine has buzzed back to the Culture Project, where her journey began a dozen years ago, and she’s about to buzz out: the show closes on Saturday. Based on a children’s book by the German author Waldemar Bonsels, “The Adventures of Maya the Bee” relates the title character’s flight from the hive in search of tastes more exotic than honey. The revival has new sets and props, but the same intricate rod and shadow puppets designed by Zofia Czechlewska. Adapted by Rachel Klein, with a score and lyrics by the jazz artist Nancy Harrow, who also conceived the show, “Maya” is a jazz musical for children, and how often do you encounter those? At 10:30 a.m., 45 Bleecker Street, near Lafayette Street, East Village, (866) 811-4111, [cultureproject.org](http://cultureproject.org); \$25.

**‘Archaeology Zone: Discovering Treasures From Playgrounds to Palaces’** (Friday, Sunday through Tuesday, and Thursday) Children will step into the shoes of an explorer like Indiana Jones in this permanent exhibition at the Jewish Museum, but the adventures will be purely scholarly. Still, there is plenty of excitement in analyzing artifacts like a jar handle, a clay jug and a bangle and figuring out the purpose behind ancient pieces like a Greek helmet and a bull-shaped vessel. This interactive show, for ages 3 to 10, also includes a recreated room from the Ottoman period (about 1900), where young archaeologists can dress in costume. From 11 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.; until 8 p.m. on Thursdays; 1109 Fifth

Avenue, at 92nd Street, [\(212\) 423-3200](tel:2124233200), [thejewishmuseum.org](http://thejewishmuseum.org). Free with admission: \$12; \$10 for 65+; \$7.50 for students; free for under 12 and members; pay what you wish on Thursdays from 5 to 8 p.m.

**Fairy Day: Enchanted Fairies & Elves** (Saturday) Little people from folklore and myth will entertain little people of the human variety in this program, part of the Stories for All Ages series from Battery Park City Parks Conservancy. The storyteller Rita Auerbach will share legends about fairies and elves from around the world, after which children can make their own wings and build small homes — from materials like twigs, moss, flowers and acorns — that might attract some of the tiny visitors they’ve just heard about. At 11 a.m., Teardrop Park, accessible from Warren or Murray Street, Battery Park City, Lower Manhattan, [\(212\) 267-9700](tel:2122679700), [bpcparks.org](http://bpcparks.org); free.

**Field Station: Dinosaurs** (Saturday and Sunday) It’s not unusual to go see giants in the Meadowlands, but some of those attracting visitors to that area of New Jersey this spring won’t wear helmets or play football. Field Station: Dinosaurs, the 20-acre park filled with more than 30 animatronic prehistoric creatures — including a Tyrannosaurus rex, a stegosaurus and a 90-foot-long Argentinosaurus — has reopened. The dinosaurs move when approached, and the three-quarter-mile trail offers other paleontology exhibits and a mock fossil dig. The park has expanded its programs and shows, including a new 23-minute 3-D movie, “Dinosaurs Alive!,” about dinosaur hunting in Mongolia and New Mexico. This Saturday and Sunday are also “Weird Field Station Weekend,” with tours and demonstrations focusing on paleontological oddities. From 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; One Dinosaur Way (off Exit 15X of the New Jersey Turnpike), Laurel Hill Park, Secaucus, N.J., [\(855\) 999-9010](tel:8559999010), [fieldstationdinosaurs.com](http://fieldstationdinosaurs.com). In advance, \$23; \$20.50 for 65+ and ages 3 to 12. At the box office, \$28 and \$23. Free for 2 and under. This Saturday the park is also celebrating Armed Forces Day by offering a 10 percent discount on day passes to all active and retired members of the military (with ID) and their families.

**Film Forum Jr.: ‘Small Change’** (Sunday) Film Forum, the downtown cinema, is now the proud parent of Film Forum Jr., a new series introducing classic movies to children. This week’s film is François Truffaut’s “Small Change” (1976), which chronicles an eventful year in the lives of a group of French schoolchildren. At 11 a.m., 209 West Houston Street, west of Avenue of the Americas, South Village, [\(212\) 727-8110](tel:2127278110), [filmforum.org](http://filmforum.org); \$7.

**‘Flight of the Butterflies’** (Friday through Thursday) It’s easy to think of the graceful creatures that are the subject of this fascinating film as traveling only short distances, flitting from flower to flower. But half a billion monarch butterflies actually migrate 3,000 miles every fall, to Mexico from Canada. A new Imax movie, this project chronicles their journey and the 40-year investigation of it by one impassioned scientist, Fred A. Urquhart. (Visitors can also see as many as 500 free-flying real butterflies in the special exhibition “The Butterfly Conservatory: Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter,” through May 27.) The film runs through July 7, hourly, from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., American Museum of Natural History, Central

Park West and 79th Street, (212) 769-5200, [amnh.org](http://amnh.org). Included in Museum Plus One admission (general admission and one Imax film or special exhibition): \$25; \$19 for students and 60+; \$14.50 for ages 2 to 12. Member tickets: \$12.50; \$8 for children.

**‘Gazillion Bubble Show: The Next Generation’** (Friday through Sunday, and Wednesday) Children love bubbles, and this interactive show promises not just a gazillion but also some of the largest ever blown, along with light effects and lasers. The stars are the members of the Yang family: Fan and Ana Yang and their son Deni and others, who rotate as M.C.’s for the production. Audience members may even find themselves in bubbles of their own. (The run is open-ended.) Friday at 7 p.m.; Saturday at 11 a.m. and 2 and 4:30 p.m.; Sunday at noon and 3 p.m.; Wednesday at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.; New World Stages, 340 West 50th Street, Clinton, (212) 239-6200, [gazillionbubbleshow.com](http://gazillionbubbleshow.com); \$44.50 to \$99.50; lap seats for ages 2 and under are \$20, cash only, at the box office.

**‘Hatched’** (Friday and Sunday) Field trips sometimes take city children to farms, but this piece, closing on Sunday, will take the farm to the children. Written by Mara McEwin and presented by the troupe Treehouse Shakers, this production for the youngest theatergoers — infants to 6-year-olds — uses dance, storytelling and handmade puppets to recreate the experience of a chick breaking out of its shell and encountering other animals, including a rooster, a calf, a lamb and baby birds. At 11 a.m., Ailey Studio Theater, 405 West 55th Street, Clinton. Information: (212) 715-1914, [treehouseshakings.com](http://treehouseshakings.com); \$22.

**‘Junie B. Jones’** (Sunday) Junie encounters several firsts in this show, including first grade and her first pair of glasses, but it is definitely not her first time onstage. Theatreworks/USA has revived its hourlong musical adaptation (with book and lyrics by Marcy Heisler and music by Zina Goldrich) based on the adventures of the enterprising Junie, heroine of the book series by Barbara Park. At 3 p.m., TriBeCa Performing Arts Center, Borough of Manhattan Community College, 199 Chambers Street, near Greenwich Street, (212) 220-1460, [tribecapac.org](http://tribecapac.org); \$25; \$15 for 10Club members.

**Kids ‘N Comedy: ‘Moms and Dads Show’** (Sunday) The class clown gets applause, not detention, at this series, in which tween and teenage comics perform stand-up. At this show the young performers will explore a topic always worthy of a laugh: Mom and Dad, and their embarrassing habits, tastes and displays of affection. The material is recommended for children 9 and older, but there’s no need to worry about appropriateness (profanity is banned) or knock-knock jokes (these dudes are sophisticated). Reservations required. At 1 p.m., Gotham Comedy Club, 208 West 23rd Street, Chelsea, (212) 877-6115, [kidsncomedy.com](http://kidsncomedy.com); \$15, with a one-item (soda or food) minimum.

**Kids Cruise** (Saturday) The best cruises are like the one in Maurice Sendak’s “Where the Wild Things Are,” in which young adventurers can have a great rumpus and still be safely home for dinner. That’s what Circle Line offers in its series of children’s sails. Each trip consists of a 75-minute voyage to the Statue of

Liberty (with a chance to take a photo there), as well as entertainment, which includes face painting, balloon artistry, a magic show and a concert by the Anna Banana Band. This sail will also have a Marvel Comics theme, with a visit from the Iron Man character. Boarding at 9:30 a.m.; sailing at 10 a.m.; Pier 83, West 42nd Street and 12th Avenue, Clinton,  [\(212\) 563-3200](tel:(212)563-3200), [circleline42.com](http://circleline42.com); \$28; \$20 for ages 3 to 12; free for 2 and under.

**‘The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe’** (Saturday) If the children of the Pevensie family could travel to the magical land of Narnia through something as simple as a wardrobe, why shouldn’t two hard-working actors be able to play them and all the characters found there? That’s what Catherine Fowles and Jara Jones are attempting in Off Broadway Family Theater’s first production, le Clanché du Rand’s adaptation of C.S. Lewis’s classic novel. (The run is open-ended.) At 11 a.m., St. Luke’s Theater, 308 West 46th Street, Clinton,  [\(212\) 239-6200](tel:(212)239-6200), [narniaoffbroadway.com](http://narniaoffbroadway.com); \$35.

**Loco-Motion Dance Theater for Children** (Saturday) When a troupe has a name like this, you know you can expect plenty of movement. But the young dancers and choreographers involved, ages 5 to 18, also have lots of ideas, which they’ll display in this annual spring show. Their dozen original works will have themes including the monster under the bed, the relationships among vintage cartoon characters and the effects of advanced technology on interpersonal communication. At 7 p.m., Miller Theater, Broadway at 116th Street, Morningside Heights,  [\(212\) 979-6124](tel:(212)979-6124), [loco-motiondancetheatre.org](http://loco-motiondancetheatre.org), [millertheatre.com](http://millertheatre.com); \$15; \$10 for children.

**‘Mario the Magician and His Suitcase Machine’** (Saturday) Looking to create amusement as well as amazement, Mario the Magician performs slapstick-inspired routines and has an avian sidekick: a dove named Mozzarella. In this show, which has inaugurated the new Kids Kabaret series at the Metropolitan Room, he incorporates handmade props like his “suitcase machine” and now a mechanical monkey, Marcel. Playing on select Saturdays through July 6, his act, geared to ages 3 through 10, reflects classic comic influences like Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton. At 11:30 a.m., 34 West 22nd Street, Flatiron district, (212) 206-0440, [metropolitanroom.com](http://metropolitanroom.com); \$30; \$20 for children; with a minimum of one menu item.

**‘Monkey King: A Story From China’** (Friday through Sunday, and Tuesday through Thursday) The Children’s Museum of Manhattan has welcomed back a mischievous hero: Monkey King, the star of this exhibition, which has traveled many miles for years, just like the character it centers on. The interactive show, inspired by the Chinese epic “The Journey to the West,” recreates many of the Monkey’s adventures, like fighting the Bull Demon at a station that resembles a video game. Much of the fun teaches Chinese values: cooperation, perseverance, bravery and self-sacrifice. (Through June 9.) Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; to 7 p.m. on Saturdays. Tisch Building, 212 West 83rd Street, (212) 721-1223, [cmom.org](http://cmom.org). Free with admission: \$11; \$7 for 65+; free for under 1 and members.

**Montefiore Teddy Bear Hospital** (Saturday) Hospitals aren't known for being fun, but this event promises to offer plenty of cheer while also educating young visitors about emergency room procedures in a nonscary setting. Children are invited to bring their teddies and other stuffed animals — those that are sick and injured, that is — to Montefiore Medical Center, where the toy patients will experience triage and treatment from the medical staff. The day will also include a tour of the emergency department; a chance to explore an ambulance; safety information from visiting firefighters and police officers; and refreshments and giveaways. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Wakefield Hospital, Montefiore Medical Center, 600 East 233rd Street, Wakefield, the Bronx, (800) 636-6683, [montefiore.org/community-events](http://montefiore.org/community-events); free.

**New York City Ballet Family Saturday** (Saturday) Children who know New York City Ballet mainly for its "Nutcracker" performances can see other sides of the repertory in this hourlong workshop, which introduces those 5 and older to classical dance. This program, to be hosted by the company soloist and choreographer Justin Peck, will feature dance excerpts complementing this final weekend of the troupe's American Music Festival, with selections from pieces like Balanchine's "Stars and Stripes," Robbins's "West Side Story Suite" and Mr. Peck's "In Creases." At 11 a.m., David H. Koch Theater, Lincoln Center, (212) 496-0600, [nycballet.com/educate](http://nycballet.com/educate); \$20.

**'Piggy Nation the Musical'** (Saturday and Sunday) Sammy Hamhock, the little pig at the center of this show for ages 3 to 10, doesn't mind being a pig, but he's disturbed when he sees somebody acting like one. With a script and lyrics by Richard Rosser, who adapted his own children's book "Piggy Nation: A Day at Work With Dad," and a score by Alec Wells, this 75-minute musical follows Sammy as he accompanies his father on Piggy Patrol: that's when you get a ticket for hoglike behavior. (The run is open-ended.) Saturdays at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.; Sundays at noon; Jerry Orbach Theater, Snapple Theater Center, 210 West 50th Street, Manhattan, (212) 921-7862, [piggynationnyc.com](http://piggynationnyc.com); \$30 (available only by calling or visiting the box office) to \$60 (premium seats). (Saturday's shows are sold out.)

**'Pippi'** (Friday through Sunday, and Tuesday through Thursday) Children's literature had at least one feminist heroine long before the feminist era: Pippi Longstocking, the pint-size, pigtailed, redheaded dynamo who lived independently and fought off villains with the help of pluck and superhuman strength. Now the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theater is reviving its 2007 musical based on the Pippi stories by the Swedish author Astrid Lindgren. With a book by Zakiyyah Alexander and a score by Daryl Kojak, the production features almost two dozen handmade marionettes. Friday, and Tuesday through Thursday, at 10:30 a.m. and noon, with an additional 2:30 p.m. show on Wednesday; Saturday and Sunday at 1 p.m.; 79th Street and the West Drive, Central Park, (212) 988-9093, [cityparksfoundation.org/arts](http://cityparksfoundation.org/arts); \$10; \$7 for ages 12 and under. Reservations required; some shows are sold out.

**'Rennie Harris' RHAW'** (Friday through Sunday) RHAW stands for Rennie Harris Awe-Inspiring Works, and that's just what this noted hip-hop choreographer plans to bring to the New Victory Theater.



The young dancers in his company will perform a varied program for ages 6 and older, including an excerpt from Dr. Harris's "Bohemian Rhapsody," a coming-of-age production done to the music of Queen, and Rodney Hill's "JAM/Hip Hop Bows," a dance celebration of Michael Jackson that features Jackson's music. The Friday night performances are followed by TXT Marks the Spot, an interactive scavenger hunt using texting. (Through May 26.) Fridays at 7 p.m.; Saturdays at 2 and 7 p.m.; Sundays at noon and 5 p.m., 209 West 42nd Street, Manhattan, (646) 223-3010, [newvictory.org](http://newvictory.org); \$14 to \$38; \$9 to \$25 for members.

**'Sing-a-Long-a "Sound of Music" ' (Sunday)** There will be a lot more do-re-mi's than those trilled by Julie Andrews in this screening of the 1965 classic "Sound of Music." Visitors are encouraged to come dressed in costume (the event will include a costume contest) and prepared to sing. A host will lead families in a vocal warm-up and give everyone bags of props to use at moments during the film, which will be shown with subtitles (so not recalling the lyrics is no excuse). At 1 p.m., Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts, Brooklyn College, Flatbush and Nostrand Avenues, Flatbush, (718) 951-4500, [brooklyncenter.com](http://brooklyncenter.com); \$15.

**Solar One Family Day: N.Y.C. Wildflower Week Interactive Plant Fair**(Saturday) Color a plant, pot a plant, portray a plant — they're all possible in this celebration for ages 3 and older at Solar One, the solar energy arts and education center. Part of the city's Wildflower Week (further events are at [nycwildflowerweek.org](http://nycwildflowerweek.org)), the day will include making wildflower costumes, potting real wildflowers to take home and putting together wildflower seed bombs: peaceful forms of bombardment consisting of balls of soil and seeds, dropped on barren land for reforestation. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Solar One, Stuyvesant Cove Park, 23rd Street and the East River, Manhattan, (212) 505-6050, [solar1.org](http://solar1.org); free, but registration is advised via an e-mail to [daisy@solar1.org](mailto:daisy@solar1.org) or [ordina@solar1.org](mailto:ordina@solar1.org).

**Spring Kids Fest 2013** (Saturday) Sponsored by the Madison Square Park Conservancy, this annual event offers all the usual pleasures of a park outing, along with a few unusual ones: yoga lessons from Karma Kids Yoga, a visit from Field Station: Dinosaurs and a pie-in-the-face activity with Hill Country Chicken. Other attractions include live music from the band Rolie Polie Guacamole and hip-hop from Secret Agent 23 Skidoo. From 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Madison Square Park, 23rd Street between Madison and Fifth Avenues, [madisonsquarepark.org](http://madisonsquarepark.org); free.

**Sundays Under the Whale** (Sunday) It's nowhere near as uncomfortable as it sounds: this whale happens to be the artificial one suspended over the Milstein Hall of Ocean Life at the American Museum of Natural History. The hall is the location for this set of family programs in the museum's Milstein Science Series. Recommended for ages 6 and older, the series this Sunday will also focus on whales. In conjunction with the museum's new exhibition "Whales: Giants of the Deep," young visitors can hear scientists speak about their marine research, learn about whale anatomy and behavior and go inside a 40-

foot model of a humpback whale. From 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West and 79th Street, (212) 769-5200, [amnh.org](http://amnh.org). Free with suggested admission: \$19; \$14.50 for students and 60+; \$10.50 for children; free for members.

**‘10-Foot Cops: The NYPD’s Mounted Unit’** (Friday through Sunday, and Tuesday through Thursday) Not all of the heroes of the Police Department walk on two legs. “10-Foot Cops,” a new exhibition at the Children’s Museum of Manhattan, celebrates the horses of the mounted unit and the officers who ride them. Lent by the New York City Police Museum, temporarily closed because of damage from Hurricane Sandy, the show, running through Oct. 6, includes uniforms, paintings, historical photos, film clips, a partial reproduction of a police stable and saddles for children to pose in. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; to 7 p.m. on Saturdays. Tisch Building, 212 West 83rd Street, (212) 721-1223, [cmom.org](http://cmom.org). Free with admission: \$11; \$7 for 65+; free for under 1 and members.

**‘A Voyage Through Jewish History’** (Sunday through Thursday) This journey involves not just miles, but years. In this new permanent interactive exhibition at the Jewish Children’s Museum, young visitors can travel from Abraham and Sarah’s tent to the Western Wall in contemporary Jerusalem and beyond. Activities along the way include giving water to Rebecca’s camels, playing the strings on David’s harp (a high-tech version with beams of light that emit sounds when struck) and taking part in the exodus from Egypt. On Sundays through June 16 children can also participate in “Torah Unwrapped,” a workshop at 1 and 3 p.m. in which they can explore how Torahs are written. The workshop includes making goose feather quills, mixing ink, handling parchment and watching a scribe. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; to 5:30 p.m. on Sundays; 792 Eastern Parkway, at Kingston Avenue, Crown Heights, Brooklyn, (718) 907-8833, [jcm.museum](http://jcm.museum); \$13; \$10 for 65+; free for under 2.

**‘A Year With Children 2013’** (Friday through Wednesday) Most of the artists whose work is displayed at the Guggenheim Museum are well known. But now the museum is showing pieces by young — very young — aspiring artists. These are the projects created by students in grades 2 through 6 who have taken part in the museum’s Learning Through Art program, which sends artists into public schools to teach skills and techniques. About 100 works from 10 schools are in the show, including drawings, paintings, collages, sculptures and photographs. (Through June 19.) From 10 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.; until 7:45 p.m. on Saturdays; 1071 Fifth Avenue, at 89th Street, (212) 423-3500, [guggenheim.org](http://guggenheim.org). Free with admission: \$22; \$18 for 65+ and students; free for children under 12 and members; pay what you wish on Saturday from 5:45 to 7:45 p.m.

**LAUREL GRAEBER**



# THE NEW YORKER

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## DANCE

### RENNIE HARRIS RHAW

RHAW is the junior company founded by the great hip-hop choreographer from Philadelphia, and this program features several of Harris's works, including a love story called "Three B Boys and a Girl" and "Bohemian Rhapsody," an excerpt from a dance musical set to Queen. For the finale, the group's director, Rodney Hill, offers a rousing homage to Michael Jackson, the eighties, and the nineties. (New Victory, 209 W. 42nd St. 646-223-3010. May 17 at 7, May 18 at 2 and 7, and May 19 at noon and 5. Through May 26.)



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN: DANCE

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May 17 – May 26

### **NEW VICTORY THEATRE**

209 W. 42nd St., New York, N.Y.

646-223-3010

[newvictory.org](http://newvictory.org)

# The New York Times

Spare Times for Children for May 24-30

By LAUREL GRAEBER

Published: May 23, 2013

## For Children

**'Archaeology Zone: Discovering Treasures From Playgrounds to Palaces'** (Friday, Sunday through Tuesday, and Thursday) Children will step into the shoes of an explorer like Indiana Jones in this permanent exhibition at the Jewish Museum, but the adventures will be purely scholarly. Still, there is plenty of excitement in analyzing artifacts like a jar handle, a clay jug and a bangle and figuring out the purpose behind ancient pieces like a Greek helmet and a bull-shaped vessel. This interactive show, for ages 3 to 10, also includes a recreated room from the Ottoman period (about 1900), where young archaeologists can dress in costume. From 11 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.; until 8 p.m. on Thursdays; also open on Memorial Day; 1109 Fifth Avenue, at 92nd Street, [\(212\) 423-3200](tel:2124233200), [thejewishmuseum.org](http://thejewishmuseum.org). Free with admission: \$12; \$10 for 65+; \$7.50 for students; free for under 12 and members; pay what you wish on Thursdays from 5 to 8 p.m.

**'The Big Adventure'** Whether or not there are alligators in New York City's sewers, a local river is filled with them, and the only bridge that crosses it has been washed-out. That's one of the situations in "The Big Adventure," an exhibition at the Brooklyn Children's Museum that asks young visitors to use their skills to conquer a variety of challenges, including flying a virtual plane and navigating a thin beam that represents a building ledge. Intrepid explorers can also make their way across a very real climbing wall. (Through Sept. 29.) Hours: daily except Mondays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., but open this Monday for Memorial Day from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., 145 Brooklyn Avenue, at St. Marks Avenue, Crown Heights, [\(718\) 735-4400](tel:7187354400), [brooklynkids.org](http://brooklynkids.org). Free with admission: \$9; free for members and under 1.

**'Body Buildings: Woolworth'** (Saturday) No weight lifting is involved in this exercise. In "Body Buildings," a workshop for ages 3 through 9 at the Skyscraper Museum, participants will explore the exhibition "Woolworth Building @ 100" and then make a fanciful New York skyline whose towering shapes are based on their own silhouettes. From 10:30 to 11:45 a.m., 39 Battery Place, Lower Manhattan, [\(212\) 945-6324](tel:2129456324), [skyscraper.org](http://skyscraper.org); \$5 per child; free for members. Registration required via phone or e-mail to [education@skyscraper.org](mailto:education@skyscraper.org) by Friday at 5 p.m.

**Family Festival: In Search of the Unicorn** (Saturday and Sunday) Unicorns in New York? They're actually abundant at the Cloisters, the medieval branch of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where they appear on tapestries and will frolic through the imagination of many a visitor this weekend. This festival will include family gallery workshops, a self-guided art hunt and the lore of the unicorn throughout the Middle Ages. On Saturday only, Mary Pope Osborne, author of the Magic Tree House children's book series, will read from her novel "Blizzard of the Blue Moon," in which a Cloisters unicorn plays a starring role. From 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Cloisters, 99 Margaret Corbin Drive, Fort Tryon Park, Washington Heights, [\(212\) 923-3700](tel:2129233700), [metmuseum.org](http://metmuseum.org). Free with suggested admission: \$25; \$17 for 65+; \$12 for students; free to members and children under 12.

**Family Films: 'Microcosmos'** (Saturday and Sunday) Honey, I shrunk the viewers. Well, not really, but moviegoers are likely to feel pretty Lilliputian while watching this 80-minute nature documentary, part of the Family Films series from the Film Society of Lincoln Center. Directed by Claude Nuridsany, this acclaimed 1996 work uses high-power lenses, extreme close-ups and time-lapse photography to make the world of insects appear giant, including battling beetles, zooming dragonflies and industrious ants. At 2 p.m., the Amphitheater, Elinor Bunin Munroe Film Center, 144 West 65th Street, Lincoln Center, [\(212\) 875-5600](tel:2128755600), [filmlinc.com/films/series/family-screenings](http://filmlinc.com/films/series/family-screenings); \$6.

**Field Station: Dinosaurs** (Saturday through Monday) It's not unusual to go see giants in the Meadowlands, but some of those attracting visitors to that area of New Jersey this spring don't wear helmets or play football. Field Station: Dinosaurs, the 20-acre park filled with more than 30 animatronic prehistoric creatures — including a Tyrannosaurus rex, a stegosaurus and a 90-foot-long Argentinosaurus — is open on weekends, including Memorial Day. The dinosaurs move when approached, and the three-quarter-mile trail offers other paleontology exhibits and a mock fossil dig. The park has expanded its programs and shows, including a new 23-minute 3-D movie, "Dinosaurs Alive!," about dinosaur hunting in Mongolia and New Mexico. From 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; One Dinosaur Way (off Exit 15X of the New Jersey Turnpike), Laurel Hill Park, Secaucus, N.J., [\(855\) 999-9010](tel:8559999010), [fieldstationdinosaurs.com](http://fieldstationdinosaurs.com). In advance, \$23; \$20.50 for 65+ and ages 3 to 12. At the box office, \$28 and \$23. Free for 2 and under.

**Film Forum Jr.: 'School of Rock'** (Sunday) Film Forum, the downtown cinema, is now the proud parent of Film Forum Jr., a new series introducing classic movies to children. This week's film is "School of Rock" (2003), which stars Jack Black as a hip substitute teacher who transforms his earnest students into rocking competitors for a battle of the bands. The screening will be followed by a special event: an air-guitar contest. At 11 a.m., 209 West Houston Street, west of Avenue of the Americas, South Village, [\(212\) 727-8110](tel:2127278110), [filmforum.org](http://filmforum.org); \$7.

**'Flight of the Butterflies'** (Friday through Thursday) It's easy to think of the graceful creatures that are the subject of this fascinating film as traveling only short distances, flitting from flower to flower. But half a billion monarch butterflies actually migrate 3,000 miles every fall, to Mexico from Canada. A new Imax movie, this

project chronicles their journey and the 40-year investigation of it by one impassioned scientist, Fred A. Urquhart. (Visitors can also see as many as 500 free-flying real butterflies in the special exhibition "The Butterfly Conservatory: Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter," through May 27.) The film runs through July 7, hourly, from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West and 79th Street, (212) 769-5200, [amnh.org](http://amnh.org). Included in Museum Plus One admission (general admission and one Imax film or special exhibition): \$25; \$19 for students and 60+; \$14.50 for ages 2 to 12. Member tickets: \$12.50; \$8 for children.

**'Gazillion Bubble Show: The Next Generation'** (Friday through Sunday, and Wednesday) Children love bubbles, and this interactive show promises not just a gazillion but also some of the largest ever blown, along with light effects and lasers. The stars are the members of the Yang family: Fan and Ana Yang and their son Deni and others, who rotate as M.C.'s for the production. Audience members may even find themselves in bubbles of their own. (The run is open-ended.) Friday at 7 p.m.; Saturday at 11 a.m. and 2 and 4:30 p.m.; Sunday at noon and 3 p.m.; Wednesday at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.; New World Stages, 340 West 50th Street, Clinton, (212) 239-6200, [gazillionbubbleshow.com](http://gazillionbubbleshow.com); \$44.50 to \$99.50; lap seats for ages 2 and under are \$20, cash only, at the box office.

**Knightwatch Medieval Slumber Party** (Friday) Manhattan may not be filled with castles, but the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine comes awfully close. In this new program children 6 to 12 are invited to live out their dreams as lords and ladies of old, and then retire in the great nave to dream some more. (One adult must attend for every three children participating.) In addition to receiving noble titles and coats of arms, young visitors will follow a court jester on a scavenger hunt to find clues for various quests. Other activities include medieval craft making, singing and dancing and bedtime storytelling. Then it's back to 2013 with a Continental breakfast on Saturday at 8 a.m. (Also on June 14.) At 6:30 p.m., 1047 Amsterdam Avenue, at 112th Street, Morningside Heights, (212) 316-5819, [tinyurl.com/amshaza](http://tinyurl.com/amshaza); \$135 a person; sold out on Friday.

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**'Pop-Up Audubon'** The Audubon Center is near the Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue entrance in Prospect Park, in Brooklyn, but in this new program it is turning up in a lot of other places too. Each month the center will set up shop in a different area of the park to investigate a particular ecosystem. May's theme is birds, and the activities include "Nature on the Go! Bird Bonanza," at 1 and 3 p.m., in which children will learn how to observe and identify different species; "Nature's Helpers," at 2 p.m., in which they'll help clean the park while exploring it; and a Discovery Tour, at 4 p.m., in which they'll investigate bird diets, early spring migration and forest layers. Meeting at Binnen Bridge, close to the boathouse (reachable from the Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue entrance), [\(718\) 287-3400](tel:7182873400), [prospectpark.org/audubon](http://prospectpark.org/audubon); free.

**'Rennie Harris' RHAW'** (Friday through Sunday) RHAW stands for Rennie Harris Awe-Inspiring Works, and that's just what this noted hip-hop choreographer has planned for this program, closing this weekend at the New Victory Theater. The young dancers in his company perform a varied program for ages 6 and older, including an excerpt from Dr. Harris's "Bohemian Rhapsody," a coming-of-age production done to the music of Queen, and Rodney Hill's "JAM/Hip Hop Bows," a dance celebration of Michael Jackson that features Jackson's music. The Friday night performance is followed by TXT Marks the Spot, an interactive scavenger hunt using

texting. Friday at 7 p.m.; Saturday at 2 and 7 p.m.; Sunday at noon and 5 p.m., 209 West 42nd Street, Manhattan, (646) 223-3010, [newvictory.org](http://newvictory.org); \$14 to \$38; \$9 to \$25 for members.

**‘10-Foot Cops: The NYPD’s Mounted Unit’** (Friday through Thursday) Not all of the heroes of the Police Department walk on two legs. “10-Foot Cops,” a new exhibition at the Children’s Museum of Manhattan, celebrates the horses of the mounted unit and the officers who ride them. Lent by the New York City Police Museum, temporarily closed because of damage from Hurricane Sandy, the show, running through Oct. 6, includes uniforms, paintings, historical photos, film clips, a partial reproduction of a police stable and saddles for children to pose in. Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., including Memorial Day; to 7 p.m. on Saturdays; Tisch Building, 212 West 83rd Street, (212) 721-1223, [cmom.org](http://cmom.org). Free with admission: \$11; \$7 for 65+; free for under 1 and members.

**‘A Voyage Through Jewish History’** (Sunday through Thursday) This journey involves not just miles, but years. In this new permanent interactive exhibition at the Jewish Children’s Museum, young visitors can travel from Abraham and Sarah’s tent to the Western Wall in contemporary Jerusalem and beyond. Activities along the way include giving water to Rebecca’s camels, playing the strings on David’s harp (a high-tech version with beams of light that emit sounds when struck) and taking part in the exodus from Egypt. On Sundays at 2:30 p.m. through June 16, and on Memorial Day at 1 and 3 p.m., children can also participate in “Torah Unwrapped,” a workshop in which they can explore how Torahs are written. The workshop includes making goose feather quills, mixing ink, handling parchment and watching a scribe. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; to 5:30 p.m. on Sundays; 792 Eastern Parkway, at Kingston Avenue, Crown Heights, Brooklyn, (718) 907-8833, [jcm.museum](http://jcm.museum); \$13; \$10 for 65+; free for under 2.

**‘A Year With Children 2013’** (Friday through Wednesday) Most of the artists whose work is displayed at the Guggenheim Museum are well known. But now the museum is showing pieces by young — very young — aspiring artists. These are the projects created by students in grades 2 through 6 who have taken part in the museum’s Learning Through Art program, which sends artists into public schools to teach skills and techniques. About 100 works from 10 schools are in the show, including drawings, paintings, collages, sculptures and photographs. (Through June 19.) From 10 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.; until 7:45 p.m. on Saturdays; 1071 Fifth Avenue, at 89th Street, (212) 423-3500, [guggenheim.org](http://guggenheim.org). Free with admission: \$22; \$18 for 65+ and students; free for children under 12 and members; pay what you wish on Saturday from 5:45 to 7:45 p.m. **LAUREL GRAEBER**





The NYC-ARTS Top Five is your cheat sheet to what's hot before it hits the radar.

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May 14, 2013

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### NYC-ARTS on THIRTEEN

The NYC-ARTS prime-time television show provides arts lovers with an insider's eye-view into New York City's myriad cultural offerings. From intimate curator's tours to inspiring interviews, catch the best of the arts, [Thursdays at 8 pm on THIRTEEN](#).



Hypnotic Brass Ensemble

### Rooftop Films: Hypnotic Brass Ensemble

**MetroTech Commons**

Fri, May 17

In the documentary film "**Brothers Hypnotic**," eight young men raise eight brass horns to the brightening sky in New York. A thrilling harmony of single notes spills forth. As the film goes on, we fall in love, not only with the brothers and their raucous, swinging, soul-tumbling music, but also with the very idea of music, with its power to elevate our everyday existence. This **free event** features a pre-screening dance party and a **live performance by the brothers**.



Dance Parade 2012 (Photo by Elyssa Goodman)

## **2013 DanceFest and Dance Parade**

**Tompkins Square Park**

Sat, May 18

**Loiue Vega, Baba, Chuck Davis and Jacquelyn Buglisi** lead 10,000 dancers in the seventh annual dance parade, as they perform more than **75 diverse dance styles**. Ending at Tompkins Square Park, the festivities continue as three stages come alive with choreographed performances, **workshops** and social dance.



## **Wild Medicine: Healing Plants Around the World, Featuring The Italian Renaissance Garden**

**New York Botanical Garden**

Sat, May 18 - Sun, Sep 8

Explore plants such as the cinchona tree, the source of quinine, which treats malaria, and white willow, whose bark leads to the production of aspirin. More than 500 species of medicinal plants are showcased at NYBG in the **largest exhibition of medicinal plants** ever. The garden

has also mounted a stunning re-creation of an **Italian Renaissance garden** with interactive stations that highlight the healing powers of tea, cacao and tropical juices.



El Anatsui, "Broken Bridge II" on the High Line

### **Tour: El Anatsui's Broken Bridge II**

#### **The High Line**

Wed, May 15

Join the curator and director of High Line Art, along with the curator of the Brooklyn Museum's exhibition "[Gravity and Grace: Monumental Works by El Anatsui](#)" for a walking tour of the High Line and hear the story behind "[Broken Bridge II](#)," El Anatsui's largest sculpture to date, and the **High Line's largest ever art installation**.




Rennie Harris Awe-inspiring Works

### **RHAW**

New Victory Theater

Fri, May 17



Urban dance guru and Alvin Ailey Award recipient Rennie Harris puts a hot new spin on street dance in "**Rennie Harris Awe-inspiring Works.**" RHAW features a youthful company of nine dancers who **pop-and-lock, b-boy and boogaloo** to create funky, upbeat depictions of city life, young love and growing up. There's also an ode to the **King of Pop** that would do MJ proud.





## Best NYC Kids' Theater Shows Spring 2013: 14 Family Shows at Non-Broadway Prices

APR 16 2013 BY [RAVEN](#)

Our [spring culture coverage](#) continues with a look at the most promising family shows opening this season. Reading the papers, you might think the only great productions for kids are on Broadway. But while *Matilda* (it's dark!) and *Cinderella* (it's light!) command the media spotlight and cost big bucks, there are many wonderfully creative children's theater performances off Broadway and beyond.

The selection this spring is particularly intriguing and there are options for all age groups, including a few shows that are perfect for first-time theatergoers. The New Victory has a pair of plotless spectacles, one acrobatic, the other urban dance, and Making Books Sing and TADA! Youth Theater are adapting popular kids' books by Eileen Spinelli and Ezra Jack Keats. Plus the [New York Children's Theater Festival](#) returns for its second year on the Upper West Side, and the tenth annual International Toy Theater Festival takes place in Brooklyn. The one thing all of these shows have in common? You can take the kids to see them without dipping into their college fund—most are \$20 or under and one is even FREE.

### **[Le Grand C](#) – Midtown West**

Thursday, April 18-Sunday, April 28. [Visit the website for the complete schedule.](#)

The New Victory Theater, 209 West 42nd Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues

\$14-\$38

Ages 7 and up

I'm catching this circus show next week with my daughter's second grade class, and I don't know who is more excited: them or me. A group of 17 acrobats perform incredible stunts—tossing, tumbling and building human towers. No big hardware or sequined outfits here; all they've got are their incredible athletic bodies and awesome skills, and it's all set to traditional French music. A must-see for nontraditional circus fans.

### **[New York Children's Theater Festival](#) – Upper West Side**

Marjorie S. Deane Little Theater, West Side YMCA, 5 West 63rd Street between Broadway and Central Park West  
\$18-\$25

Last year, I wrote an entire post about the [first-ever New York Children's Theater Festival](#). While I only managed to catch one of the three shows, I was impressed with the fest as a whole. There were fun pre-show activities for kids

(this year, [face painting](#), [magic and juggling performances](#), and [art workshops](#) are on the schedule), and the vibe was casual and welcoming. This year's fest takes place on three consecutive weekends on the [Upper West Side](#):

**[The Tale of Jamie Freel: A Faerie Story](#)** – Friday, April 19 at 5:30pm; Saturday, April 20 at 11am and 1pm; Sunday, April 21 at 2pm

Ages 7 and up

Based on an old Irish folktale, the show mixes storytelling, dance and music to tell the tale of a young hero whose thirst for adventure uncovers a magical world.

**[Cheater, Cheater, Pumpkin Eater!](#)** – Friday, April 26 at 5:30pm; Saturday, April 27 at 11am and 1pm; Sunday, April 28 at 2pm

Ages 4 and up

A puppet musical about a young student who's so stressed out about testing, she considers cheating. Awesome timing since the [ELA and Math Assessments are going on](#).

**[Molly Bloom-Lately](#)** – Friday, May 3 at 5pm; Saturday, May 4 at 11am and 1pm; Sunday, May 5 at 2pm

Ages 5 and up

An anti-bullying musical about a vertically challenged third grader who learns to stand up for herself and others.

### **[Wanda's Monster the Musical](#) – Midtown West**

Friday, April 19-Sunday, May 12. [Visit the website for the complete schedule](#).

Theater 3, 311 West 43rd Street near Eighth Avenue

\$20 for adults, \$15 for children under 12

Ages 3 to 6

We already highlighted this new musical in our [April NYC Go List](#), but its creative pedigree makes it worth touting again. Nonprofit children's theater company [Making Books Sing](#) debuts a page-to-stage adaptation of Eileen Spinelli's picture book *Wanda's Monster* about a feisty five-year-old whose grandma turns the tables on the old monster-in-the-closet legend. While we've loved many of the troupe's other shows like *The Butterfly* and *Sky Boys*, the big news here is that preschool rock goddess Laurie Berkner wrote the songs! It's her first foray into musical theater and the numbers include her hit "Monster Boogie" as well as brand-new tunes.

### **[Adventures From Ezra Jack Keats](#) – Flatiron**

Friday, April 19-Sunday, May 19. [Visit the website for the complete schedule](#).

TADA! Youth Theater, 15 West 28th Street between Broadway and Fifth Avenue

\$20-\$25 for adults, \$8-\$15 for children

Ages 5 and up

Another [April NYC Go List](#) pick! We [often rave](#) about the shows at this venerable family theater company, which is made up entirely of local youths ages 8 to 18. But we're particularly excited about the troupe's new production, since it's based on two picture books by one of our favorite children's authors: Ezra Jack Keats. Watch as talented kids bring the hidden saxophone player from *Apt. 3* and the adventures of *Maggie and the Pirate* to life through song and dance.

### **[Off the Map](#) – Lower East Side**

Saturdays, April 20, 27 and May 4 at 10:30am and 12:30pm

University Settlement, 184 Eldridge Street at Rivington Street

\$15 for adults, \$5 for children

Ages 2 to 5

I've been hearing great things about the Trusty Sidekick Theater, which was founded by arts educator Jonathan Shmidt (who has a day job at the New Victory, so you know he has good taste). The company's latest show was created specifically for preschoolers and stars a subway train who's gone off the rails, literally. While most folks want to see him get back on track, one young passenger looks forward to taking a new uncharted route. Told with puppets, projections and people, *Off the Map* is a lovely first-time theater experience.

### ***Little Red's Hood* – Citywide**

Tuesday, April 22-mid-October

Locations, dates and times vary. [Visit the website for the complete schedule.](#)

FREE

All ages

Another awesome option for young theatergoers: The City Parks Foundation's PuppetMobile—a mobile offshoot of Central Park's [Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre](#)—brings its contemporary take on the old *Little Red Riding Hood* fairy tale to NYC parks free of charge. In this version of the oft-told story, Red is a sophisticated and cynical city kid obsessed with her smartphone who runs into a wolf when she visits her granny in the 'burbs. Since the show is outside and free, you have nothing to lose if your toddler can't make it to the end. But chances are your little one will be mesmerized by the handcrafted puppets.

### ***The Gruffalo* – Greenwich Village**

Saturday, April 27 at 11am and 2pm

NYU Skirball Center, 566 LaGuardia Place at Washington Square South

\$28

Ages 3 and up

The Skirball's [Big Red Chair Family Series](#) wraps up for the season with this musicalization of Julia Donaldson's best-selling kids' book. An adventurous mouse scares off predators with tall tales of the terrifying Gruffalo but what happens when he meets the creature himself? England's [Tall Stories](#) theater company brings its award-winning production to NYC. Live in Brooklyn? The production is also playing on Sunday, April 28 at [Kingsborough Community College's Leon M. Goldstein Performing Arts Center](#).

### ***In the Garden* – Fort Greene**

Friday, May 3-Sunday, May 5 at 10:30am and 1pm

BAM Fisher Fishman Space

\$7

Ages 1 to 4

The inaugural year of [BAMfamily programming](#) has been quite a success. One of the final offerings is this multimedia theater experience developed specifically for preschoolers. A couple walking through a garden comes across a piece of cloth, which sparks a visual feast of shadow play, projections and wordless wonder. The entire performance is one hour long, and that includes a post-show Q&A, so it's great for short attention spans.

### ***RHAW* – Midtown West**

Friday, May 17-Sunday, May 26. [Visit the website for the complete schedule.](#)

The New Victory Theater, 209 West 42nd Street between Seventh and Eighth Avenues



\$14-\$38

Ages 6 and up

I admit, I'm not the biggest dance fan but I usually love the movement-based shows at the New Vic. Somehow they speak to me more than what's going on at the Joyce. *RHAW* was developed by urban dance star Rennie Harris and features nine energetic performers who infuse their moves with a Philly street sensibility. Plus they do a mean tribute to Michael Jackson.

#### ***If You Give a Mouse a Cookie & Other Story Books* – Corona**

Sunday, June 2 at 1 and 3pm

Queens Theatre, 14 United Nations Avenue South in [Flushing Meadows Corona Park](#)

\$14

Ages 5 to 10

Theatreworks USA's musical revue of contemporary kid lit is a real crowd pleaser. The big name stories include Laura Numeroff's title tale, *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman, *Master Man* by Aaron Shepard and *Math Curse* by the wickedly funny Jon Scieszka.

#### **International Toy Theater Festival & Free Temporary Toy Theater Museum – Dumbo**

Friday, June 14-Sunday, June 23

St. Ann's Warehouse, 29 Jay Street between Plymouth and John Streets

\$20 for adults, \$10 for children

Ages vary

Did you know that there's an annual Toy Theater Festival in Brooklyn? And this year is its tenth anniversary! The fest isn't aimed at families and not all productions are kid-friendly. However, there are always a handful of offerings that children can see and additional attractions like a toy theater museum and puppet parade. The lineup for this year's edition won't be released until May 1 but you can [sign up for the email list](#) right away. Of course we'll be keeping an eye on the shows and will add all of the kid-friendly ones to our [Event Calendar](#).

#### ***Peter and the Starcatcher* – Midtown West**

Ongoing. [Visit the website for the complete schedule](#).

New World Stages, 340 West 50th Street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues

\$72.50-\$99 but you can save by using the [Broadwaybox discount code](#)

Ages 8 and up

I rarely recommend commercial off Broadway shows with open runs because, well, they tend to be pretty expensive. But I've seen this wonderfully inventive stage adaptation of Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson's *Peter Pan* prequel twice now and it's worth the splurge. The show is low-tech theater at its finest, a celebration of imagination, the magic of childhood and the power of belly laughs. It won five Tony Awards and critical raves on Broadway before it transferred off Broadway last month. Frankly I think it plays even better in a smaller house. While it's officially recommended for ages 10 and up, my seven-year-old loved it. It's definitely a fantastic option for hard-to-please tweens, who might find some of these other recommendations too babyish.

## 14 FUN THINGS TO DO WITH KIDS IN MANHATTAN THIS MAY

by [Vanessa Friedman](#) April 25, 2013

We've picked the top 14 things to do with your kids in Manhattan this May, including Super WHY on stage on the Upper West Side, the NYRR Youth Jamboree on Randall's Island, the annual HOWL Festival in the East Village, and several Mother's Day events.



### **Super WHY Live: You've Got the Power!**

**Beacon Theatre, Upper West Side  
May 2**

Based on the Emmy-nominated PBS Kids series, [Super WHY Live: You've Got the Power!](#) brings together entertainment and education in an interactive, live performance for the preschool set. The show features favorite literacy-powered superheroes Alpha Pig, Wonder Red, Princess Presto, and their puppy pal Woofster, with a book written by *Super WHY* creator Angela Santomero and musical score by Jack Antonoff of the Grammy-nominated band fun.



### **NYRR Youth Jamboree**

**Icahn Stadium, Randalls Island  
May 5**

At the [NYRR Youth Jamboree](#), kids as young as 4 can experience all the fun of a track and field

competition—no experience necessary. In this daylong event, kids in pre-K through high school will participate in races ranging from 55 to 800 meters as well as relays, long jump, and shot put events. First-, second-, and third-place finishers will receive ribbons, and all other finishers will receive participation ribbons. Online registration is strongly recommended.



## Happy Mother's Day!

### Manhattan, Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens Throughout May

Mother's Day should be completely stress-free, so we've done your activity planning for you. All you have to do is pick your favorite activity from our list of [22 fun Mother's Day events in NYC](#), including 9 in Manhattan.



### **RHAW: Rennie Harris Awe-Inspiring Works**

#### **The New Victory Theater, Times Square May 17-26**

Urban dance guru and award-winning choreographer Rennie Harris has put together a new family show that celebrates street dance. In [RHAW: Rennie Harris Awe-Inspiring Works](#), the music is as diverse as the dance styles, but the whole show promises to deliver “spirit and straight-up Philly soul.” The nine young dancers who make up the company show extreme skill and have a reserve of seemingly never-ending energy, as they pop and lock, b-boy and boogaloo to create funky, upbeat depictions of city life, young love, and growing up. Overall, the show is inspiring, relevant, and above all, a ton of fun.



## HOWL! Festival

**Thompkins Square Park, East Village**

**May 31 – June 2**

Beat poets and counter-culture lovers rejoice, because the [HOWL! Festival](#) is coming back to town and it's celebrating its 10th year on the scene. This festival of freewheeling bohemia celebrates poetry, music, dance, and art while highlighting the history of the East Village and the Lower East Side. The festivities call on the spirit of the late poet Allen Ginsberg as more than 350 artists, poets, and performers—including many youthful new talents—transform Thompkins Square Park into a participatory artwork infused with creative energy and inspiration. The festival opens with the signature group reading of *Howl*, one of Ginsberg's most famous works, on Friday afternoon and features family entertainment through Sunday. On Saturday and Sunday, make sure to take advantage of The Great HOWL! Out Loud Kid's Carnival, which features carnival games, funhouses for all ages, fairway attractions, arts and crafts activities, miniature golf, and continuous kids' entertainment (both for kids and by kids). **FREE!**



## Sprout Film Festival

**The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Upper East Side**

**May 31 – June 2**

Mainstream media has a long way to go when it comes to representing everyone fairly and accurately, and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (both as subjects and performers) often appear only on the sidelines. The [Sprout Film Festival](#) aims to change that by showcasing works of all genres featuring this population. The festival is entering its 11th year with a robust program of educational and inspiring works, including the "Foreign Gems" program, which features unique and rarely seen stories from foreign lands (with subtitles); *The Punk Syndrome*, a feature documentary following Finland's most outlandish punk rock band; and *Growing Pains*, a thought-provoking drama about adolescence, to name a few. (Pictured: *My Brother Vinnie*, starring Australian actor Aaron Pedersen and his brother Vinnie, will screen June 1.) Perfect for parents and older children, this festival also offers a number of free museum events open to all festival attendees and particularly tailored to people with special needs.





May 13, 2013

**NYCkidsARTS** is the the most reliable resource for New York parents who share a love of the arts with their kids.

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### **RHAW**

**New Victory Theater**

Fri, May 17 - Sun, May 26

Rennie Harris' RHAW is a youthful company of dancers who **pop-and-lock, b-boy and boogaloo** to create funky, upbeat depictions of city life, young love and growing up. Awesome alert: there's an ode to the **King of Pop** that would **do MJ proud**.

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### **BAE Spring Performance**

**Gerald W. Lynch Theater at John Jay College**

Fri, May 17 - Sun, May 19

The students of **Ballet Academy East** perform George Balanchine's "**Tarantella**," "**Sleeping Beauty**" prologue, and excerpts from "**Napoli**." Bring your cameras because Sleeping Beauty's Fairies will be on hand for **photos with your children** during intermission. Children can also **decorate and keep their own wand**!

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## Light & Sound Concerts: Glass Music Master Miguel Frasconi

**Old Stone House**

Fri, May 17 & Sun, May 19

Composer Miguel Frasconi uses analog electronics, a laptop and glass objects to create music from a uniquely imagined tradition. **His glass instruments are struck, blown, stroked, smashed** and otherwise coaxed into vibration. On May 19 there's a 40-minute family concert.

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## Design with Impact: When History is the Client

**Park Avenue Armory**

Sat, May 18

As the **restoration and renovation** of the Park Avenue Armory takes place, participants in this workshop will model one aspect of the design process by **creating new fixtures** (light fixtures, furniture, window treatments, etc.) for a historic room that simultaneously reference the original 1880 **American Aesthetic** design movement.

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## Madison Square Park: Spring Kids Fest

**Park Avenue Armory**

Sat, May 18

This free event is open to all little ones and big kids who love **live entertainment, crafts, games, food, face painting** and much, much more. Your families are welcome to join the Madison Square Park Conservancy to celebrate spring!

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## Wild Medicine: Healing Plants Around the World, Featuring the Italian Renaissance

## **Garden**

### **New York Botanical Garden**

Sat, May 18 - Sun, Sep 8

Interactive stations highlight the rejuvenating and healing powers of tea, cacao and tropical juices. Explore fascinating **rare books** and manuscripts known as herbals, and enjoy a **poetry walk, Renaissance music, dance performances** and **science adventures** for kids.

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## **Kids Club THIRTEEN: Old Fashioned Good Time**

### **Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden**

Sat, May 18

Learn about **19th-century life** through wooden toys and activities, including popular children's games from the 19th century such as **The Cat and the Mouse**. This **Kids Club** event includes a meet & greet with **Buster** from "Postcards from Buster!"

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## **On A Wing: Family Festival**

### **Belvedere Castle - Central Park**

Sat, May 18

Get up close and personal with **birds of prey** as they fly under your arms in the **Tunnel of Talons**. Discover more about the birds of NYC on a guided bird walk in Central Park. Learn about **monarch butterflies** and make all sorts of winged beings at the craft exhibit.

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## **DanceFest and Dance Parade 2013**

### **Tompkins Square Park**

Sat, May 18



More than 10,000 dancers perform over 75 diverse dance styles in the annual dance parade, concluding at Tompkins Square Park, which comes alive with **performances, family dance activities, social dance** and **workshops**.

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## **The Queen of Colors**

**Flushing Town Hall**

Sat, May 18

Full of kaleidoscopic wonder, "The Queen of Colors" is an award-winning story about unleashing creativity and **choosing not to color within the lines**. Based on the children's book by **Jutta Bauer** and accompanied by a "court musician," this performance offers ingenious **puppetry and live illustrations** by the Company Les Voisins that literally jump off the page.

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## **Meet the Author: Stephen Savage**

**New York Transit Museum**

Sat, May 18

Award-winning author/illustrator Stephen Savage ("**Little Tug**") talks about being an illustrator and reads his latest book about **a lovable and hard-working New York harbor tug boat**. An art-making workshop will follow.

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## **Sing-a-long-a Sound of Music**

**Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts**

Sun, May 19

This interactive screening of the movie-musical will have the kids singing along with **props and costumes**. Pre-movie, the host will lead a vocal warm-up and teach everyone activities that will unfold at certain moments in the show.

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## **Around the World with CMA: Caribbean Festival**

**Children's Museum of the Arts**

Sun, May 19

Bonga is back! Celebrate the Caribbean Cultural Festival with Haitian musician **Bonga** and his band and dances by **La Troupe Zetwal** and **Cumbe**. Join in the drum circle or create your own **3D topographical island maps**, headdresses inspired by **Carnival costumes**, and island animations.

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## **Drums Along the Hudson: A Native American Festival**

**Inwood Hill Park**

Sun, May 19

This free, family-oriented Native American festival includes dance and drumming traditions with the **Thunderbird American Indian Dancers**, **Heyna Second Sons** and **Silver Cloud Drum Group**, as well as Native American crafts.

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## **Mamapalooza 10th Anniversary Festival**

**Riverside Park**

Sun, May 19

The 10th annual Outdoor Extravaganza at **Summer on the Hudson** at Riverside Park South will feature mom and kid bands, great food, performances by Funniest Mom in America finalists, and activities for the whole family.



## Rennie Harris' RHAW to Groove at New Victory Theatre, 5/17-26



Dr. Rennie Harris, [Alvin Ailey](#) Award recipient and renowned choreographer, returns to the New Victory stage (Legends of Hip-Hop, New Vic 2004, 2006; Puremovement, New Vic 1999) to inspire the next generation of hip-hoppers with Rennie Harris Awe-Inspiring Works-RHAW. Featuring a hip-hop dance theater company of talented young dancers, RHAW delivers straight- up Philly soul and fresh spins on classic street dance styles, creating depictions of city life and young love. Rennie Harris' RHAW, will run at The New Victory Theater, 209 West 42nd Street from May 17 through 26.

Downplaying the abstract while pushing a dramatic aesthetic, the fresh, enthusiastic and generous performers of Rennie Harris Awe-inspiring Works (RHAW) take street dancing back to the basics. RHAW will feature three works by the versatile Dr. Rennie Harris: "Brother," an emotional performance about less fortunate male figures in society who are often judged and condemned; "Three B Boys & A Girl," a love story told through nontraditional break dancing vocabulary; and an excerpt from "Bohemian Rhapsody," a dance musical featuring music by Queen, which tells a coming-of-age story about one young man's search for love, identity and justice.

Additional numbers include the memorable "110th Street," featuring music by Bobby Womack and Peace, and "JAM/Hip Hop Bows," a grand ode to The King of Pop choreographed by Rodney Hill and featuring [music](#) by [Michael Jackson](#). Upbeat, fun and full of verve, "JAM/Hip Hop Bows" utilizes popping and hip-hop social dances of the 80s and 90s to create a buoyant show finale that summarizes the foundation and core of RHAW-youthful, energetic and ready at a moment's notice.

A Philadelphia native, Dr. Harris founded RHAW in the "City of Brotherly Love" to serve urban youth by demonstrating discipline and focus through performance, dance education, outreach programming and mentorship. Inspired by the overwhelming interest from local teens and young adults who hoped to join his internationally renowned company Rennie Harris Puremovement, Dr. Harris also aims to foster and cultivate hip-hop culture and preserve its legacy. Ultimately, RHAW is an emerging artist dance company that teaches its members professionalism, show production, street [dance](#) history and

technique in various styles of movement including Campbell Locking, Popping & Boogaloo, Bboy/girl, House and Hip-hop.

RHAW is directed by Dr. Rennie Harris and features dancers Davion Brown, Amaryah Bone, Katia Cruz, Joshua Culbreath, Phillip Cuttino Jr., Neka Chantol French, Brandyn S. Harris, Mai Lê Ho Johnson, Macca Malik, Kevin S. Rand, Neha Sharma, Mariah Tlili and Shafeek Westbrook. The company is managed and directed by Rodney Hill. Raphael Xavier serves as artistic director and Crystal Frazier serves as assistant artistic director while Brandyn S. Harris is rehearsal director, David Todaro is the technical supervisor and lighting designer and Darrin M. Ross is the production manager.

RHAW is recommended for everyone 6 and older. This project is partially supported by a grant from Pennsylvania Performing Arts on Tour, a program developed and funded by The Heinz Endowments; the William Penn Foundation; the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency; and The Pew Charitable Trusts; and administered by Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation.

To watch a video from RHAW, click [HERE](#).

Performance Schedule - 10 performances:

Fri 5/17 7pm\*

Sat 5/18 2pm and 7pm

Sun 5/19 12pm and 5pm

Fri 5/24 7pm\*

Sat 5/25 2pm and 7pm

Sun 5/26 12pm and 5pm

#### \*TXT Marks the Spot

After select Friday performances of RHAW, The New Victory invites ticketholders to participate in TXT Marks the Spot, which combines digital gaming, scavenger hunting and the performing arts into a unique post-show experience for families to enjoy together. Equipped with a map and personal mobile device, each family will interact with New Victory Teaching Artists as they roam from lower lobby to mezzanine, learning more about the theater and the performance they've just seen. For RHAW, TXT Marks the Spot will take place on May 17 and May 24.

Tickets for RHAW at The New Victory Theater (209 West 42nd Street) cost \$25, \$18, \$12 and \$9 for Members and \$38, \$28, \$18 and \$14 for Non-members based on seat locations.

Theater-goers who buy tickets for three or more New Victory shows in the current season qualify for free Membership benefits, including up to 35-percent savings on tickets all season long. To purchase tickets online, visit [NewVictory.org](http://NewVictory.org), and to purchase by phone, call 646-223-3010. The New Victory Theater box office (209 West 42nd Street) is open Sunday and Monday from 11am-5pm and Tuesday through Saturday from 12pm-7pm.



## **Rennie Harris' RHAW to Groove at New Victory Theater, 5/17-26**

*Wednesday, Apr, 17, 2013; 4:30 PM; - by [Dance News Desk](#)*

Dr. [Rennie Harris](#), [Alvin Ailey](#) Award recipient and renowned choreographer, returns to the New Victory stage (Legends of Hip-Hop, New Vic 2004, 2006; Puremovement, New Vic 1999) to inspire the next generation of hip-hoppers with [Rennie Harris](#)Awe-Inspiring Works-RHAW. Featuring a hip-hop dance theater company of talented young dancers, RHAW delivers straight- up Philly soul and fresh spins on classic street dance styles, creating depictions of city life and young love. [Rennie Harris'](#) RHAW, will run at The New Victory Theater, 209 West 42nd Street from May 17 through 26.

Downplaying the abstract while pushing a dramatic aesthetic, the fresh, enthusiastic and generous performers of [Rennie Harris](#) Awe-inspiring Works (RHAW) take street dancing back to the basics. RHAW will feature three works by the versatile Dr. [Rennie Harris](#): "Brother," an emotional performance about less fortunate male figures in society who are often judged and condemned; "Three B Boys & A Girl," a love story told through nontraditional break dancing vocabulary; and an excerpt from "Bohemian Rhapsody," a dance musical featuring music by Queen, which tells a coming-of-age story about one young man's search for love, identity and justice.

Additional numbers include the memorable "110th Street," featuring music by Bobby Womack and Peace, and "JAM/Hip Hop Bows," a grand ode to The King of Pop choreographed by Rodney Hill and featuring music by [Michael Jackson](#). Upbeat, fun and full of verve, "JAM/Hip Hop Bows" utilizes popping and hip-hop social dances of the 80s and 90s to create a buoyant show finale that summarizes the foundation and core of RHAW-youthful, energetic and ready at a moment's notice.

A Philadelphia native, Dr. Harris founded RHAW in the "City of Brotherly Love" to serve urban youth by demonstrating discipline and focus through performance, dance education, outreach programming and mentorship. Inspired by the overwhelming interest from local teens and young adults who hoped to join his internationally renowned company [Rennie Harris](#) Puremovement, Dr. Harris also aims to foster and cultivate hip-hop culture and preserve its legacy. Ultimately, RHAW is an emerging artist dance company that teaches its members professionalism, show production, street dance history and

technique in various styles of movement including Campbell Locking, Popping & Boogaloo, Bboy/girl, House and Hip-hop.

RHAW is directed by Dr. Rennie Harris and features dancers Davion Brown, Amaryah Bone, Katia Cruz, Joshua Culbreath, Phillip Cuttino Jr., Neka Chantol French, Brandyn S. Harris, Mai Lê Ho Johnson, Macca Malik, Kevin S. Rand, Neha Sharma, Mariah Tlili and Shafeek Westbrook. The company is managed and directed by Rodney Hill. Raphael Xavier serves as artistic director and Crystal Frazier serves as assistant artistic director while Brandyn S. Harris is rehearsal director, David Todaro is the technical supervisor and lighting designer and Darrin M. Ross is the production manager.

RHAW is recommended for everyone 6 and older. This project is partially supported by a grant from Pennsylvania Performing Arts on Tour, a program developed and funded by The Heinz Endowments; the William Penn Foundation; the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency; and The Pew Charitable Trusts; and administered by Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation.

To watch a video from RHAW, click [HERE](#).

Performance Schedule - 10 performances:

Fri 5/17 7pm\*

Sat 5/18 2pm and 7pm

Sun 5/19 12pm and 5pm

Fri 5/24 7pm\*

Sat 5/25 2pm and 7pm

Sun 5/26 12pm and 5pm

\*TXT Marks the Spot

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For more information, visit [NewVictory.org](http://NewVictory.org).

Dr. [Rennie Harris](#) started teaching hip-hop at the age of 15 with the Smithsonian Institute and continues to teach worldwide. In 2001, in addition to receiving an [Alvin Ailey](#) Award for Choreography, he received three Bessie Awards for Rome & Jewels and was nominated for a [Laurence Olivier](#) Award. His critically-acclaimed adult company [Rennie Harris Puremovement](#), founded in 1992, is the first and longest running hip-hop dance touring company. Among many awards and honors, he received an honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from Bates College, a 2010 Guggenheim Fellowship for recognition of his work as a choreographer and a 2007 United States Artist Fellowship. Harris was voted one of the most influential people in the last one hundred years of Philadelphia history and has received the keys to both Miami and Philadelphia. In 2011, Puremovement was chosen to serve as a cultural ambassador for [President Obama's](#) "Dance Motion USA" campaign in the Middle East.

Since The New Victory Theater opened its doors in 1995, it has become a cultural rite of passage for young New Yorkers, their families and schoolmates. At affordable prices, The New Victory presents sophisticated, thought-provoking and professional productions that are as artistically rich as they are entertaining, resulting in season after season of multidisciplinary works from around the globe and close to home. The theater's contributions to the cultural landscape of the city were recently celebrated by the prestigious New York critics' organization, The Drama Desk, which presented The New Victory Theater with a 2012 Special Award for "providing enchanting, sophisticated children's theater that appeals to the child in all of us, and for nurturing a love of theater in young people."

An independent, nonprofit organization, The New 42nd Street was created to assume long-term responsibility and oversight for seven historic theaters on 42nd Street between 7th and 8th Avenues. The projects of The New 42nd Street include: The New Victory Theater, a performing arts theater devoted to kids and families; the New 42nd Street Studios, a state-of-the-art, 10-story rehearsal studio/office/theater "complex", and The Duke on 42nd Street, an intimate 200-seat black-box theater.