

LaTasha Barnes Biography

Awarded a 2021 Bessie for Outstanding Performer, LaTasha Barnes is an internationally recognized dancer, choreographer, educator, and Tradition-bearer of Black American Social Dance from Richmond, VA. She is globally celebrated for her musicality, athleticism, and joyful presence throughout the cultural traditions she bears: House, Hip-Hop, Waacking, Vernacular Jazz, and Lindy Hop, among them. Barnes' expansive artistic, competitive and performative skills have made her a frequent collaborator to Dorrance Dance, Singapore based Timbre Arts Group, Ephrat Asherie Dance, and many more. The NY Times said of her most recent collaboration with Caleb Teicher in *Swing Out*: "Barnes is especially extraordinary for the way the past and the present can pass through her..."

Barnes leadership and business skills have placed her in positions of service as Chair of the Board of Trustees for Ladies of Hip-Hop Festival[®], Vice President of Marketing & Outreach for the International Lindy Hop Championship[®], Co-director HellaBlackLindyHop, Board Member of the Black Lindy Hoppers Fund, the Frankie Manning Foundation and a contributing member to the NEFER Global Movement Collective.

Expanding the scope of impact for the communities she serves, Barnes completed her self-designed Masters in Ethnochoreology, Black Studies and Performance Studies thru New York University Gallatin School (2019). Her thesis and continuing research are working to bridge the gap between communities of practice and academic cultural dance research, performance, preservation and pedagogy. In concert with these efforts, she is deeply honored to be a part of the Brain Trust that developed the groundbreaking stage production *Swing Out*, bringing the passion and power of Lindy Hop and its community to the concert stage.

Barnes is also honored to be the visionary and Artistic Director of the intergenerational and intercommunal cultural arts experience *The Jazz Continuum*, supported and presented by Guggenheim Works & Process and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in 2021. In support of this dialogue, Barnes is a contributing author to the forthcoming text *Rooted Jazz Dance: Africanist Aesthetics and Equity in the Twenty-First Century* - Univ. FL Press (2021). Ensuring future artists and dance scholars maintain authentic cultural context as they move through the world bearing forth Black dance traditions, Barnes joined the faculty of Arizona State University School of Music, Dance & Theater as Asst. Prof of Dance in fall, 2021.

Across all her efforts, Barnes' eternal *purpose* is to inspire fellow artists and arts enthusiasts to champion *artivism* through cultivating an authentic sense of self and intention in their creative expressions and daily lives.