



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ARTSEMERSON WELCOMES THE RETURN OF STEP AFRIKA!
*THE MIGRATION: REFLECTIONS ON JACOB LAWRENCE***

**AN EXPLOSION OF DANCE, DRUMS, AND CANVAS
FIVE PERFORMANCES ONLY – MAY 3-6, 2018
EMERSON CUTLER MAJESTIC THEATRE, BOSTON**

TICKETS ON SALE NOW

The Press Performance is Thursday, May 3, 2018 at 7:30pm
email ami@motormmm.com for tickets, more information, images, and select interviews

[Boston, MA—**March 23, 2018**] ArtsEmerson, Boston’s leading presenter of contemporary world theatre, proudly welcomes the return of Step Afrika! with **The Migration: Reflections on Jacob Lawrence**. Combining South African Gumboot, Western African dance, vocals, drumming, visual art and audience participation, **The Migration** begins in Africa and chronicles the epic, historical movement of thousands of African Americans in the US from the rural south to the industrial cities of the north between 1910-1930. Directed by Jakari Sherman, the limited Boston run of only five performances takes place May 3 through 6, 2018 at the Emerson Cutler Majestic Theater, located at 559 Washington Street in Downtown Boston. Tickets range from \$20-\$90, and may be purchased online at www.ArtsEmerson.org, by phone at 617.824.8400, or in person at the box office. Student, senior and group discounts are available.



“We're so looking forward to Step Afrika's return,” shares ArtsEmerson Artistic Director David Dower. “They really struck a chord with Boston audiences with their self-titled piece, revealing a capacity to make the whole theater jump with their charm, skill, and high-voltage performance. **The Migration** is the exact right work for their return to ArtsEmerson. The stories captured in those colorful Lawrence paintings alongside the language of dance and music reclaim a history and a narrative that belongs to so many Bostonians, but many don't know. The resulting dimensions of color, sound, movement, and story bring these paintings, and the struggles they capture, to exuberant life, helping us see our collective history.”

About The Migration: A Reflection on Jacob Lawrence

Step Afrika! triumphantly returns to Boston with **The Migration**, a multi-media powerhouse production that chronicles and celebrates the paths of the brave men and women who left the American South searching for better opportunities. Inspired by painter Jacob Lawrence’s groundbreaking series about “The Great Migration,” eighteen performers transform the work into a textured, interdisciplinary movement piece incorporating South African Gumboot, Western African dance, vocals, drumming and audience participation. Click here to view the video trailer: <https://youtu.be/p9KclxKETNo>

About the Paintings

In 1941, Jacob Lawrence, then just twenty-three years old, completed a series of sixty paintings about the Great Migration, the mass movement of African Americans from the rural South to the urban North. Prior to 1910, ninety percent of African Americans lived in the south. Between 1910 - 1920 the African American population in the North increased 65 percent. It was a movement on an epic scale with an impact similar to the migration from southern and eastern Europe into northern US cities decades earlier. Both migratory historical events are universal and shaped the cultural landscape of America. Lawrence’s work is a landmark in the history of modern art and a key example of the way that history painting was radically reimagined in the modern era. The Migration Series is jointly owned by The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC and the Museum of Modern Art, New York. <http://lawrencemigration.phillipscollection.org/>

The Migration: Reflections on Jacob Lawrence Performance Schedule

Thursday, May 3, 2018	7:30pm	press performance
Friday, May 4, 2018	8:00pm	
Saturday, May 5, 2018	2:00pm	
Saturday, May 5, 2018	8:00pm	
Sunday, May 6, 2018	2:00pm	

About Step Afrika!

Founded in 1994 by C. Brian Williams, Step Afrika! is the first professional company dedicated to the tradition of stepping. It now ranks as one of the top ten African-American dance companies in the United States. The Company blends percussive dance styles practiced by historically African American fraternities and sororities, traditional South African dances, and a wide variety of contemporary and folkloric art forms. Performances are much more than dance shows; they integrate songs, storytelling, humor and audience participation. Step Afrika! promotes stepping as an educational tool for young people, focusing on teamwork, academic achievement and cross-cultural understanding. The Company reaches tens of thousands of Americans each year through a 50-city tour of colleges and theatres and performs globally as Washington, DC’s one and only Cultural Ambassador. Step Afrika! has earned Mayor’s Arts Awards for Outstanding Contribution to Arts Education (2005); Innovation in the Arts (2008); and Excellence in an Artistic Discipline (2012); and most recently performed at the White House for former President Barack Obama and the First Lady. Step Afrika! is featured prominently at the

Smithsonian's new National Museum of African-American History & Culture with the world's first stepping interactive. www.stepafrika.org

About ArtsEmerson

ArtsEmerson is Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theatre and is the professional presenting and producing organization of the Office of the Arts at Emerson College. Founded in 2010, the year the US Census confirmed there was no single cultural majority in Boston, ArtsEmerson committed to building a cultural institution that reflects the diversity of our city by engaging *all* communities through stories that reveal and deepen connections to each other. By cultivating diversity in the art *and* in the audience, ArtsEmerson ignites public conversation around the most vexing societal challenges as a catalyst for overcoming them. ArtsEmerson is committed to welcoming everyone into its landmark venues, located in Boston's downtown Theatre District, for a diverse program of contemporary theatre, film, and music from around the city and around the world. In addition, ArtsEmerson engages in a range of community partnerships and produces a series of initiatives that make visible the rich diversity of cultural activity in the region. ArtsEmerson is led by Artistic Director, David Dower and Executive Director, David Howse. For more information, visit ArtsEmerson.org.

About Emerson College

Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,780 undergraduates and 670 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic. The College has an active network of 39,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the arts. For more information, visit emerson.edu.

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