



Kwame Shaka Opare

Teaching Artist • Performing Artist

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Kwame Shaka Opare is classically trained in West African dance and has a MFA in Dance from the University of Maryland. He has created critically-acclaimed works that speak to social issues. In 2016 Kwame became Brooklyn Academy of Music's inaugural recipient of the *Baba Chuck Davis Emerging Choreographer Fellowship*, which awarded him the opportunity to study dance in Ghana, West Africa where he performed and created work with the National Dance Company of Ghana. Renowned for his ability to engage students, educators, and audiences alike, Kwame is frequently sought to speak about his work in dance and dance education and has been twice featured in TEDx Talks (*Disrupting the Miseducation of African-American youth* [2014] and *"Triumph of Disruption: Disrupting the status quo in education among African American Youth* [2017]). In 2017 he served as Artist-in-Residence with the Virginia Department of Health/Petersburg Public Schools and was a featured lecturer alongside professional colleague and mentor Dr. Jonathan Kozol at the *Adverse Childhood Experiences Summit* in Petersburg, VA. Kwame leads professional development workshops in dance and dance education as a **CETA** artist (Changing Education Through the Arts) with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Maryland State Arts Council

National Dance Education Organization

Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA),
Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Curriculum Development

Instruction Specialist

Project Management

Creative Director

Graphic Design

Theatrical Production

EDUCATION

- 2013 MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN DANCE** – Performance and Education
University of Maryland (College Park, MD) Thesis: *Triumph of Disruption: A Movement to Subvert*
- 2010 BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS IN DANCE AND DANCE EDUCATION**
Towson University (Towson, MD)
- 2007 TEACHING ARTIST INSTITUTE GRADUATE**
Specialized training in Arts Integration
Young Audiences/Maryland State Arts

PERFORMANCE

- 2016 - NOW INDEPENDENT DANCE ARTIST** • Choreographer / Performer
/ Artistic Director / Producer
- 2003 - 2016 DISHIBEM TRADITIONAL CONTEMPORARY DANCE GROUP**
(Baltimore, MD) Founder, Artistic Director, Choreographer,
Lead Performer and Soloist
- 1997 - 2004 STOMP (NEW YORK CITY // US TOUR // EUROPEAN TOUR)**
Lead Performer, Rehearsal Director, NYC, National and
International Tours

TEACHING

- 2015 - NOW INDEPENDENT TEACHING ARTIST**
Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA), Kennedy
Center for the Performing Arts (Washington, DC) •
Virginia Public School System (Petersburg, VA)
- 2014 - 2015 HIGH POINT HIGH SCHOOL**
Full-Time Dance Educator
- 2010 - 2014 UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND** (College Park, MD)
West African Dance Instructor, Adjunct Professor
- 2007 - 2014 YOUNG AUDIENCES OF MARYLAND** (Baltimore, MD)
Performing and Teaching Artist Maryland Schools

AWARDS / HONORS

- 2016 BABA CHUCK DAVIS EMERGING CHOREOGRAPHY FELLOWSHIP**
Brooklyn Academy of Music (Brooklyn, NY)
- 2016 DANCEMOTION USA** International Artist Pilot Program
Host/Selected participant (*New York, NY*)
- 2014 SMITH FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP**
University of Maryland (College Park, MD)
- 2014 RUBY'S ARTIST PROJECT GRANTEE**
The Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance
(Baltimore, MD)
- 2012 UMD / SMITH FAMILY RESEARCH GRANT**
University of Maryland (College Park, MD)
- 2010 FINE ARTS / DANCE DEPARTMENT AWARD**
Towson University (Towson, MD)
- 2008 KATHERINE DUNHAM AWARD**
Best choreography in a play or music/dance concert (Chicago, IL)