

# Two Extraordinary Companies

## Buran Bush Women and Compagnie Janet-Bi

The next performance of Portland White Bird Portland State University dance series features a collaboration between Urban Bush Women and Compagnie Janet-Bi on Wednesday, April 2 at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall. That same week, White Bird will also present the Brenda Angiel Aerial Dance Company, April 3-5 at Portland State's University's Lincoln Hall. (See story and photo on opposite page.)

Urban Bush Women is made up of seven women from Brooklyn, N.Y., and Compagnie Janet-Bi, is comprised of seven men from Senegal.

Their Portland performance will feature a new work, *Les Écailles de la Mémoire* (The Scales of Memory), which focuses on the themes of differing cultural landscapes and artistic exchange.

Now in the midst of a U.S. tour, the work has already garnered raves from critics. The *Houston Chronicle* wrote, "Their work together looks seamless -- unabashedly modern but infused with a traditional African vocabulary... Watching this expression of pure physicality, you can't help but feel the joy."

Urban Bush Women is a company well known to White Bird audiences. Founded by Artistic Director Jawole Willa Jo Zollar in 1984, the company seeks to bring the untold and under-told stories of disenfranchised people to light through dance.

Janet-Bi is one of Africa's leading contemporary dance groups. Founded in 1998 by Artistic Director Germaine Acogny, called "the mother of African contemporary dance," the company has developed a dance technique that combines traditional West African dance with elements of classical ballet and modern dance.

The all-female 'Urban Bush Women' dancers from New York combine forces with the all-male 'Compagnie Janet-Bi' dancers from Senegal, to bridge cultural landscapes.



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