

# TheaterJones

Review: Ronald K. Brown/Evidence | TITAS | Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House

## Here's the Proof

**Ronald K. Brown/Evidence: A Dance Company returned to Dallas, thanks to TITAS, for an intoxicating performance at AT&T Performing Arts Center.**

by [Margaret Putnam](#)

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Photo: Sharen Bradford/The Dancing Image

Ronald K. Brown/Evidence performed at the AT&T Performing Arts Center, presented by TITAS, on Jan. 17, 2015

**Dallas** — **Ronald K. Brown/Evidence: A Dance Company** swept into the AT&T Performing Arts Center's Winspear Opera House Saturday night, presented by TITAS, with something fresh and new and completely unpretentious. Of its many virtues, the greatest was that you did not need to analyze, interpret, ponder—just let dance and music pull you into its wonderful orbit.

Ronald K. Brown/Evidence

Artistic director and choreographer Ronald K. Brown's *Come Ye* and *On Earth Together* clearly showed their African influence, but the two works had a contemporary, American flavor. The movement was free and fluid: a leap easily morphed into a turn, a deep bend into an arm swing. Arms sweep the air, propelling bodies into quarter or full turns. Transitions are seamless, turns sustained, and torsos fluid. When working as a group, these dancers seem to ruffle on a breeze.

The stage is fairly dim in *Come Ye* as dancers emerge wearing white shirts and dark blue pants. Nina Simone's plaintive songs create something of a sober air. Later, as the lighting changes, so do the costumes and the music: Fela Anikulapo Kuti's bouncy, percussive music. Whether it is a dress, a frock coat or a blouse, every part has long panels, and when the dancers turn, the panels flare out dramatically, intensifying the sense of freedom.

Some of the dance called for uniform movement, but for most of the time the three men and five women moved as individuals, creating striking images that complemented each other. Think not of a field where corn stalks are swaying at the same angle, but of a flotilla of sailing ships tacking and jibing.

*Come Ye* was engaging; *On Earth Together* was enthralling. Stevie Wonder's music could have been written just for this work, for the dance and music merged.

Each section had its own flavor, whether it was "Don't You Worry 'Bout a Thang," "Baby, All I Do is Think of You," or "For the City." The latter featured New Yorkers bustling about in all directions, a short scene with a drug dealer and sirens, a man being handcuffed, and a woman stalking off in disdain. But what made "For the City" so memorable was the repetition. The music cascaded, repeated and repeated, as the dancers swayed, swirled, bent backward, massed, broke apart, left, re-entered, intoxicated by the pounding rhythm. It was Brown's version of *Bolero*, driving and intense and intoxicating.

» Margaret Putnam has been writing about dance since 1980, with works published by *D Magazine*, *The Dallas Observer*, *The Dallas Times Herald*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *The New York Times*, *Playbill*, *Stagebill*, *Pointe Magazine* and *Dance Magazine*.

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