

# MARC BAMUTHI JOSEPH

*/peh-LO-tah/*

Developed with and Directed by  
**Michael John Garcés**. Choreography  
by **Stacey Printz**

*“Marc Bamuthi Joseph belongs to a rare breed of artists who can kindle political and cultural awareness while delivering a highly entertaining performance.” – The Philadelphia Inquirer*



photo: Jon Lowenstein/NOOR

Marc Bamuthi Joseph is acclaimed for his groundbreaking productions that combine spoken word and contemporary movement in an experimental theatrical form based on hip-hop aesthetics. His new multimedia performance work */peh-LO-tah/* links art and sport to notions of camaraderie, pride, and tradition across cultures. Inspired by memories of playing soccer growing up, Joseph draws on his experiences as a child of Haitian immigrants, chronicles of his travels to World Cups in South Africa and Brazil, and his explosive hip-hop style. Themes of freedom and citizenship are articulated through the lens of immigration as he questions: What is your place? What makes “home” home? The soccer technique-inspired choreography complements the musical narratives performed in English and Portuguese with the backdrop of South African drums, inspirational gospel, and the power of poetic verse. This reflective and timely work is conversant with and in tune to the pulse of Black Lives Matter, with “the Beautiful Game” as the frame, and Black life as the center.

Beyond the show, */peh-LO-tah/* features a powerful education and outreach component, engaging immigrant youth in soccer “clinics” and writing workshops, and academia with discussions around immigration, global economies, and sports as politics.

*/peh-LO-tah/* has been commissioned by the Kennedy Center for the Arts and the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), Chicago. It is made possible with funding support by the New England Foundation for the Arts’ National Theater Project, with lead funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; The MAP Fund (a program of Creative Capital, supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation); The Panta Rhea Foundation; The Wattis Foundation; The Zellerbach Family Foundation; East Bay Community Foundation; and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Developmental residencies have been provided by Southern Methodist University, Georgia Tech, Wesleyan University Center for the Arts, and Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. Support for the pilot of moving and passing in Harlem and the Bronx is funded by Guggenheim Social Practice, an initiative supported by the Edmond de Rothschild Foundations. Marc Bamuthi Joseph is a participant in the Global Connections - ON the ROAD program, funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and administered by Theatre Communications Group.

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Running time: 80 minutes, no intermission  
Open Availability  
National Theater Project subsidies available!

Produced by **mapp international** productions

# artist biography

Marc Bamuthi Joseph is a pillar of American performance, arts education, and artistic curation as an arts activist, spoken word artist, performer, and librettist. After appearing on Broadway as a young actor, Joseph wrote and performed in a series of poetically-based works for the stage that have toured worldwide, including *Word Becomes Flesh*, *Scourge*, and the *break/s: a mixtape for stage*, all of which were produced by MAPP International Productions. His full-evening theater work, *red, black & GREEN: a blues* was also produced by MAPP, and premiered at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (2011) and toured through 2014. *red, black & GREEN: a blues* was nominated for a Bessie (2013) for "Outstanding Production of a work stretching the boundaries of a traditional form."

Joseph's commissions include *Black Joy in the Hour of Chaos* (2015), the libretto for *Home in 7* for the Atlanta Ballet (2011) and theater work for South Coast Repertory Theater's *Crossroads Commissioning Project*. His essays have been published in *Cultural Transformations: Youth and Pedagogies of Possibility*, Harvard Education Press (2013); and *Total Chaos: Next Elements*, Basic Civitas (2007). Joseph has lectured at more than 200 colleges, has carried adjunct professorships at Stanford and Lehigh, among others, and currently serves as Director of Performing Arts at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco. He co-founded *Life is Living*, a national series of one-day festivals designed to activate under-resourced parks and affirm peaceful urban life. Joseph has won numerous grants, including from the National Endowment for the Arts and Creative Capital Foundation. Named one of "America's Top Young Innovators in the Arts and Sciences," he graced the cover of Smithsonian Magazine (2007), received the inaugural US Artists Rockefeller Fellowship (2007), and was an inaugural Doris Duke artist (2012). Mr. Joseph is currently completing a new work with Bill T. Jones and Daniel Bernard Roumain for Opera Philadelphia called *We Shall Not be Moved* while serving as Chief of Program and Pedagogy at YBCA in San Francisco.



photo: John Coyne

**/peh-LO-tah/ Collaborators** include: Michael John Garcés (director), Stacey Printz (choreographer), Tommy Shepherd (composer), Tom Ontiveros (lighting designer), and David Szlasa (scenic and video designer), Joan Osato (photographer/film production), Rob Kaplowitz (sound designer), and Meghan Healey (costume designer).

**Performed by The Living Word Project:** Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Amara Tabor-Smith, Tommy Shepherd, Traci Tolmaire, Yaw Agyeman



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