



Press Release

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Tavaziva Celebrates 15 Years of Making Contemporary African Dance

Tavaziva is one of the UK's leading professional, contemporary-African dance companies, led by Zimbabwean-born Artistic Director, Choreographer and Music Producer Bawren Tavaziva who established the company in 2004. Now a national touring company, supported by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation, Bawren Tavaziva has reached audiences in every corner of the UK.

In Tavaziva's 15th year, the company will embark on the creation of its new production *BOY'S KHAYA*, featuring seven exceptional dancers. With his distinctive African style that is highly original, inventive and thrilling to watch, this new work includes cutting-edge digital design and motion-capture technology, adding to the striking visual staging of *BOY'S KHAYA*.

The show will premiere and tour in spring 2020 and will be accompanied by an education and participation programme of workshops, masterclasses, residencies and talks.

"Looking back over the last 15 years, it's amazing to take stock of all that we have achieved. Thousands of people have come in to contact with our work through performances, workshops, projects and commissions. I'm excited for BOY'S KHAYA and using technology to create a new experience for our audiences. I'm looking forward to what the next 15 years has in store!" **Bawren Tavaziva**

Other 2019 highlights include:

- Tavaziva comes together with F.R.E.S.H Studios for a screening of excerpts of *Izindava* and a fascinating live interview with Bawren Tavaziva, exploring trauma through dance. Saturday 4 May, 5pm at Fresh Ground Battersea as a part of Wandsworth Arts Fringe.
- The culmination of the *Journeying Between* community project, in collaboration with Royal Academy of Dance, Enable Leisure & Sport in partnership with Wandsworth Council and Linden Homes. Performance is on Tuesday 7 May, 6pm at Royal Academy of Dance as a part of Wandsworth Arts Fringe.
- A series of Professional Contemporary Class with Bawren Tavaziva, for dance students, graduates and professionals. From April to December at bbodance.
- Creation of an exhibition of Bawren's career and the history of Tavaziva. The exhibition will be toured with the new work *BOY'S KHAYA* in 2020.

- ENDS -

For further information and images, please contact Emily Winfield, Company Manager, on 020 8237 7010 or emily.winfield@tavazivadance.com.

Photoshoots with the company, plus press and radio interviews with Bawren Tavaziva can be arranged on request. You are also invited to attend a studio rehearsal of *BOY'S KHAYA* during the creation that starts in November 2019, please be in contact to arrange a suitable time.

About Bawren Tavaziva

Bawren Tavaziva grew up in a rural village near Masvingo in Zimbabwe. Football, Michael Jackson, New Edition and Kung Fu movies viewed at the local community hall provided inspiration to Bawren and his friends. Bawren's musical talents also developed at this time on a guitar made by his brother from a 5 litre tin can and fishing wire.

At the age of 12 Bawren Tavaziva attended an outreach ballet project with the National Ballet of Zimbabwe at his local community centre. From day one, his determination and talent led him to a life-long passion for dance. He danced with Tumbuka for five years and toured Africa. He came to England to join Phoenix and Union dance and in 2004 he presented his own choreography and music as a finalist at The Place Prize with a deeply moving quintet entitled *Umdhlalo Kasisi*, in memory of his sister who sadly died of HIV.

After this, Bawren formed his own company and became Artistic Director of Tavaziva Dance and in the same year won a fellowship with Dance of the African Diaspora's Trailblazer programme. His work can be controversial, aiming to provoke and change audience's perceptions as he challenges and highlights important issues that are unspoken especially in Zimbabwe.

About Tavaziva

Tavaziva is renowned for its beautiful and dynamic hybridization of contemporary, ballet and African dance. The style demands a high degree of technique, talent and skill resulting in unique, intricate and thrilling choreography for audiences to be inspired by.

Tavaziva tours to venues throughout the UK and internationally, hosts a post-graduate dance apprenticeship programme to support dancers to becoming first-class professionals, delivers a range of education and training programmes for young dancers, and has been commissioned to make work for organisations such as CAT (Centre for Advanced Training), Association of the African Diaspora, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and Southbank Centre.

In 2017 Bawren was commissioned by Rambert to research a new dance work *Mud Child*, working with Polka Theatre's Artistic Director Pete Glanville. In 2018 Bawren choreographed *Ending the Silence* by Euton Daley MBE and was a Shona Dance Consultant for the Young Vic's striking production *The Convert*.

Tavaziva has produced: *Umdlalo Kasisi* 2004, *Soul Inspired* 2005, *Bophelo* 2006, *Chatsva* 2007, *Heart of Darkness* 2009, *Wild Dog* 2010, *Double Take* 2011, *Sensual Africa* 2012, *Greed* 2013, *Tavaziva Ten* 2014, *Africarmen* 2015, *Izindava* 2017.

The company's dancers are Lisa Rowley, Asmara Cammock, Harriet Waghorn, Ihsaan de Banya and Dakarayi Mashava. Plus, Jessica Chambers and Ruby Edmonds through the Postgraduate Apprentice Scheme at Northern School of Contemporary Dance.

About BOY'S KHAYA

In this moving and powerful new work, Bawren Tavaziva seeks to offer a universal comment on AFRICA and who we are today.

BOY'S KHAYA, meaning 'servants house' is a derogatory term, a colonial legacy still very apparent today in Zimbabwe. It draws evocative memories for Bawren who grew up in one and speaks powerfully, through dance, about the fragility of human beings.

The emotional legacy of colonialism, monarchies, political persecution, slavery and new corporate grabs provide a rich source of untold material for BOY'S KHAYA, a dance without words but one that speaks loudly.