



## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **'CAN YOU BRING IT,' AN 'AFROPOP' DOCUMENTARY, WINS PEABODY AWARD**

**The "AfroPoP" film, about choreographer Bill T. Jones' epic ballet "D-Man in the Waters," to receive the accolade at the 84th Annual Peabody Awards on June 9**

**Stream the documentary on WORLD's YouTube channel through July 9**

**NEW YORK (May 9, 2024)** — *Can You Bring It: Bill T. Jones and D-Man in the Waters*, a documentary in Black Public Media and WORLD's *AfroPoP: The Ultimate Cultural Exchange* series, has won a 2024 Peabody Award. Rosalynde LeBlanc and Tom Hurwitz's documentary about Jones' powerful and healing ballet sprung out of the heartbreaking AIDS crisis, opened season 15 of the popular documentary series ***AfroPoP: The Ultimate Cultural Exchange***. *AfroPoP* is co-produced by [Black Public Media](#) (BPM) and [WORLD](#), and the film was co-presented and distributed to public television stations by [American Public Television](#) (APT). The award will be presented at the 84th Annual Peabody Awards on Sunday, June 9, at the Beverly Wilshire hotel in Beverly Hills, California.

In honor of the win, *Can You Bring It: Bill T. Jones and D-Man in the Waters* has been rereleased on [WORLD's YouTube channel](#). Viewers may watch the documentary for free on the [BPM website](#), [WORLDchannel.org](#), and [YouTube](#) through July 9, 2024.

The film takes viewers to LeBlanc's dance studio at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, where her students grapple with learning Bill T. Jones' tour de force ballet "D-Man in the Waters," one of the most important works of art to come out of the age of AIDS. It also transports the audience back to 1989, when the dance was created by Jones, one of America's most renowned choreographers, as members of the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company were themselves besieged by the AIDS pandemic. Dancers in the company reflect on the devastating losses of their beloved members, including co-founder Zane and Demian Acquavella, a star dancer whose nickname was "D-Man." Back in the studio, LeBlanc's current-day students work to master the intense physicality of the piece and to understand a period in America before they were alive. Soon they face the formidable Jones himself as he drops in to observe rehearsals and offer feedback.

The documentary received unanimous critical acclaim during its theatrical release. At the time, Kimber Myers of the *Los Angeles Times* said, "Death and grief may exist in the soul of 'D-Man in the Waters' but 'Can You Bring It' is full of vitality and energy, a testament to the power of art in the face of tragedy."

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“We are profoundly honored to have our work recognized by this award that speaks to excellence in storytelling, and we sincerely thank everyone involved with us in funding, making and distributing *Can You Bring It...*,” said LeBlanc and Hurwitz.

The prestigious Peabody Awards honors excellence in storytelling that reflects the social issues and the emerging voices of our day. According to the organization, *Can You Bring It* is one of 34 projects to receive the distinction this year out of 1,100 entries.

Audiences can visit the [Black Public Media YouTube channel](#) to watch an [AfroPoP Artist Chat](#) featuring Jones and LeBlanc on the power of dance and other art.

Since its premiere in 2008, *AfroPoP* has presented 91 feature and short films spotlighting stories from across the African diaspora. The series is executive produced by BPM Executive Director **Leslie Fields-Cruz** and WORLD (at GBH) Editor-in-Chief and Executive Producer **Chris Hastings**. **Denise A. Greene** is series director/producer, **Carol Bash** is series associate producer and **Ashton Pina** is the series writer.

*Can You Bring It: Bill T. Jones and D-Man in the Waters* was made possible by grants from Loyola Marymount University’s College of Communication and Fine Arts, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Drollinger Family Charitable Foundation and the Ford Foundation’s JustFilms.

Follow the film on Instagram at @dman\_documentary or Facebook at @DManMovie.

For more information on *AfroPoP*, now in Season 16, visit <https://blackpublicmedia.org/afropop/>.

#### **ABOUT BLACK PUBLIC MEDIA:**

**Black Public Media** (BPM) supports the development of visionary content creators and distributes stories about the global Black experience to inspire a more equitable and inclusive future. For more than 44 years, BPM has addressed the needs of unserved and underserved audiences. BPM-supported programs have won five Emmys, 10 Peabodys, three Anthem Awards, 14 Emmy nominations, and an Oscar nomination. BPM continues to address historical, contemporary, and systemic challenges that traditionally impede the development and distribution of Black stories. For more information, visit [blackpublicmedia.org](http://blackpublicmedia.org) and follow BPM on Instagram and Facebook and @BLKPublicMedia on X.

#### **ABOUT WORLD:**

**WORLD** shares the best of public media in news, documentaries and programming. WORLD’s original series examines the issues and amplifies the voices of those often ignored by mainstream media. The multiplatform channel helps audiences understand conflicts, movements and cultures from around the globe. Its original work has won two Peabody Awards, an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Award, an International Documentary Association Award, a National News and Documentary Emmy Award, two Webby Awards and many others honoring diversity of content and makers. WORLD is carried by 194 member stations in markets representing 77% of US TV households. Funding for WORLD is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation

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and the National Endowment for the Arts. WORLD is produced by GBH in partnership with WNET and is distributed by American Public Television (APT). Find out more at [WORLDChannel.org](http://WORLDChannel.org).

#### **ABOUT AMERICAN PUBLIC TELEVISION:**

**American Public Television** (APT) is the leading syndicator of high-quality, top-rated programming to the nation's public television stations. Founded in 1961, APT distributes 250 new program titles per year and more than one-third of the top 100 highest-rated public television titles in the U.S. APT's diverse catalog includes prominent documentaries, performance, dramas, how-to programs, classic movies, children's series and news and current affairs programs. *Doc Martin*, *Midsomer Murders*, *America's Test Kitchen*, *Rick Steves' Europe*, *The Best of the Joy of Painting* with Bob Ross, *My Life is Murder*, *Pati's Mexican Table*, *Christopher Kimball's Milk Street Television*, *Legacy List with Matt Paxton*, *Table for All with Bukie Elegbede*, *Lidia's Kitchen*, *Kevin Belton's New Orleans Kitchen*, *Lucky Chow*, *NHK Newslines*, *BBC News* and *Biz Kid\$* are a sampling of APT's programs, considered some of the most popular on public television. APT also licenses programs internationally through its APT Worldwide service and distributes Create@TV — featuring the best of public television's lifestyle programming — and WORLD™, public television's premier news, science and documentary channel. To find out more about APT's programs and services, visit [APTonline.org](http://APTonline.org).

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