



Sarah Trist  
Dance Management Agency

# Born to Manifest



*“It's a powerful piece with controlled performances from both dancers, they emanate frustration, anger and sadness with pent up physicality and flowing structured movements. The choreography is strong and avoids cliché and allows the performers a freedom to express themselves, a factor that is not always achieved in contemporary dance”*. EdinburghGuide.com (review of work in progress performance)

Real life accounts from black men across London with ages ranging from 17 to 45 generate a poignant responsive double bill by Just Us Dance Theatre ***Born to Manifest*** which puts cultural identity, the challenging of racial stigmas and the mental health agenda centre stage.

**Joseph Toonga**'s muscular twisting choreography is shown to powerful effect in a solo for himself and a duet performed with Theophilus 'Godson' Oloyade. Toonga's visceral, hybrid language utilises hip hop form and culture and contemporary dance to tell real life stories, including his own.

Renowned producer, composer and **DJ Michael 'Mikey J' Asante**, co-artistic director of **Boy Blue Entertainment** and a fixture of the UK urban music industry, has created an original score. Other notable associates on the creation are Dutch dance dramaturge Peggy Ollislaegers, co-artistic director of Blue Boy Entertainment Kenrick 'H20' Sandy and choreographer Sir Richard Alston.

***Born to Manifest*** will premiere at Jerwood DanceHouse, Ipswich on 4 October at the start of a national tour.

Joseph Toonga, originally from the Cameroon, is based in East London. He founded his production company Just Us Dance Theatre, in 2007 with Ricardo Da Silva and Rudeen February. A major part of the company's ethos is to inspire, support and nurture others and it has established two mentoring programmes, Lets Shine and New&Notable, to provide tools and opportunities for young emerging hip-hop dance theatre artists.

*'I feel a responsibility as a black male to empower the younger generation as a role model and example of how dance can provide a positive, successful route. Mental health and black men's experiences of it, are little discussed, which is why I am passionate about creating awareness to shift stigmas'* – Joseph Toonga

## Wraparound/workshops

**Just Us** workshops explore the fundamentals of popping, Krump and freestyle within a contemporary dance context, whilst looking at tension in the body, parts of the body in isolation, and intention behind movement. Workshop participants will learn repertoire from *Born to Manifest* as part of the session.

**Just Us** is also committed to engaging with local youth groups and providing professional performance opportunities through curtain raiser performances.

Workshops and curtain raisers are tailored to specific abilities and ages.

## Booking Details

Availability:	upon request
Touring Company:	two dancers, one technician
Running time:	60 minutes (approximate).
Venue specification:	Minimum performing area 8m x 8m On the day get in, lighting rigged in advance of company's arrival Tech. spec. not yet available.
Cost (UK only)	£1500 per performance.
Work in progress video	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1-DyniC00k">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1-DyniC00k</a> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWMUgplDn8o">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iWMUgplDn8o</a>
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