



## Press Release

Tuesday 20 September 2016

### East London Dance presents the tenth anniversary of Collabo, Tony Adigun's exhilarating annual dance celebration

2016 marks the tenth anniversary of **Collabo**, as East London Dance once again hands over programming duties for this thrilling hip hop showcase to maverick choreographer and Avant Garde Dance Artistic Director, Tony Adigun.

On **Thursday 10, Friday 11 and Saturday 12 November**, Collabo will once again take over **Stratford Circus Arts Centre** as Adigun brings together some of the UK's leading hip hop artists to create unique dance collaborations, in an explosive programme of original performances. ([National press performance: Friday 11 November](#))

Collabo was founded in 2006 by Hackney-born Adigun out of a desire to shake up the dance world by promoting new and unexpected partnerships between hip hop artists and crews. Over the past decade, it has played a key role in expanding the repertoire and spearheading a movement towards greater collaboration within hip hop.

This unique weekend of dance will see choreographers and performers push their skills to the limit, as new pairings of some of the UK's brightest hip hop talents take to the stage with their innovative dance hybrids.

To celebrate this milestone year, Adigun will invite back some of the most popular performers from the decade-long history of Collabo, including Sky's *Got to Dance* 2013 winner, **Lukas McFarlane**, **Program 68** and krump collective **Rugged Estate**. On Thursday evening, the programme will feature a special selection of past Collabo highlights from **Avant Garde Dance**, all handpicked by Adigun to celebrate the company's 15th anniversary.

This year's collaboration (collabo) highlights include: East London hip hop dance collective **Slum Civilians** and BBC's *The Voice* choreographer **Emer Walsh** who return with their classic 2013 collabo *Blue Jeans*. **Just Us Dance Theatre** (previously commissioned by Richard Alston Dance Company amongst others) will perform a brand new collabo with **New Movementz** (producers of the UK's biggest under 18s Dance Battle). Up-and-coming choreographers **Tyrone Isaac-Stuart** (Blue Boy Entertainment) and **Saskia Horton** (ZooNation Dance Company) will also team up.

As in previous years, Adigun will challenge a clutch of artists to create their own unique dance interpretation to a hand-picked music track. As this celebratory programme is both retrospective and forward-looking, 2016's interpretation track is a flashback to a classic *Collabo 2011* remix from producer and DJ Mikey J.

Championship-winning **Unity UK** (ITV's *Britain's Got Talent*, Sky's *Got to Dance*) will return to present their jaw-dropping 2011 interpretation.

For the first time in Collabo's history, Adigun and East London Dance are inviting dance fans everywhere to [join the challenge online](#) by creating and uploading their own dance interpretation to the music track, with the winner to perform live at Collabo.

**Tony Adigun, founder of Collabo:** *"Many incredible artists have been part of Collabo over the past decade. We've originated never-before-seen collaborations, and hope we've excited and inspired audiences along the way. I am thrilled to announce this three-night celebration of the past, present and future of dance here in East London".*

**Polly Risbridger, Director of East London Dance:** *"Reflecting on East London Dance's ten year 'Collabo' with Tony Adigun has highlighted to me how influential his vision for this event has been in shaping the evolution of hip hop dance culture. The collaboration, experimentation and exchange of ideas and skills inherent in Collabo have helped develop a new, more theatrical approach to the artform which sits proudly alongside the battling form."*

### **Collabo line-up**

Avant Garde Dance  
Emer Walsh & Slum Civilians  
Just Us Dance & New Movementz  
Lukas McFarlane  
Program 68  
Rugged Estate  
Saskia Horton & Tyrone Isaac-Stuart  
Unity UK

The programme for each night will vary. More acts and full programme line-up for the three nights to be confirmed. Visit [eastlondondance.org/events/collabo-2016](http://eastlondondance.org/events/collabo-2016) for the latest updates.

### **Listings:**

#### **Collabo**

Venue: Stratford Circus Arts Centre, Theatre Square, E15 1BX

Performances: 10, 11 & 12 November at 7:30pm

National press night: Friday 11 November at 7:30pm

Tickets: £12, £10 concessions

Box office: 020 8279 1080 / [stratford-circus.com](http://stratford-circus.com) or in-person at Stratford Circus Arts Centre, Theatre Square, E15 1BX

#### **Press contact:**

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### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

Over the past decade, East London Dance has supported, produced and championed the work of Tony Adigun and Avant Garde Dance. East London Dance first invited Adigun to create and programme Collabo in 2006, following earlier small-scale commissions. Avant Garde Dance was an Associate Company of East London Dance from 2009 to 2012, a partnership which led to the creation of a number of ambitious artistic projects including *The Bunker Thing* (2010 / 2012) for British Dance Edition, and *Illegal Dance* (2011), Adigun's first full-length stage production. Ten years on, East London Dance continues to support Adigun and his Company, co-commissioning and presenting the London premiere of *Fagin's Twist* in May 2016.

### **About East London Dance**

Enriched by 28 years of experience, East London Dance is the leading producer of creative dance experiences for the people of East London and beyond. We produce inspirational projects and events to engage our diverse local communities in dance, and nurture the next generation of artists and professionals. We champion enterprise, collaboration and innovation in order to create dance of exceptional quality that is seen regionally, nationally and internationally. We specialise in a tailored and responsive approach that places our communities and their needs, interests and ambitions at the centre of our work. In the last three years we have attracted diverse live audiences of over 88,000, of which over 50% are least likely to attend the arts. We have engaged and inspired over 11,000 people to participate in dance activities and launched the careers of many successful artists, choreographers and companies.

East London Dance is based at Stratford Circus Arts Centre in the vibrant borough of Newham, and predominantly works across the London boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, City of London, Hackney, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest.

[eastlondondance.org](http://eastlondondance.org)

### **About Tony Adigun**

Tony Adigun is the founder and Artistic Director of Avant Garde Dance Company and continues to blend hip hop and contemporary styles into uncharted creative territory. He has a razor sharp eye for composition, musicality and form, which has allowed him to develop a unique dance vocabulary that has gained respect and admiration from the highest echelons of the dance industry. Tony is currently a Work Place Artist at The Place where his latest production *Fagin's Twist* runs from 28 September to 15 October. Tony was Creative Director for Sky One's 'Got to Dance' and has been commissioned to create *The House* by Greenwich Dance International Festival 2016. He was funded by British Council to tour *The Black Album* in India and has also recently worked with Cirque du Soleil. In both 2011 and 2012, Tony was the recipient of the BEFFTA Award for Best Choreographer. Commercially, he has choreographed and performed with top artists from the UK and America including Janet Jackson, Usher, Mel B, and Whitney Houston.

[avantgardedance.com](http://avantgardedance.com)