

Image: Clementine Crochet, courtesy Park Avenue Armory



Park Avenue Armory | United States

FLEXN

A collaboration of Reggie (Regg Roc) Gray, Peter Sellars, and members of the Flex community

Creative Team

- Light Sculpture and Design** Ben Zamora
- Costume Design** Angela Wendt
- Music Mix** Epic B
- Associate Director** Charlotte Brathwaite
- Production Manager** Andrew Lulling
- Stage Manager** Betsy Ayer
- Company Manager and Assistant Producer** Abena Floyd
- Executive Producer** Park Avenue Armory
- Consulting Producer** Diane J. Malecki
- Tour Producer** Avery Willis Hoffman

Artist Talk

Moderated by Reggie Gray and Peter Sellars, each performance is accompanied by a 20 minute public conversation and features a range of guests, engaging in cross-disciplinary discussions providing a unique lens through which to view the performance.

Please note: Music contains some strong language.

Cast

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Android Martina Heimann | Doc Aaron Frazier | Scorp Dwight Waugh |
| Banks James Davis | Dre Don Andre Redman | Shellz Shelby Felton |
| Brixx Sean Douglas | Droid Rafael Burgos | Slicc Derick Murreld |
| Cal Calvin Hunt | Karnage Quamaine Daniels | Tyme Glendon Charles |
| Dayntee Deidra Braz | Regg Roc Reggie Gray | |

Latecomers will only be seated during an appropriate break. Ticket holders consent to be filmed as part of the audience. The information in this programme is correct at the time of publication. The Festival reserves the right to alter, without notice, events, programmes and artists.

Tell us what you think of the show

🐦 f @ @NZFestivaloftheArts #NZFEST festival.nz

Curated by **Lemi Ponifasio**

Sun 23 Feb, 7pm
Mon 24 Feb, 6.30pm

Te Rauparaha Arena

2hrs including FLEXN Artist Talk

Commissioned and produced by Park Avenue Armory.

Partnered by: Audio Visual Partner:



Thanks to:



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New Zealand Festival OF THE ARTS

21 Feb – 15 Mar 2020

"Part protest, part dance party, part collective autobiography"

- *The New York Times*

About FLEXN

Characterised by pausing, snapping, gliding, bone breaking, hat tricks, animation and contortion, flex is a form of street dance that has evolved from the Jamaican bruk-up found in dance halls and reggae clubs in Brooklyn. This electrifying phenomenon has toured internationally for five years confronting issues of social justice through the eyes and bodies of the dancer-activists.

Created in the era of unrest following the murders of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and Eric Garner in New York City, this powerful work is made in collaboration with a crew of flex dancers from the very neighbourhoods where the Black Lives Matter movement first took shape. Performing both as individuals and in groups to choreography created by the ensemble itself, the dancers utilise their breathtakingly beautiful movement to tell deeply human and sometimes heart-wrenching stories that address these troubling issues of our time.



Image: Reiner Kruse



Image: Stephanie Berger, courtesy of Park Avenue Armory

Peter Sellars and Reggie (Regg Roc) Gray

About the Company

Android: FLEXN helped me live as a dancer and go deeper into my flexn style. The project keeps challenging me, because it's freestyle and not all choreographed. Reflects what's going on in my life.

Banks: Flexn is more of a lifestyle now, we're impacting other people's lives. First we were just doing concepts now we're telling stories and inspiring people...I take what I go through in life and now I apply it to my style, my dance.

Brixx: FLEXN pushed me to a limit I didn't think I could go. I built my performance and social skills even more. It enables me to be free. People change so the dancing changes. Always being real.

Cal: We have developed as a people, spiritually, mentally, and even dance-wise; I've become stronger as a dancer, my focus is sharper, and I'm aiming at the heart and people's emotions.

Dayntee: Like anything in life, experience makes you grow as a person; over the last five years many experiences have allowed me to grow as person and I express that growth on stage.

Doc: I'm a human being, I grow, my dancing grows...Now we're growing into something that is going to become more beautiful every time we touch the stage.

Dre: FLEXN changed me and my environment, helped build me as a man, helped build our confidence in our styles and accept different roles in our community.

Droid: Our bodies are a whole language in itself, something that everyone can understand. Battling is different from performing on stage, we have to convert our whole dance style so that people understand.

Karnage: We are becoming the change we want to present to the world; we are digging deeper, we are now masters of our craft, masters of our emotions and feelings.

Peter: If you're a young African American trying to survive, you've got to be able to flex, morph, change - be creative with your identity. And so that's exactly what this art form is - the dancers' own computer-generated imagery communicated through their bodies and it's breathtaking..."

Reggie: The beginning of flexn was about storytelling. It was about giving the ultimate stories with our bodies that people understood. What we did was go back to that. Peter (Sellars) and I connect on a great level. We both have a great deal of respect for each other's work, that's what keeps everything stable. He's been a great mentor throughout this process.

Scorp: I feel, if you don't live your own dream you're a slave. Dancing is my way of being free. It's how I make my own destiny, my own goals.

Shellz: I've been in a transformation this whole time personally, but my favorite moment on tour was in Italy, the audience didn't speak English but they understood our stories and they were able to relate, that meant a lot to me.

Slicc: We've been on a journey together, every day the world is evolving, there is no limit to art, we can keep on evolving, if you ask me. FLEXN changed my perspective and made me a better person.

Tyme: Our pieces have evolved in a way that we want to reach out to everybody now, we want to see feedback from the whole world.