

# The Bronx Museum Celebrated its 50th Anniversary With a Theatrical Performance



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Photo: Madison McGaw/BFA.com

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Photo: Madison McGaw/BFA.com

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Wardell Milan



Photo: Madison McGaw/BFA.com

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DJ Light Blue with the DJ mixer console



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Jasmine Wahi



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Zachary Tye Richardson



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Lashay Simmonds, Jasmine Wahi



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The scene at the Bronx Museum



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Zachary Tye Richardson, Billy Rae Morgan, Jasmine Wahi, Wardell Milan

On Wednesday evening, an electric yet hushed energy could be felt at the Bronx Museum the moment Wardell Milan and Zachary Tye Richardson appeared in the center of its lobby. The eyes of onlookers—stylishly dressed artists, musicians, and curators—stuck to the pair as their theatrical performance kicked off the museum’s 50th Anniversary celebration and the inaugural in-person event since lockdown.

Serving as the performance’s main stage was the museum’s latest exhibition, Milan’s “Amerika. God Bless You If It’s Good To You.” The duo pranced and skipped throughout the gallery adorned by Milan’s thought-provoking piece, then to the Rothko Chapel-inspired space designed by Billy Rae Morgan. Choreographed by Richardson, the performance was as artful as it was athletic—Milan credits his training in martial arts and fencing as proper conditioning, but he also performed in what seemed to be the comfiest leather loafers on the market

“We wanted to do something so utterly unapologetic,” curator Jasmine Wahi told *Vogue*. “I’m always thinking about these tough subjects and ‘Dell and I wanted the exhibition to be straightforward in its message.” Straightforward would be an understatement—Milan’s exhibition is a clear confrontation of White supremacy in America.

The night’s performance dipped and crescendoed on multiple occasions. And, while there were many moments of the performance worth noting, perhaps the one that prevails was when Richardson told a flash-heavy cameraman, “Stop!” mid-performance. “When we’re trying to focus and relaying the messages about the constraints of society, we obviously needed to be in the moment without distraction,” Milan told *Vogue later own*.

Following the performance there was a mass exodus to the museum’s outdoor terrace occurred—it was one of those rare, perfect weathered summer days in the city. Afterward, people sipped on margaritas while jiving and grooving to the upbeat tunes provided by DJ April Hunt. From the echoing laughter and glowing smiles by attendees, it was easy to see that these moments have been missed dearly.