Dance is a vital force in African-American culture, yet many artists experience a relative dearth of performance opportunities. In response, the **Black Choreographers Festival** offers three weekends of seminars, master classes, and performances by young, up-and-coming, and noted African and African-American dance artists. Youth get the focus Friday-Sunday, Feb. 12-14, at **Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts** (1428 Alice St., Oakland), with a dance conference and summit (call for details; 510-283-7219). A family matinee featuring pre-professional youth-dance companies wraps things up on Sunday (4 p.m., $5). **Dance Mission Theater** (3316-24th St., San Francisco) hosts the following two weekends: **Reginald Ray-Savage, Raissa Simpson**, and others perform Feb. 19-21, and a dozen burgeoning choreographers show their stuff at the **Next Wave Choreographers Showcase** Feb. 26-28. (Fri.-Sat. 8 p.m.; Sun. 7 p.m.; $10-$20). For the master-class schedule, call Dance Mission at 415-826-4441. BCFHereAndNow.com or BrownPaperTickets.com

— Claudia Bauer

**Malonga Casquelourd Center for the Arts**
1428 Alice St.
OAKLAND-DOWNTOWN

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