It didn’t seem like COVID-19 was keeping anyone away from the Lisser Theater at Mills College on Sunday night, March 8, though it’s hard to tell with concert dance. (Modern dancers in particular are used to performing for thin crowds.) The theater may not have been packed to the rafters, but attendance was good for the performance of the third weekend of the Black Choreographers Festival, now in its 16th year. More importantly, energy was positive and high and I didn’t see anyone wearing a mask.

WE INTERRUPT THIS POST WITH A SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THOSE OF YOU LIVING UNDER A ROCK: IT’S TIME TO WEAR YOUR MASK!

Though it’s been nearly a month since I saw BCF Weekend 3, a month involving new levels of brain befuddlement, I still remember many moments from the performance.

Jon Boogz and DJ Two Bears’ short film What Came Before (2018): African American and Native American dance forms meet on a New York City playground. The dancing brings awakens the history of Manhattan through Black and Indigenous movement. Today, I’m imagining those encaged NYC playgrounds, usually full of play, vacant but for ghosts of movers past.
Le Jazz Cool as performed by JP Alejandro, Ashley Gayle, Kao Vey Saephanh, and Annie Aguilar in Raissa Simpson’s Motley Experiment.

Chloé Arnold bringing down the house with her untitled tap performance — intoxicating antiphony.
Two works by Gregory Dawson that demonstrated the ways Dawson has absorbed and reconfigured the sensibilities of his former choreo-boss, Alonzo King.

Crystal dawn Bell and ArVejon Jones in Robert Moses’ Silt — Excerpt. I can still see Bell’s gaze — simultaneously laser-focused and soft.

Black Choreographers Festival was the last live show I saw before the pandemic locked us in our houses. I remain buoyed by the memory of movement.