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I am proud to announce an extraordinary gift from Stefan Edlis and Gael Neeson to name the MCA Theater, home of the MCA Stage since 1996–97. The newly named Edlis Neeson Theater is the primary space in which we celebrate and support live arts.

For more than thirty-five years, Stefan Edlis and Gael Neeson have been extraordinary supporters of MCA Chicago. In his longtime role as Trustee, Stefan has been particularly involved in the care and preservation of the MCA’s Josef Paul Kleihues–designed building. By extension, Stefan and Gael’s support of this theater is of paramount importance to the MCA, as it is a place where artists and audiences come together around the most significant art and ideas of our time.

Stefan and Gael share our vision of the MCA as an artist-activated, audience-engaged museum for producing art, ideas, community, and conversation around the creative process—in our galleries, theater, and beyond. We are deeply thankful to them and truly thrilled by this affirmation of multidisciplinary programming at the MCA.

Enjoy tonight’s performance!

Madeleine Grynsztejn
Pritzker Director
Welcome to the Edlis Neeson Theater

Marc Bamuthi Joseph/
The Living Word Project
with Theaster Gates
red, black & GREEN: a blues

Thursday–Saturday,
April 12–14, 2012

Museum of Contemporary Art
Chicago

Edlis Neeson Theater
The Residency
Marc Bamuthi Joseph’s collaboration with Theaster Gates for *red, black & GREEN: a blues* was the catalyst for an MCA Stage residency. Part installation and part performance, *rbGb* synthesizes movement, verbal and visual languages, and social and political content. Joseph and Gates devised the set/installation, which references George C. Wolfe’s *The Colored Museum*, to represent the four seasons, four cycles of life, four rooms of a house, and four cities: Chicago, Houston, New York, and Oakland. They harvested material, literally and figuratively, for the project over several years during interviews and community events in each city.

A crucial intention of *rbGb* is the involvement of community. MCA Chicago has organized these opportunities for the community to engage with the artists and gain insight into their creative process. Many of these encounters take place directly on the artists’ playing space.

This March, Joseph engaged a number of youth and educators for a week of peer-to-peer discussions; dialogues; and a studio visit, led by his collaborator Theaster Gates, to the Dorchester Projects. Participating members of youth programs Kuumba Lynx, YOUmedia, and the MCA’s Teen Creative Agency reunite with Joseph and Gates this week for the SHareOUT, as the artists turn their theater set over to these talented young people to express their own realities through word, beats, media, and conversation.

Talk: “At Your Own Risk: what is to be done”
This Tuesday, the International House at the University of Chicago hosted Marc Bamuthi Joseph and Van Jones, environmental advocate, civil rights activist, and former advisor to the White House, in a riveting discussion about environmental racism, social ecology, and collective responsibility in an era of dramatic climate change. Throughout their long friendship, Joseph and Jones have paved unique paths toward a national conversation about jobs, manufacturing, and green economy as experienced among members of the black working class. Jones is leader of Rebuild The Dream, the growing movement to rebuild America’s middle class, and this talk is his only local speaking tour. This event was copresented by the MCA with The University of Chicago and portoluz as part of WPA 2.0: a brand new deal.

First Nights
Thursday–Saturday, April 12–14
Following each performance of *red, black & GREEN: a blues*, the artists invite audience members to join them on the set for one-on-one conversations.

Educator Symposium
Friday, April 13
Fostering lively discussion on the role of contemporary art in arts education, this year’s biannual MCA Educator Symposium features Marc Bamuthi Joseph as one of the keynote speakers on the critical engagement with and investigation of those ideas that relate specifically to pedagogy, curriculum design, and teacher professional development.

Installation Hours
Friday, April 13, 1–5 pm
Saturday, April 14, 10 am–1 pm
During specified museum hours, visitors can experience Theaster Gates’s *rbGb* set/installation, *The Colored Museum*. 
red, black & GREEN: a blues

SHareOUT
Saturday, April 14, 1:30-4 pm
Free with museum admission or rbGb ticket
Marc Bamuthi Joseph’s multimedia collaboration with Theaster Gates imagines what environmental justice can look like in America’s forgotten neighborhoods. For this SHareOUT, they turn their theater set over to young people who are expressing their own realities through word, beats, media, and conversation. Participants include Young Chicago Authors, Kuumba Lynx, YOUMedia, FilmLAB@1512 and AgLAB@1512 of the Better Boys Foundation, and the MCA’s Teen Creative Agency.

Created by Marc Bamuthi Joseph/The Living Word Project
Directed by Michael John Garcés
Set/Installation Concept and Design by Theaster Gates

Produced by MAPP International Productions

Media Design by David Szlasa
Lighting Design by James Clotfelter
Choreography by Stacey Printz
Documentary Films by Eli Jacobs-Fantauzzi
Music composed by Tommy Shepherd aka Emcee Soulati
Costume Design by Mai-Lei Pecorari
Sound Design by Gregory T. Kuhn
Stage Management by Rebecca Cullars
Photography by Bethanie Hines

Performed by Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Theaster Gates, Traci Tolmaire, and Tommy Shepherd a.k.a. Emcee Soulati
Dance that explodes in every sense, dazzles the eye, and remains vividly imprinted in your memory.”

Le Nouvel Observateur

For tickets, visit mcachicago.org or call 312.397.4010.
This project is made possible by the Contemporary Art Centers (CAC) network, administered by the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA), with major support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Additional generous support is provided by Mary Ittelson. CAC, an initiative of NEFA’s National Dance Project, is comprised of leading art centers and brings together performing arts curators to support collaboration and work across disciplines.

red, black & GREEN: a blues is co-commissioned by Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts at University of Houston, Walker Art Center, and Lehigh University. It is also commissioned by The America Project, a program of MAPP International Productions with support from The Ford Foundation and the Nathan Cummings Foundation.


Acknowledgments
The collaborative team would like to thank the citizens of uptown Chicago; 3rd and 5th Wards in Houston; Harlem, New York; and West Oakland, California for their durability, receptivity, and inspiration. We thank Rolando Brown, Jeff Chang, Brett Cook, Van Jones, Chinaka Hodge, Kuumba Lynx, the Awakenings Movement, Reginald Harris, Hard Knock Radio, Jewell Kinch, Estria Miyashiro, K Dub, Ms. Valerie at DeFremery, Freddi Price (slide National Steel guitar), and Theresa Wong (Cello) for permission to re-sample their original performances. We further wish to thank Karen Farber of the Mitchell Center for being able to see “it” before we did. In addition to their collective institutional support, we wish to throw our arms around the teams at MAPP and Youth Speaks, especially to Cathy Zimmerman and Joan Osato, for their love and grit. We put out hands to the hearts of our families in greeting, acknowledgement, and yielding.

The author wishes to dedicate this piece to Kanoelani Connor and Hodari Davis. Love is life, and life is living . . .
A Rite to Heal

In April of 2011, a dozen artists and designers gathered in a large warehouse turned Z Space Studio. “I don’t know what this is yet,” said Marc Bamuthi Joseph, clearing a safe space for himself and the other members of the group who gathered in a circle to hear his text in process. He began to read, starting with a preamble that described a cast of characters. “Four characters. One speaks through text and body, one speaks through character and movement, one speaks through song and sculpture, one lives in sound and fury.” The lyrical phrasing outlined the contours of the collaboration that was taking shape.

Marc Bamuthi Joseph’s red, black & GREEN: a blues (rbGb) is a multi-disciplinary performance experiment. It mixes visual art, spoken word, choreography, theatre, and film in ways that expose the boundaries that still exist amongst these art forms; its composition is an aesthetic act that integrates ritual, critique, and community engagement at once. Now there is a great deal of fine work out there that aspires to similar goals. Choreographers are situing their work in museums as often as theatres; sculptors are organizing interactions instead of creating objects; and videographers are creating installations in spaces other than the cinema. Meanwhile, much of this work aspires to social engagement with this cross-media mixing, searching for new ways to activate viewers and mobilize communities. rbGb, in its making and its dissemination prompts a recalibration of what we think collaboration can be.

“I was using a vocabulary and a world view that I had inherited from scientists, and that wasn’t appropriate because we had a different project . . . our message was about creating a safe space for learning, which has been a problem for the Green movement.”

The experience provoked a name change and a philosophical one: “we moved toward Life.” De-emphasizing a Green rhetoric that seemed not to address the basic needs of daily survival in under-resourced communities, Bamuthi and Youth Speaks decided to focus on the language of Living. The Life is Living (LiL) project has since coordinated festivals in four cities that mix spoken word artis...
games, public art, and food into occasions for asking “what sustains Life” in one’s community. The invitation prompts a wider imagining of what qualifies as sustenance and what counts as Life. Bamuthi’s environmental art practice thus coincides with a number of progressive urban planning movements. His world view coincides with that of AbdouMaliq Simone who argues that “people” function more deeply as a self-sustaining “infrastructure” in urban neighborhoods where traditional material infrastructures have broken down.\(^3\)

red, black & GREEN: a blues distills and transforms the practice of Life is Living. The form and content of Life is Living drives that of rbGb; audiences will find it in the video projected, in the murals displayed, in the handwritten texts pinned to walls of a modular set that has been constructed entirely of found materials. As stories unfold and bodies dance, performers will move and be moved by a set that represents four cities of LiL’s urban engagement—Oakland, New York, Houston, and Chicago—each of them occupied by distinctive characters who field the complex politics of poverty, violence, and gentrification.

If today’s urban neighborhoods rely on a living infrastructure of exchange and support, then rbGb’s cast enacts that relational reality in their material movements and embodied gestures.

When asked about the difference between the creation of community festivals and the creation of scripted and choreographic works like rbGb, Bamuthi says, “I don’t see them as two different types of creativity. In general, we seek to be collaboratively generative. We seek many ways to create safe space, whether it is in a classroom, in a community, or in the frame of performance art. The frame for development of all of these things is all pedagogical, all environmental, the impulse is to enable an active participation, an immersion, an ownership, amongst as many platforms as possible in order to advocate for that safety.”\(^4\)

red, black & GREEN: a blues is divided into different components, each with their own form of relational encounter; first comes the colored museum, followed by colors and muses; the performance ends with back talk, an extended discussion with all artists and audience members. Recalling but redefining the form and content of George C. Wolfe’s canonical play “The Colored Museum,” four quadrants of the space in the colored museum each have a color and are lit and activated to feature stories and movements from four urban regions. As a mode of reception, the “museum” form makes that modulation more acute through the offer of both proximity and mobility. Receivers can get close to the structure, touch it if they want. Decisions to stand, to walk, or to walk faster belong to them. Receivers can move in close to hear the stories better; they can also find themselves backing away. Each decision has an ethics. While the codes of museum display activate a traditionally seated theatre audience, conventions of reception are also challenged in reverse. A traditionally mobile museum spectator is arguably less used to encountering an object that talks back, much less one that meets her gaze.

The first section of rbGb is thus a space of aesthetic as much as social re-calibration, a place where the conventions of performing art and visual art fields are redefining each other, moment to moment. As such, the colored museum is also a place to reflect upon another dimension of this
Gates says of his practice: “I want to enunciate PLACES that already exist and occupy those PLACES with happenings . . . While I may not be able to change the housing market or the surety of gentrification, I can offer questions within the landscape. To question, not by petitioning or organizing in the activist way, but by building and making good use of the things forgotten . . .

Creative people have the right to be concerned with the built environment and should engage the tools of architecture as a way of making meaning of their spaces. . . . Beautiful objects belong in blighted spaces and creative people can play a pivotal role in how this happens.”

As Gates’s visual art practice “expanded” along architectural lines, his work coincided with that of other socially-engaged architects such as Houston-based Rick Lowe. Known most widely for his Project Row Houses, Lowe argues for the use of art in urban recovery and was a key collaborator in the Life is Living Festival in Houston; he appears as a character in the rbGb text. Integrating these and other influences into the design, Theaster Gates’s “set” is striking, not only for its use of recycled materials, but also for a modularity that makes different kinds of “happenings” possible. As in Gates’s own re-inhabited houses — as in most experiences of urban dwelling — performers in this space have to become comfortable with constant shifts in their experience of privacy and publicity.

After the colored museum ends, audiences return to their seats to bear witness to the colors and muses portion of the evening. This longer section takes us on rotations from city to city, extending beyond the conversation with the Sudanese mother in Chicago to introduce us to central figures in Houston, New York, and Oakland. Along the way, Bamuthi’s central questions around environment and racial justice refract and change. As the piece moves from city to city, we encounter stories that demonstrate the distinctive landscape of different cities. It is in Harlem that we encounter a poetics that reflects on the title of the piece as well as its relationship to a history of African American literature and culture.

“In winter the harlem bells can’t ring loud enough . . . / Red blood black people green land and such / Red black and green like a mossaiah messianic dream / Like an afternoon wedding shot dead at dawn in queens / Silent. Bell.”

With the under-punctuated stream of words,
Bamuthi’s torrent sees today’s Harlem residents as descendents of those who first launched the historic red, black, and green of the Pan-African flag. Designed in 1920 by Marcus Garvey and his followers, the flag was created strategically to define African peoples as citizens and unite them as comrades. Red referred to the blood that they shared and shed, black to their distinguished race, and green to the verdant natural resources of the African continent. The pedigree of the play’s title thus also makes another aspiration of the play clear, for if Bamuthi seeks to introduce a racial consciousness in an environmental movement, he is also asking us to shake free a new understanding of “GREEN” in the long history of African American and civil rights movements. If the color green has mobilized civil rights, it is now time to complicate its referents, to question any association that would position “Africa” romantically or exploitatively as a natural resource capable of infinite bounty. Another layer of political complication emerges when rbGb returns to Bamuthi’s hometown of Oakland where he finds himself taught by a roomful of young female poetry students who share stories of sexual violence. “Men go where we are not wanted and fuck shit up.” he recalls, “Continents. Constitutions. Coastal reefs. Women’s bodies.” Asking feminist questions of environmental imagining and racial solidarity, their words connect the dots between social degradation and acts of destruction that are still so central to insecure conceptions of secure masculinity.

Elements of a social puzzle emerge and recede, adding layers of emotion and complication with each story. The “people” who form the infrastructure of these American cities are embedded in tangled networks of affect and responsibility. Moreover, representing these people requires its own artistic network, collaborators whose relations of affect, responsibility, and technical skill produce their own living infrastructure. Bamuthi’s hope is that “everyone involved grows by the exponent of collective investment,” and Michael John Garcés’ focus as a director is to make sure that it happens. For Garcés, collaboration is “not about just hoping that something will happen;” it is more precisely about creating a structure that frees creativity. “My job is to start making decisions, allowing them to be subject to change . . . Collaboration is two or more people coming together to reach a goal that is as yet unclear, and that means they share a willingness to try things, and being willing to change them, trusting that we’ll get there.” It should be said that many artists trained in their respective fields would find it impossible, aesthetically as well as temperamentally, to commit to such a process. Collaboration across the arts not only means “working with others” but also allowing the boundaries of your own art form to be subject to change; it means that the script will change on the actors, that a set will be used in ways unintended, and that a documentary film will suddenly serve as “background” for a “happening.” As artists with multi-disciplinary talents, however, this ensemble is willing to take the risk.

red, black & GREEN: a blues hopes to encourage growth “by the exponent of collective investment.”

At the end of the show, audience members will be asked to enter the playing space for conversation. For Bamuthi, it is essential that the conversation exceed the conventions of a typical “post-show” discussion. Garcés reminds us that call and response is central aesthetically and socially to Bamuthi’s process. “Bamuthi
challenges notions without making assumptions of those notions. He came in with an inquiry that was about the Green movement and people of color, and his sense of the goal changed because of how people answered him when he asked them questions. And I think that’s fairly rare. The process really defined what the show became. It’s really about an aesthetic rigorous process.”

While the rigor of the process has involved researching the arguments of environmentalists and racial justice advocates who have documented the economic and physical health of city-dwelling Americans, Bamuthi’s inquiry also means stepping away from the professional “glossary” of sustainability when necessary.

“There has to be a certain protection of terms to maintain a standard and efficiency, but in this case, we are talking about our environment. So while there has to be a certain standard, it’s also in all of our best interests to be as inclusive as possible. . . . I am a language guy, so I get it. . . . I could say that this is about obesity, diabetes, and food justice, but the purpose of using broad language is to acknowledge that all of these things are like an ecosystem.”

Post-show conversation is thus about broadening this already broad language, devising new glossaries together and reminding each other of who and what resides in the eco-system that we share.

But even as non-controversial as the word “Life” may sound, it comes loaded with conceptual history from different quarters. The word Life was a signature term for avant-garde artists of the sixties who touted “Art-into-Life” as a mantra for dismantling the institution of art and for staging radical experiments with groups of (largely white) kindred spirits. If Life was a generalized term for many of these artists, Life is Living brings forward other urgent connotations, implicitly asking whether and how the issues of survival and justice can animate the Life experiments of the artistic avant-garde. From another direction, though, the term Life is not robust enough to address a highly wrought and historic system of racial inequality; for those who consider the degree to which “social death” has been a principle structural activator of African-American history and identity, Life is too naïve a term. For social historian Orlando Patterson and subsequent generations of African-American thinkers who gave up on Garveyism long ago, no vision of African-American subjectivity is complete without a clear-eyed understanding of the systemic obstacles to racial survival. Bamuthi says he gets this too.

“Green isn’t necessarily a shared value; life isn’t necessarily a shared value for black males under the age of 24. The leading cause of death for black males age 16 to 24 is violence perpetrated on each other. So injecting that word Life is to shift the perception of what it means to be environmentally literate and what it means to sustain our communities.”

Life then is not a given, nor is it a given that Life is good. But in a dire context, loaded with irony and justified pessimism, Bamuthi argues for what he calls “his rite to heal.” To claim such a right and to craft such a rite is thus a highly charged political act.

This note is excerpted from a longer essay by Shannon Jackson, University of California, Berkeley. It is commissioned by the Contemporary Art Centers.
(CAC) network, an initiative of NEFA’s National Dance Project administered by the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA), with major support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation; The America Project, a program of MAPP International Productions.

1 Author Interview with Marc Bamuthi Joseph, June 2011.
2 Author Interview with Marc Bamuthi Joseph, June 2011.
4 Author Interview with Marc Bamuthi Joseph, June 2011.
6 http://theastergates.com/home.html
8 Author’s Interview with Bamuthi Joseph, June 2011.
9 Author’s Interview with Garcés, June 2011.
10 Author’s Interview with Garcés, June 2011.
11 See Orlando Patterson, Slavery and Social Death (Harvard UP, 1985) and, more recently, Jared Sexton, Amalgamation Schemes: Antiblackness and the Critique of Multiculturalism (University of Minnesota Press, 2008); Frank Wilderson, Incognegro, A Memoir of Exile and Apartheid (South End Press, 2008) and his Red, White, and Black: Cinema and the Structure of U.S. Antagonisms (Duke UP, 2010).
12 Author’s interview with Bamuthi Joseph, June 2011.
Marc Bamuthi Joseph

is one of America’s vital voices in performance, arts education, and artistic curation. In the fall of 2007, Joseph graced the cover of Smithsonian Magazine after being named one of America’s Top Young Innovators in the Arts and Sciences. He is the artistic director of the seven-part HBO documentary Russell Simmons presents Brave New Voices and is an inaugural recipient of the United States Artists Rockefeller Fellowship, which annually recognizes fifty of the country’s “greatest living artists.” Additionally, Joseph was recently announced as the 2011 Alpert Award winner in Theater. He is maintaining a dedicated practice in performance, while currently serving as the Director of Performing Arts at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco.

After appearing on Broadway as a young actor, Joseph has developed several poetically based works for the stage that have toured across the United States, Europe, and Africa. These include Word Becomes Flesh, presented by MCA Stage in 2006, as well as Scourge and the break/s, which co-premiered at the Humana Festival of New American Plays and the Walker Arts Center in the spring of 2008 and was presented by MCA Stage in 2009. Joseph’s Word Becomes Flesh was re-mounted in December 2010 as part of the National Endowment for the Arts’ American Masterpieces series and will tour throughout North America and Hawaii through 2013. In addition, Joseph wrote the commissioned libretto, Home in 7 for the Atlanta Ballet in 2011, and is directing Dennis Kim’s Tree City Legends at Intersection for the Arts in 2012.

A gifted and nationally acclaimed educator and essayist, he has lectured at more than two hundred colleges and universities, been a popular commentator on National Public Radio, and carried adjunct professorships at Stanford University, Lehigh University, Mills College, and the University of Wisconsin. Joseph’s proudest work has been with Youth Speaks where he mentors thirteen- to nineteen-year-old writers and curates the Living Word Festival and Left Coast Leaning. He is the cofounder of Life is Living, a national series of one-day festivals designed to activate under-resourced parks and affirm peaceful urban life through hip-hop arts and focused environmental action.

lifeisliving.org
alpertawards.org

Michael John Garcés

is the artistic director of Cornerstone Theater Company, a community-engaged ensemble in Los Angeles where he is currently directing Café Vida by Lisa Loomer, and has also directed work by Jeffrey Hatcher, Naomi Iizuka, Page Leong, Tom Jacobson, and Julie Marie Myatt. He is very pleased to be continuing his collaboration with Bamuthi, which began with the break/s. Other recent directing credits include Oedipus El Rey by Luis Alfaro at the Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, where he is a company member; Funnyhouse of a Negro by Adrienne Kennedy at CalArts; and the tenth-anniversary production of N.E. 2nd Ave by Teo Castellanos at the Arsht Center for the Performing Arts. Other theaters at which he has directed include The Guthrie Theatre, The Children’s Theatre Company, New York Theatre Workshop, Hartford Stage, Second Stage, Huntington Theatre Company, INTAR, Yale Repertory Theatre, The Cherry Lane, The Atlantic Theater Company, and Repertorio Español. Garcés is on the executive board of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.

For Cornerstone he wrote Los Illegals, created...
in collaboration with communities of day laborers and domestic workers, which was published in the summer 2011 issue of Theatre Magazine (Yale School of Drama/Duke University Press). Other plays he has written include THE WEB (needtheatre), points of departure and customs (INTAR), and Acts of Mercy (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater). Short plays include hymn in three parts (Chalk Rep), inhabited (Red Fern Theatre Co.), tostitos (EST Marathon of One-Act Plays), on edge and the ride (Humana Festival), audiovideo (Drama League/Directors Project), and catch and sandlot ball (Mile Square). He wrote the text for the oratorio Stations, composed by Alexandra Vrebalov, recently performed at the NOMUS Festival in Novi Sad, Serbia. Garcés is a recipient of the Princess Grace Statue, the Alan Schneider Director Award, and a TCG/New Generations Grant. He is a proud alum of New Dramatists.

Theaster Gates

is a Chicago-based artist whose practice covers performance and installation, urban planning and design, and the traditional fine arts. His work in performance, installation art, and public intervention offers a platform that opens up challenging issues by presenting them not as acute encounters but as invitations to engage hard information creatively. His installation at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Temple Exercises, built of wooden boards recycled from a factory in Chicago’s post-industrial heart, not only encouraged people to see these discarded materials in light of modernist art, but to reflect on cultural traditions that depend on scrap for survival. The installation housed performances by the Black Monks of Mississippi, a music ensemble which Gates founded. Other performances, installations, and exhibitions include Black Monks & the Gospel of Black (Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands); Black Monks of Mississippi–If You See Jesus Tell Him Where I Am (Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago); Branded Alongside the Cabinet of Curiosities (Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin); Tea Shacks, Collard Greens & the Preservation of Soul (Center for Proliferation of Afro-Asian Artifacts, Chicago); Plate Convergence (Yamaguchi Institute, Chicago); Mississippi Houses (Inax Ceramic Museum, Tokoname, Japan); and The American Negro: Too good to be true (St. George Cathedral, Cape Town, South Africa). Gates received an interdisciplinary master’s degree in Urban Planning and Public Sculpture from Iowa State University in 2005. He is currently Director of Arts and Public Life and Artist in Residence at the University of Chicago.

David Szlasa

is a media artist, curator, and producer. He is the recipient of the Gerbode Award, Future Aesthetics Artist Award, and Lighting Artists in Dance Award for innovative use of video in performance. The San Francisco Chronicle called Szlasa’s ongoing work with interactive technology “so timely as to feel timeless.” His work has been presented in a range of venues from the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts to the Sydney Opera House and the Harare International Festival of the Arts, Zimbabwe. Szlasa has collaborated with artists including Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Sara Shelton Mann, Rennie Harris, Deb Margolin, Hope Mohr, Synaesthetic Theater, and Bill Shannon. In addition, Szlasa produces and curates programming at Z Space in San Francisco and has worked on staff at The Culture Project, Playwrights Horizons Theater.
School, The Drama League, and Dance Theater Workshop in New York. Szlasa is currently engaged in a commission awarded by the National Science Foundation and the Geissler Group in Theoretical Chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley. davidszlasa.com

James Clotfelter
is committed to the creation of collaborative and socially conscious work for theater and dance. He is Artistic Associate with Pig Iron Theatre Company (Chekhov Lizardbrain, Welcome to Yuba City), Resident Lighting Designer and Production Manager for Miro Dance Theatre (Punch, Spooky Action), and Company Member of johannes wieland (newyou, Progressive Coma). In 2005 he cofounded Mlab, a laboratory for innovations and design technologies in the live arts which has realized numerous scenic, light, and video designs specifically tailored for efficient and sustainable touring. Recent collaborations include work with Rennie Harris, John Jasperse, Bill Shannon, Thaddeus Phillips, Sara Shelton Mann, Rainpan 43, Southern Repertory Theatre, and Lubelski Teatr Tanca. jcdl.net

Stacey Printz
is artistic director of the Printz Dance Project (PDP). Founded in 1998, PDP has performed extensively in California with home seasons at the Cowell Theater in San Francisco, and has toured all over the United States, including New York, Los Angeles, Memphis, Arizona, Colorado, and internationally in Lithuania, Russia, and Ireland. Printz has been commissioned to choreograph for many companies in California and has received awards from the Zellerbach Family Foundation, the W&F Hewlett Foundation, and Fort Mason Foundation. She is also a recent recipient of the New Work Fellowship from the Marin Arts Council. Printz received sociology and dance degrees from the University of California, Irvine. In addition to teaching at San Francisco Dance Center, she has been on faculty at St. Mary’s College, Sonoma State University, and RoCo Dance Studio. She has taught master classes and workshops across the United States, as well as internationally in Switzerland, Italy, Amsterdam, Belgium, Russia, Lithuania, and Ireland. Highly interested in collaborative experiences, Printz had the pleasure of working with Marc Bamuthi Joseph on Scourge and the break/s. printzdance.org

Eli Jacobs-Fantauzzi
has traveled the world capturing the voice of international hip-hop and documenting the art of storytelling around the globe. After graduating from the University of California, Berkeley, while still enrolled in the MA program at New York University’s Tisch School for the Arts, he completed his first acclaimed international documentary, Inventos: Hip Hop Cubano, in 2005, winning the prestigious Student Filmmaker Award at the Pan-African Film Festival. He then created Homegrown: Hip Life in Ghana, the story of Hip Life (a combination of hip-hop and Ghana’s native High Life music style), that documents the band VIP’s ten years journey from the ghetto in Accra to their first international tour. Jacobs-Fantauzzi launched Fistup.tv, an online channel dedicated to documenting the global hip-hop movement. Episodes have featured Los Rakas (Panama), Las Krudas (Cuba), Ana Tijoux (Chile), and Blitz the Ambassador (Ghana) and have also covered the 2011 South By Southwest music/film conference in Austin, Texas. Jacobs-Fantauzzi works as an educator and activist, teaching in the Ethnic Studies Department at
UC Berkeley, and as a documentarian for The Center for African Peace and Conflict Resolution in Ghana. He has worked with Sacramento Youth Speaks, Sol Collective Arts and Cultural Center, and the National Institute of Culture and History in Belize. Jacobs-Fantauzzi was recently awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for “Breaking the Paradigm: The Reciprocal Relationship Between Traditional Cultural Artforms and Contemporary Hip Hop.” He is currently curating the second annual Fist Up Film Festival and working on a new film in Medellin, Colombia, titled Revolucion Sin Muertos (Revolution Without Death).

**Tommy Shepherd**

a.k.a. Emcee Soulati, is an actor, playwright, composer, educator, b-boy, rapper, drummer, and beat boxer. He is a cofounder of the live hip-hop collective, Felonious: onelovehiphop, which plays music throughout the world and creates original theatrical productions from their base as a resident company at Intersection for the Arts. Felonious’s last project was Angry Black White Boy, adapted from the Adam Mansbach book by Dan Wolf, for which Shepherd created the original music and performed. Shepherd has also been a longtime Hybrid Resident Artist at Intersection, a member of Campo Santo, and a performer with Erika Chong Shuch’s ESP project. He acted in and created the score for Nobody Move and Hamlet: Blood in the Brain by Naomi Iizuka; and created the sound design and score with Howard Wiley for A Place To Stand. He also acted, beat boxed, and composed a live score with Scheherazade Stone for Domino by Campo Santo with Sean San José, which premiered at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. In 2007 he created and performed his first one-act solo, The MF in ME, premiering at Intersection for the Arts’ GROUNDED? festival of new works. Other credits include co-composer/collaborator/performer with the Jazz Mafia Symphony; performing the world premiere of The Joshua Norton Suite; creating the score for Donald Lacy’s Color Struck, which was performed at the National Black Theatre Festival and for the National Black Congress leading up to President Obama’s election. Shepherd was a commissioned artist, co-creator and performer of Raw Dios for headrush crew, which toured Berkeley, Denver, and the famed El Teatro Campesino in San Juan Bautista. He re-created the previously unfinished Duke Ellington musical Queenie Pie, which premiered at the Oakland Opera in 2008. Shepherd has performed and toured internationally with Marc Bamuthi Joseph, collaborating on Scourge and the break/s.

**Traci Tolmaire**

is an actor, dancer, and singer from Chicago. Her training in theater arts and dance includes a BA in Theatre from Spelman College; theatrical studies at New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts; and dance training at Sammy Dyer School of Theatre in Chicago, Joel Hall Dance Center, Lou Cante/Hubbard Street Dance Company, and classes with master teachers Katherine Dunham and Savion Glover. Her theatrical credits include Anansi the Spider (Marin Theatre Company); Rejoice! (Lorraine Hansberry Theatre); IPH... a translation of Iphigeneia at Aulis by Euripides (Brava Theater/African-American Shakespeare Company); Mirrors In Every Corner (directed by Marc Bamuthi Joseph for Intersection for the Arts/Campo Santo); Susan Lori Parks’s 365 Days/365 Plays series (Hartford Stage Company); Joseph and the Amazing
Technicolor Dreamcoat (Fulton Opera House); The Darker Face of the Earth (Take Wing and Soar Productions); Trouble in Mind (Actor’s Express); and Breath, Boom (Synchronicity Theatre Group). She was an understudy for Lisa Kron’s play In the Wake at Berkeley Repertory Theatre and appeared twice in the New York International Fringe Festival as a leading actress in original productions Fantasy, Girl (also choreographer) and Eggs and the Rebound Guy. Tolmaire has worked as choreographer for Hartford Stage Company’s production of Gee’s Bend, Connecticut Critics Circle award winner for best ensemble, and Rejoice!, a holiday musical at Lorraine Hansberry Theatre. She resides in the San Francisco Bay Area.tracitolmaire.com

Mai-Lei Pecorari
is an independent costume designer and wardrobe stylist based in San Francisco and New York. She began her career as a designer while attending college at the University of Florida, where she completed her bachelor’s degree in costume design. Moving to Atlanta, she designed shows with Jomandi Productions and worked with neighboring theaters such as Virginia’s Mill Mountain Theater. These projects granted her the opportunity to work with artists such as choreographer Moustapha Bangoura of Les Ballets Africains; Chuck Davis, artistic director of DanceAfrica; and Marc Bamuthi Joseph on the production of Scourge. Since her move to the West Coast, she has been a wardrobe stylist, costume supervisor, and key costumer on film and video sets. Currently her focus is on commercial and advertising productions, with clients ranging from the Gap and Levi Strauss & Co. to Microsoft and Apple, Inc., to Adidas and New Balance.

Gregory T. Kuhn
is a multidisciplinary creator and collaborator in the performing and fine arts since 1986 as composer, sound designer and engineer, visual artist and designer. After receiving a BA in Music from Swarthmore College, he worked with Relâche and New Music America 1987, and at the Yellow Springs Institute in the Philadelphia area. Since 1988, he has collaborated on a great diversity of projects in the San Francisco Bay Area for theater, multimedia, exhibition, dance, and experimental and contemporary music performances. Recent recognition includes the 2007 Isadora Duncan Award for San Francisco Ballet’s Ballet Mori (with Ken Goldberg and Randall Packer) and the 2008 Lucille Lortel Award for Unique Theatrical Experience for Rinde Eckert’s Horizon (directed by David Schweizer). Ongoing activities include new works by Paul Dresher, Joan Jeanrenaud, Karla Kihlstedt, Margaret Jenkins, Joe Goode, Larry Reed, Wayne Vitale, Rafael Landea, Traveling Jewish Theater, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Eco Ensemble, and Other Minds.

Rebecca Cullars
a.k.a. B^2, worked on Marc Bamuthi Joseph’s the break/s as Stage Manager and Lighting Director. Based in New York, she has worked on The NYC Downtown Urban Theater Festival as Stage Manager; Fyvush Finkel Live, Two Brothers, and Metamorphose as Interim Production Manager, Video Supervisor, and Master Electrician; Perfect Fit as Lighting Designer; Nathan the Wise as Assistant Lighting Designer; Hip Hop Monologues: Inside the Life and Times of Jim Jones as Stage Manager; Cyclone and the Pig-Faced Lady as Assistant Lighting Designer; and Any Night as Technical Director. She has worked as Sponsor Liaison for
the Marty Markowitz Brooklyn Summer Concert Series and is lighting designer for Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts of gospel acts including Mary Mary, Tye Tribbett, Hezekiah Walker, Kirk Franklin, The Clark Sisters, JJ Hairston, and Richard Smallwood.

Bethanie Hines aims for her photography to “move [Hines] through the world with her whole heart . . . [so that] those on the other side of her lens feel the reverence she holds for life.” Hines is committed to a practice of mindfulness, which connects her to moments that could easily be missed. She strives for her photography to evidence vulnerability, emotion, intimacy, and connection to her subjects.

bethaniehines.com

The Living Word Project (LWP) is the resident theater company of Youth Speaks, committed to producing literary performance in the verse of our time. Aesthetically urban and pedagogically Freirean, LWP derives personal performed narratives out of interdisciplinary collaboration. Although its methodology includes dance, music, and film, the company’s emphasis is on spoken storytelling. LWP creates verse-based work that is spoken through the body, illustrated by visual and sonic scores, and in communication with the important social issues and movements of the immediate moment. LWP is the connection from Shakespeare’s quill to Kool Herc’s turntables, from Martha Graham’s cupped hand to Nelson Mandela’s clenched fist—a new voice for a new politic. Recent highlights include the break/s (Marc Bamuthi Joseph, 2009), Mirrors in Every Corner (Chinaka Hodge, 2010), red, black & GREEN: a blues (Marc Bamuthi Joseph, directed by Michael John Garcés, 2011) and Tree City Legends (Dennis Kim, 2012). Since 2008, LWP has produced LIFE is LIVING across the country in underutilized parks in urban cities. LIFE is LIVING establishes a new model for partnerships between diverse and under-resourced communities, green action agencies, and the contemporary art world. Highly successful LIFE is LIVING events have taken place in Harlem, Chicago, Houston, and Oakland. Joan Osato is Producing Director.

MAPP International Productions develops sustainable environments for artists to create, premiere, and tour performing arts projects and advances appreciation of diverse cultures and perspectives through arts, humanities, and public dialogue. Our curatorial vision leads us to seek out artists on the cutting edge of their disciplines—artists who lead the way in tackling complex subject matter and experimenting with form, and whose works are the engine that continually push the cultural conversation forward in our society. We realize our mission through our interconnected programs—New Works, Artist-Public Dialogues, and MAPP on Tour—and through our national and international programs, The America Project and The Africa Contemporary Arts Consortium. Since its founding in 1994, MAPP has produced thirty acclaimed multidisciplinary performing arts projects created and performed by more than three hundred artists, and our productions have been seen in forty-two US states and sixteen countries. MAPP has introduced the US public to artists from twenty-two countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, Australia, and the Caribbean.
Better Boys Foundation (BBF) has worked for fifty-one years to improve the quality of life of the North Lawndale community through youth development programming designed to respond to the academic, social, and emotional needs of the community’s children, youth, and families. BBF’s current focus is on out-of-school time programming for elementary-age children and high-school-age youth and post-secondary preparation and support for young people going on to college or vocational school. Its two core programs are kidLAB@1512 (serving children ages five to twelve), and YouthLAB@1512 (serving youth ages thirteen to eighteen). Approximately two hundred children/youth are served by BBF’s programming on-site each day. BBF’s goal is to realize the power of potential in each child/youth it serves via intensive academic support services and innovative and expert-led apprenticeships offered currently in eight core areas:

— Organic gardening and urban food policy work (AgLAB@1512)
— Drawing, painting, and sculpture (ArtLAB@1512— to launch summer 2012)
— Digital music production (BeatLAB@1512— to launch summer 2012)
— Bicycling and bicycle mechanics in partnership with West Town Bikes (BikeLAB@1512)
— Film, video, and new media (FilmLAB@1512)
— Knitting, crocheting, and textile arts (KnitLAB@1512)
— Writing and graphic design (LitLAB@1512)
— Beginning and advanced tap dancing (TapLAB1&2)

The members of BBF screening their video work for SHareOUT at MCA Stage are Kia Clair & Stephenie Gipson: BBF Dreamers (2012, documentary/animation); Angelo Williams: Moon’s (2010, documentary); Aurelia Turner: Train In The Closet & The Call (2011, narrative/animation); and Monique Morgan & Boshea Brown: Hard Work (2012, documentary.)

Follow YouthLAB at http://www.betterboys.org/programs-services/youthlab-1512/. For the latest from AgLAB @1512 please visit http://bbf-aglab.tumblr.com/

The Creative Agency at MCA (TCA) is a new two-year program in which the MCA partners with local teens to explore art and culture through the lens of their individual creative questions and passions. Members meet weekly with the program’s Lead Artist, Jason Pallas, and focus on themes of critical interpretation, public speaking, and cultural participation.

The founding TCA members are Harlan Ballogg, Chi Arts; Alejandro DiPrizio, Loyola Academy; Kara Franco, Elk Grove HS; LaMar Gayles, Kennedy-King College Prep; Nick Jackson, Jones College Prep; Richard Jackson, Harold Washington College; Ella Kinsman, Glenbard South HS; Benjamin Marshall Jr., Chi Arts; Matthew Moen, Whitney Young; Alexis Moore, Marine Math and Science Academy; Rosa Novak, Evanston Township HS; Xavier Smith, EPIC Academy; Andrew Yaus, Oak Park-River Forest HS; and Lucy Wang, Hinsdale Central HS.

Follow The Creative Agency @TCAatMCA

Kuumba Lynx was founded by Jacinda Bullie, Jaquanda Villegas, and Leyda “Lady Sol” Garcia in 1996 as an interdisciplinary performance ensemble and arts education organization. Hailing from
the north, south, and west side of Chicago, members include artists of all ages dedicated to preserving community story through “edutainment”—a term coined by hip hop emcee, philosopher, and activist KRS 1. The ensemble fuses hip hop movement, text, and music to create urban narratives that explore culture, spirituality, social responsibility, and cross cultural understandings. Kuumba Lynx is a Chicago Park District Arts Partner with Clarendon Park. It has performed throughout Chicago as well as in Atlanta, Cuba, California, New Mexico, and New York.

The members of Kuumba Lynx participating for SHareOUT at MCA Stage are Dashay Barlow, Sahara Burton, Askia Bullie, Hamid Bullie, Jacinda Bullie, Jahliegh Bullie, Quenton Cole, LeSuga Eagens, Joshua Garcia, Anniece Grays, Leslie Guzman, Marshan Hall, Kenisha Harper, Key-kee Itson, Michael Johnson, Maya Odim, Aliyah Olemade, Jeremiah Perry, Keith Redmond, Tatianna Serrato, Tanya Smith, Jaquanda Villegas, Neiyah Villegas, and Sejahari Villegas.

Follow Kuumba Lynx at kuumblynx.org.

YOUmedia
is a collaboration between the Chicago Public Library and Digital Youth Network (DYN). DYN is a hybrid digital literacy program begun at the University of Chicago’s Urban Education Institute and now administered by DePaul University. In its partnership with the Chicago Public Library, DYN supports new ways of activating and exploring themes found in traditional literature through the development of multimedia projects and applied technology by youth who meet at the main Chicago Public Library (Harold Washington) after school hours. DYN is otherwise not bounded by walls or time of day. The core of the model spans the worlds of school, home, and after-school activities. It provides youth with access and training in the use of new media literacy tools; meaningful activities where the development of new media literacies is essential for accomplishing goals; and a continuum of established new media mentors (from high school students to professionals) who develop students’ technical skills, serve as role models, and provide access to the communities of practice surrounding technology-based careers.

The members of YOUmedia participating for SHareOUT at MCA Stage are Sam Carrol, Malcom London, Vanity Robinson, Kush Thompson (poets) and Ramon “Prince Talent” O’Donnell (audio.)

Follow YOUmedia at redblackgreenablenuesyoumedia.tumblr.com.

Young Chicago Authors
was founded in 1991 by Dr. Robert S. Boone, a published author and educator with extensive experience teaching teens in urban and suburban Chicago settings. He assembled a group of educators, writers, and philanthropists who all believed that young people should have more exposure to creative writing. YCA directly serves 2,500 teens a year through workshops and performance and publication programs, and reaches 30,000 young people and adults through readership of its publications and audiences at its events. It also develops programs that serve young writers and educators. YCA’s Writing Teachers Collective, formed by and for writers who teach and teachers who use writing
in the classroom, offers workshops on special topics in creative writing. WTC has been integral in several initiatives, such as the Chicago Teen Poetry Slam; WordWide; GirlSpeak; Men as Allies: Swaggerzine; and Say What, a literary magazine tying together creative writing with youth culture and personal expression. YCA is widely celebrated as producer of Louder Than A Bomb, which brings hundreds of teens together from across the United States and across racial, gang, and socio-economic lines in a friendly competition that emphasizes self-expression and community via poetry, oral storytelling, and hip-hop spoken word.

The members of Young Chicago Authors participating for SHareOUT at MCA Stage are Leah Barber, Nina Coomes, Eric Gaston, Cece Tate, and Keith Warfield.

Follow Young Chicago Authors at youngchicagoauthors.org.
As one of the nation’s largest multidisciplinary museums devoted to the art of our time, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago offers exhibitions of the most thought-provoking art of today. The museum’s performing arts program, MCA Stage, is the most active presenter of theater, dance, and music in Chicago, featuring leading performers from around the globe in our 300-seat theater.

MCA Stage is committed to presenting groundbreaking performances that focus on collaboration; working closely with artists; converging with the larger programming of the museum; and offering a contemporary view of the traditional roots of performance.

Performance Programs
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Yolanda Cesta Cursach, Associate Director
Surinder Martignetti, Manager
Antonia Callas, Assistant
Kevin Brown, House Management Associate
Alicia M Graff, House Management Associate
Quinlan Kirchner, House Management Associate
Eboni Senai Hawkins, Intern

Theater Management
Dennis O’Shea, Manager of Technical Production
Richard Norwood, Theater Production Manager

Box Office
Matti Allison, Manager
Phongtorn Phongluantum, Assistant Manager
Molly Laemle, Coordinator
Jena Hirschy, Associate
Lucy Pearson, Associate
Gabriel Garcia, Associate

Program notes compiled by Yolanda Cesta Cursach

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Carol Prins
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Patty Sternberg
Richard Tomlinson

Parking
Validate your ticket at coat check for $11 parking in the MCA garage (220 E. Chicago Avenue) and Bernardin garage (747 N. Wabash). The $11 parking is limited to six hours on date of performance.

Lost and found
To inquire about a lost item, call the museum at 312.280.2660. Unclaimed articles are held for 30 days.

Seating
Switch off all noise-making devices while you are in the theater.

Late arrivals are seated at the management’s discretion. Food and open beverage containers are not allowed in the seating area.

Reproduction
Unauthorized recording and reproduction of a performance is prohibited.

Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago
220 E. Chicago Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611
mcachicago.org

General information 312.280.2660
Box office 312.397.4010
Volunteer for performances 312.397.4072
housemanagers@mcachicago.org

Contact the Performance department housemanagers@mcachicago.org

Museum hours
Tuesday: 10 am–8 pm
Wednesday–Sunday: 10 am–5 pm
Closed Mondays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year’s Day