The Way You Look (at me) Tonight running time is one hundred minutes with no intermission.

Winter/Spring 2018
Created and performed by Claire Cunningham and Jess Curtis

Philosophical Consultant
Alva Noë

Video Design
Yoann Trellu

Music Composition
Matthias Herrmann

Dramaturgy
Luke Pell

Costumes and Set
Michiel Keuper

Set Construction
Saskia Schoenmaker

Lighting Design
Chris Copland

Audio Description
Emma Jane McHenry

Sign Language Consultation
Catherine King

ASL Interpretation
Amy Kisner and Shannon Poutinho

Producers
Claire Cunningham Projects and Jess Curtis/Gravity

Gravity Production Manager
Alley Wilde

Claire Cunningham Projects Executive Producer
Nadja Dias

Assistant Production Management
Sheena Khanna

Marketing Management (UK)
Vicky Wilson

Access Coordination
Jak Soroka and Geraldine Wong

Technical Direction
Beth Hersh and Chris Copland

FROM THE CURATOR

This Chicago debut by Claire Cunningham and Jess Curtis is part of a crucial dance movement lineage that includes AXIS Dance Company and Bill Shennon (aka Crutch Master), who—some may recall—also debuted in Chicago at the MCA. Claire, a classically trained soprano, began dancing in the early 2000s after working with Jess, who is a leading figure in San Francisco’s music and Contact Improvisation scenes. More than ever, their investigations of perception as it relates to dance, especially in the context of social justice and embodied differences, is hugely relevant.

Sound heady? Think of The Way You Look (at me) Tonight as a positive disruptor. The artists’ collage of dance, song, and text by their brilliant collaborator, philosopher of perception Dr. Alva Noë, invites a collective “object-ion” to oversimplified notions of empathy and other dangerous misunderstandings of how we experience one another.

Next week, the MCA is providing Claire commissioning support and a residency to develop her forthcoming work Thank you very much . . . Conceived for five performers including Claire, the piece looks at notions of impersonation versus tribute—of grooming and training to be someone else yet never reaching the supposed ideal—through the lens of the Elvis Presley phenomenon and the competitive world of Elvis tribute artists. My special thanks go to the Hyde Park Art Center for hosting Claire's initial MCA residency, which, for the first time, brings her together with two of her Chicago-based collaborators: writer-choreographer Barak adé Soleil and media artist Chunshan (Sandie) Yi.

—from Yolanda Cesta Cursach, Curator of Performance

Presented in Association with Bodies of Work
MCA Stage's series of artist-centered talks, workshops, and open studios engages the public with the artists in intimate settings and provides a closer look at the creative process.

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**POSTSHOW TALK**

**Sat, Feb 10**

The audience is invited to a conversation with Claire Cunningham and Jess Curtis directly after the performance, moderated by MCA Curator of Performance Yolanda Cesta Cursach.

The talk includes ASL interpretation by Amy Kisner.

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**AUDIO DESCRIPTION WORKSHOP**

**Sat, Feb 10, 11 am**

In this free workshop for dance and theater artists, Claire Cunningham and Jess Curtis explore the creative potential of audio description for movement-based performance.

Registration required. Call the Box Office at 312-397-4010.

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**IN PROGRESS: CLAIRE CUNNINGHAM**

**Tue, Feb 13, 6–8 pm**

Join Claire Cunningham in the Commons to hear about *Thank you very much . . .*, her latest radical collaboration, which considers the notion of training and grooming through the lens of the Elvis Presley phenomenon and the competitive world of Elvis tribute artists.

The talk includes ASL interpretation by Amy Kisner.

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**OTHERNESS AND DIFFERENCES**

**Tue, Feb 13, 1–2 pm**

Claire Cunningham engages MCA staff in a talk about practice, process, and perspectives about “otherness” and “difference.” What we share—in the studio, in public—or keep private reveals our empathy, sympathy, or indifference more than we think.

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**ACCESSIBLE EVENTS**

All the performances of *The Way You Look (at me) Tonight* offer optional audio description.

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**TOUCH TOUR**

**Sat, Feb 10, 6:30 pm**

Blind of low-vision patrons are invited to explore the stage, experience the movements of the performers, and touch elements on the set of *The Way You Look (at me) Tonight*.

Registration required. Call the Box Office at 312-397-4010.

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**RELAXED PERFORMANCE WITH ASL-INTERPRETATION**

**Sun, Feb 11, 2 pm**

Relaxed performances are for people, with or without disabilities, who prefer some flexibility in terms of noise and movement in the theater. Stage lighting and sound have been adapted by the artists to be less intense. Patrons are free to leave and reenter the theater as necessary, and the theater lights are kept at a glow to facilitate movement. Sensory rest areas are available outside the theater for patrons to take a break before returning to the show. Trained volunteers are present to assist.

Amy Kisner and Shannon Moutinho are the ASL interpreters for this performance.
CLAIRE CUNNINGHAM (CREATOR AND PERFORMER) is a Glasgow-based performer and creator of multidisciplinary performance and a current Factory Artist with Tanzhaus NRW Düsseldorf, Germany. One of the United Kingdom’s most acclaimed and internationally renowned disabled artists, Cunningham’s work is often rooted in the use/misuse of her crutches and the exploration of the potential of her specific physicality, with a conscious rejection of traditional dance techniques (which are developed for non-disabled bodies). This runs alongside her deep interest in the lived experience of disability and its implications not only for choreographers but also in terms of societal notions of knowledge, value, and interdependence.

JESS CURTIS (CREATOR AND PERFORMER) is an award-winning choreographer and performer committed to an art-making practice informed by experimentation, innovation, critical discourse, and social relevance. He has created and performed multidisciplinary works throughout the United States and Europe with the radical San Francisco performance groups Contraband and CORE and with the experimental French circus company Cahin-Caha. In 2000, he founded his transcontinental performance company, Jess Curtis/Gravity. Curtis is also an active researcher, writer, teacher, advocate, and community organizer in the fields of contemporary dance and performance. He holds an MFA in Choreography and a PhD in Performance Studies from the University of California at Davis.

ALVA NOË (PHILOSOPHICAL CONSULTANT) is a writer and philosopher living in Berkeley, CA, and New York. He is the author of Action in Perception (2004), Out of Our Heads: Why You Are Not Your Brain and Other Lessons from the Biology of Consciousness (2009), Varieties of Presence (2012), and Strange Tools: Art and Human Nature (2015). He is Professor of Philosophy and a member of the Center for New Media and the Institute for Cognitive and Brain Sciences at the University of California, Berkeley. Noë is a 2012 recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and a 2018 winner of the Judd/Hume Prize in Advanced Visual Culture. He is a contributor to National Public Radio’s science and culture blog 13.7 Cosmos and Culture.

LUKE PELL (DRAMATURGY) is a Scotland-based artist fascinated by detail, nuances of time, texture, memory, and landscape. Maker, curator, and dramaturg, he collaborates with other artists and organizations to imagine alternative contexts for performance, participation, and discourse that might reveal wisdoms for living. Noticing threads that weave among people and places, his artistic projects take form as intimate encounters, poetic objects, installations, and designed environments—choreographies—for physical and digital spaces. Pell is a Dance Base Associate Artist 2017–19, Dramaturg in Residence with South East Dance 2018, an Associate Artist of Fevered Sleep, and regular collaborator with Janice Parker Projects.

YOANN TRELLU (VIDEO DESIGN) is a French video artist based in Berlin. He started working with live projection in 1999, first using photography and slide projections, but quickly moving to computer, video projection, and real-time media software such as Max/Msp/Jitter. He creates video content and develops custom video applications for performance and theater. In the last ten years, he has worked on more than forty productions in Germany, France, and the United States with Post Theater (Berlin, New York, Tokyo), Konzert Theater Bern (Switzerland), Landestheater Coburg (Germany), Tatraum Projekte Schmidt (Germany), TEN PEN CHii (Berlin), Shang-Chi Sun (Berlin, Taiwan), Junge Staatsoper (Berlin), Theater Strahl (Berlin), and Jess Curtis/Gravity.

MATTHIAS HERRMANN (MUSIC COMPOSITION) studied cello with Rudolf Mandalka at the Robert Schumann Hochschule,
ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

Select MCA Stage performances include open-captioning, sign-interpretation, listening devices, or are relaxed sensory. Please call 312-397-4010 in advance to reserve seats and inclusive services.

CHRIS COPLAND (LIGHTING DESIGN) graduated from Goldsmiths College with an MA in theater arts in 2001 and has worked extensively in theater and dance since 1993. He has worked as a production manager for Bedlam Dance, Nigel Charnock, Ursula Martinez, Laila Diallo and Wendy Houstoun, and Flexer & Sandiland, among many others, and as a lighting designer for Nigel Charnock, H2 Dance, Tavaziva Dance, Candoco Dance Company, Ursula Martinez, Kate McIntosh, and Wendy Houstoun. Chris regularly gives lectures on acting and devising for the theater.

MICHIEL KEUPER (COSTUMES AND SET) graduated in fashion design from ArtEZ Institute of the Arts in Arnhem, Netherlands. With his fashion label, Keupr/van Bentm, he presented his collections during Paris Fashion Week for several years, and his autonomous fashion work is represented in museum collections and exhibited internationally. In recent years, he has extended his practice to fine arts, performance, and art direction—including painting and set and costume design for contemporary dance—as well as singing. Recently he has worked with Hana Lee Erdman, Jeremy Wade, Miguel Gutierrez, Antonija Livingstone, and Sheena McGrandles.
Join us for dinner or drinks before or after the theater at Marisol, named one of the hottest restaurants in Chicago by Zagat and one of Vogue’s “Six Chicago Restaurants You Should Know About Now.” Call 312-799-3599 to make reservations.

Marisol. Photo: Herman Miller.

SEASON CALENDAR

2017

Sep 7–10 600 HIGHWAYMEN
The Fever

Oct 5–8 Marc Bamuthi Joseph/
The Living Word Project
/peh-LO-tah/-a futbol
framed freedom suite . . .

Nov 9–12 Faye Driscoll
Thank You For
Coming: Play

Dec 7–10 Twyla Tharp
Minimalism and Me

2018

Jan 25–28 Federico León
Las ideas

Feb 8–11 Claire Cunningham
& Jess Curtis
The Way You Look
(at me) Tonight

Apr 6–7 Mind Over Mirrors
Bellowing Sun

Apr 12–15 Okwui Okpokwasili
Poor People’s TV Room

May 24–26 Kaneza Schaal
and Cornell Alston
Jack &
The MCA's newest affinity group, Enact, is a group of MCA donors dedicated to supporting the renowned programs of MCA Stage. Join today for opportunities to meet artists, gain behind-the-scenes access, and discuss groundbreaking directions with leading curators—all while providing vital support.

**BENEFITS OF ENACT MEMBERSHIP INCLUDE:**

- Members-only programming throughout the MCA Stage season, such as intimate gatherings with MCA performance leadership, pre- and post-performance discussions with artists, and behind-the-scenes access to select rehearsals
- Invitation to Season Reveal, an annual preview of the upcoming season
- Opportunities for complimentary drinks and tickets

Circle Donor membership is required to join Enact. Enact dues are an additional $1,000 annually. For more information, contact us at enact@mcachicago.org.

**ENACT MEMBERS**

Dr. Bruce and Sally Bauer
Ms. Shawn M. Donnelley and Dr. Christopher M. Kelly
Lois and Steve Eisen and The Eisen Family Foundation
Ginger Farley and Bob Shapiro
Nicholas and Nancy Giampietro
Cynthia Hunt and Philip Rudolph
Ashlee Jacob
Anne L. Kaplan
Anne and John Kern
Elizabeth A. Liebman
Sharon* and Lee Oberlander
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Maya Polsky
D. Elizabeth Price and Lou Yecies
Carol Prins and John Hart/
The Jessica Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Seder
Ellen Stone Belic
Linda and Michael Welsh

*Enact Chair
As of January 2018

**SUPPORT FOR MCA STAGE**

Lead support for the 2017-18 season of MCA Stage is provided by Elizabeth A. Liebman.

Generous support is provided by Lois and Steve Eisen and The Eisen Family Foundation, Ginger Farley and Bob Shapiro, the Martha Struthers Farley and Donald C. Farley Jr. Family Foundation, Sharon and Lee Oberlander, Maya Polsky, Carol Prins and John Hart/The Jessica Fund, Susan Manning and Doug Doetsch, D. Elizabeth Price and Lou Yecies, and Ms. Shavun M. Donnelley and Dr. Christopher M. Kelly.

Additional generous support for MCA Stage is provided by Enact, the MCA's performance affinity group.

The MCA is a proud member of the Museums in the Park and receives major support from the Chicago Park District.

**FOUNDATION SEASON SPONSOR**

**ALPHAVOOD FOUNDATION CHICAGO**

**HOTEL SPONSOR**

**Residence Inn® Marriott.**

**ABOUT MCA STAGE**

As an internationally renowned institution devoted to contemporary culture, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago presents the most thought-provoking visual art and performing arts of our time. MCA Stage is a vibrant series presenting theater, dance, and music by leading artists from the United States and around the world in the MCA’s three-hundred seat Edlis Neeson Theater.

MCA Stage’s groundbreaking performances are an integral part of the MCA’s artist-activated, audience-engaged programming. Along with the museum’s exhibitions and educational initiatives, they encourage a broad and diverse community to experience and discuss the work and ideas of living artists.

**PARKING**

Validate your ticket at coat check for $12 parking in the MCA garage (220 E Chicago Ave) and the Bernardin garage (747 North Wabash). The $12 parking is limited to six hours on the date of performance.

**LOST AND FOUND**

To inquire about a lost item, call the museum at 312-280-2660. Unclaimed articles are held for thirty days.

**SEATING**

Please switch off all noise-making devices while you are in the theater.

Patrons 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 are prohibited.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

312-280-2660

**BOX OFFICE**

312-397-4010

**VOLUNTEER FOR PERFORMANCES**

312-397-4072

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