

DAMION LOCKS  
AND TAMMAR-KALI

*Where Future  
Unfolds and  
Demon Fruit Blues*

Program  
Notes

Sat  
Aug 18, 2018

MCA  
STAGE

Edlis Neeson  
Theater

Eyes  
Wide

Lights  
Low

at MCA  
Stage

Summer/Fall  
2018

*Where Future Unfolds* and  
*Demon Fruit Blues* running  
time is ninety minutes with  
intermission.

SUPPORT FOR THIS  
MCA STAGE PROJECT

Lead support for the  
MCA Stage New Works  
Initiative is provided by  
Elizabeth A. Liebman.

Special thanks to  
Phill Cabean and Kasey  
Trouba for their  
administrative work on  
the 2018/19 season.

Gratitude to Michael  
Byrd of the Illinois  
Youth Center Chicago  
and Heidi Mueller  
of the Illinois  
Department of Juvenile  
Justice, Marcus Davis  
of the Chicago Park  
District's TRACE (Teens  
Reimagining Art,  
Community, and  
Environment), and the  
MCA's own Teen  
Creative Agency for  
additional  
programming.

SUPPORT FOR  
THE ARTISTS

Damon Locks's *Where  
Future Unfolds* is  
being developed in part  
through a residency  
at the Hyde Park Art  
Center and through the  
MCA's SPACE Program.

Tamar-kali's *Demon  
Fruit Blues* was  
originally commissioned  
by Danni Gee for  
Central Park  
SummerStage's 2016  
season. The work  
has been in  
development through  
Harlem Stage  
WaterWorks, a Mabou  
Mines SUITE/Space  
Residency, and the  
MCA's New Works  
Initiative.

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DAMON LOCKS: *WHERE FUTURE UNFOLDS*

The Black Monument Ensemble

Vocals	Allie Bradford, Tramaine S. Parker, Phillip Armstrong, and Joseph A. Kern
Drums	Dana Hall
Percussion	Arif Smith
Trumpet and bells	Ben LaMar Gay
Electronics, bells, and vocals	Damon Locks

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TAMAR-KALI: *DEMON FRUIT BLUES*

Concept, music direction, and composition	Tamar-kali
Direction	Charlotte Brathwaite
Choreography	Adia Tamar Whitaker
Visual Imagery	"Necromancer" by Sarah Olson  "Erzulie's Kiss" and "Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome" by Tiffany Smith
Drums	Mark Robohm
Percussion	Lisette Santiago
Upright and electric bass	Catherine O'Malley
Lead/rhythm guitar	Kat Dyson
Rhythm/lead guitar	Jerome Jordan
Violin 1	Sylvia de la Cerna
Violin 2	Caitlin Edwards
Viola	Michelle Manson
Cello	Ifetayo Ali-Landing
Àşę Dance Theatre Collective	Adia Whitaker, Kendra Ross, Jovan Clay, and Angel Chinn

## FROM THE CURATOR

I am struck by how distinct Damon Locks's and Tamar-kali's works are, while having so much in common: both artists compose music in order to rework familiar narratives, their own musical inheritances, and history itself. Over the past year I got to hear about Tamar-kali's relationship to her Gullah roots on the Sea Islands of South Carolina, Damon's latest obscure vinyl discovery (recordings by writers Lorraine Hansberry and Claude McKay), and a time when Tamar-kali crashed on Damon's couch in the early 2000s during filming for the documentary *Afro-Punk*. Beneath our conversations is their mutual intention: that performance can be a moving political gesture.

Thank you for joining us at the end of Tamar-kali's weeklong New Works Initiative residency and as Damon expands his vision with Chicago's own Black Monument Ensemble. As we embrace these two in-development projects, you are witnessing them at a vital, pivotal moment.

Tara Aisha Willis,  
Associate Curator of Performance

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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.

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BUY TICKETS

ONLINE  
[mchicago.org/stage](http://mchicago.org/stage)

BY PHONE  
312-397-4010

AT THE MCA  
BOX OFFICE

220 E Chicago Ave  
Chicago, IL 60611

Single performance tickets starting at \$30; \$10 for students, limited availability.

Groups of ten or more save 20% on full-price tickets; call 312-397-4010.

FREE MUSEUM  
ADMISSION  
WITH TICKET

Present your MCA Stage ticket stub to receive FREE ADMISSION\* and 10% off your purchase at the MCA Store.\*\* Or become an MCA Member and save 15%.

Ticket stub is valid during regular hours up to seven days after the performance date.

\* Not accepted for special ticketed exhibitions.

\*\* Regular price, in-stock merchandise only; no other discounts apply.

## RELATED PROGRAMS

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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POST-SHOW TALK  
Sat, Aug 18

The audience is invited to join Damon Locks and Tamar-kali in conversation directly after the performance, moderated by Associate Curator of Performance Tara Aisha Willis.

## ART BY DAMON LOCKS



## ABOUT DEMON FRUIT BLUES

Tamar-kali's *Demon Fruit Blues* explores the origins of misogyny and the "curse of womanhood" as outlined in Genesis 3:16:

To the woman he said: I will intensify your toil in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Yet your urge shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.

This collection of works speaks to how the perception of the female body reverberates throughout Western history and represents the cultural and ideological concepts that drive Tamar-kali as an artist. Inspired by the majesty of female African deities, "goddess"-themed art, and feminist theory, these works reflect the artist's personal journey to self-discovery and acceptance. Tamar-kali's lyrical and compositional approach connects the dots between modern-day rock, gospel, blues, and original African rhythms and reframes the influence of classical music in an eclectic contemporary context. The resulting experience challenges the trend of hidden influences in popular American media that severs the ties between history and culture.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

DAMON LOCKS: *WHERE FUTURE UNFOLDS*

DAMON LOCKS is a Chicago-based visual artist, educator, vocalist, musician, and DJ. He received his BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Since 2014 he has been teaching art at Stateville Correctional Center through the Prison + Neighborhood Art Project. He is a recipient of the Helen Coburn Meier & Tim Meier Foundation Achievement Award in the Arts and the 2016 MAKER Grant. Last year he operated as an Artist Mentor in the Chicago Artist Coalition program FIELD/WORK, and more recently he became a Soros Justice Media Fellow. He is currently inaugurating the new Public-Engaged Residency at the Hyde Park Art Center and works as an artist in residence as a part of the MCA's SPACE Program, introducing civically engaged art into the curriculum at the Sarah E. Goode STEM Academy.

JOSEPH A. KERN (VOCALS) is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, with a BS in Neuroscience. Kern has served in Zambia as a Rural Health Extensionist with the United States Peace Corps and as a mentor for Chicago teens through the Chicago Youth Programs and Summer Service Partnership. He has also stayed connected to the music he grew up with through the Chicago Children's Choir. Kern is currently in his second year at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine.

PHILLIP ARMSTRONG (VOCALS) graduated from Millikin University with a BA in Music and BS in Communication. Armstrong performed in the Chicago Children's Choir and Lookingglass Theatre's production of *Sita Ram*, debuting the role of God Brahma/King Janaka. He made several appearances as a lead vocalist for the Steve Harvey Gala and Mayor Rahm Emanuel's inaugurations, and has been featured on Fox News, WGN News, and ABC News. On the weekends Armstrong performs in the Becca Kaufman Orchestra at Chicago's

greatest venues: The Drake, London House, Navy Pier, and The Peninsula of Chicago, among others. He was recently featured as an alumnus on the Chicago Children's Choir vinyl record *We All Live Here*.

ALLIE BRADFORD (VOCALS) is a Chicago Children's Choir alumna and performing vocalist. She has sung alongside a plethora of world-renowned musicians and toured domestically and internationally with various groups including the American Music Award-winning band New Kids On The Block. She has recorded for and often makes cameo performances with Grammy Award-winning artist Chance the Rapper and is a background vocalist for Billboard's new favorite singer-songwriter, Jamila Woods.

TRAMAINE S. PARKER (VOCALS) began singing at age four at Mt. Vernon Baptist Church in Chicago. She later joined the Chicago Children's Choir, performing at several venues including Ravinia in Highland Park, IL; Carnegie Hall, Riverside Church, NY; and the Harris Theater for Music and Dance. She has performed with a number of ensembles including the John Work Chorale, Vocality, and Pitchmafia. While studying at Fisk University, Tramaine was a member of the Fisk University Choir and Grammy-nominated Fisk Jubilee Singers, and she received an MA in Clinical Professional Psychology from Roosevelt University. In addition to performing as a soloist in the Chicagoland area, Tramaine works as an investigator for the Illinois Department of Children Family & Services.

DANA HALL (DRUMS) is a jazz drummer, percussionist, composer, bandleader, and ethnomusicologist. After spending the first few years of his life in Brooklyn, NY, he relocated with his family to his mother's hometown of Philadelphia. There, Hall was exposed to jazz and soul music through the recordings of his mother Diane, his uncle Earl Harris, and his large extended family. His

family's interest in creative music and their "open door" policy toward the finest resident Philadelphia jazz musicians of the modern era created the perfect environment to spark Hall's curiosity, passion, and ultimately his career in music.

ARIF SMITH (PERCUSSION) is a multidisciplinary artist and educator. His performance- and video-based work centers on diasporic citizenship and African-rooted performance practices, exploring notions of blackness, copresence, and marronage. Currently, Smith is a Program Manager at Old Town School of Folk Music and an Artist-in-Residence with Arts + Public Life and the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture at the University of Chicago. He is also a member of Bomba con Buya and Iré Elese Abure.

BEN LAMAR GAY (TRUMPET AND BELLS) is a composer, cornetist, vocalist, and producer who moves components of sound, color, and space through folkloric filters to produce electro-acoustic collages. Gay's unification of various styles is always in service of the musical narrative. His true technique is giving life to an idea while transforming the thought and theory of the term "Americana."

TAMAR-KALI: *DEMON FRUIT BLUES*

TAMAR-KALI Born and bred in Brooklyn, Tamar-kali is a second-generation musician, composer, and singer-songwriter. The aggressive, melodic rock of her five-piece outfit at once enchants and delivers a swift kick to the gut. The work she composes and arranges for Psychochamber Ensemble, her string sextet and voice project, marries the classical music of her Catholic upbringing with post-punk sensibilities. Her incendiary performances and contribution to the 2003 documentary film *Afro-Punk's* soundtrack introduced a generation to her unique story and undeniable talent. Her debut as a film score composer came in 2017 with Dee Rees's *Mudbound* and continued in 2018 with Joshua

Marsten's *Come Sunday*. Her vocals were featured in Dee Rees's *Pariiah* and HBO's biopic *Bessie*. Her eclectic sound and versatility have allowed her to perform with a diverse list of artists from Paramore, Vernon Reid, and Roger Waters to Vijay Iyer, Meshell Ndegeocello, and The Roots.

CHARLOTTE BRATHWAITE (DIRECTOR) is known for her unique approach to staging classical and unconventional texts, video, film, dance, visual art, multimedia, site-specific installation, performance art, plays, and music events. Her work has been seen in the Americas, Europe, the Caribbean, and Asia and ranges in subject matter from the historical past to the distant future, illuminating issues of race, sex, power, and the complexities of the human condition. Named one of the "up-and-coming women in theatre to watch" by *Playbill*, Brathwaite has received the Prelude Festival Franky Award, the Princess Grace Award, the Julian Milton Kaufman Prize (Yale), a Rockefeller Residency, and the National Performing Network Creation Fund. She received her MFA at Yale School of Drama and her BA in Physical Theater at the Amsterdam School for the Arts. She has been a Visiting Professor at Amherst College and a Visiting Artist at Williams College, and is currently Assistant Professor of Music and Theater Arts at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

ADIA TAMAR WHITAKER (CHOREOGRAPHER) has performed contemporary vernacular movement, modern, and Afro-Haitian dance in the United States and abroad for sixteen years. Whitaker completed a BA in Dance at San Francisco State University and the Professional Division Independent Studies Program at The Ailey School. She was Choreoquest Resident Artist at Restoration Dance Theater, a Ford Foundation Special Initiative for Africa Grant Recipient, an Urban Bush Women Apprentice, and a Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography Creative Entry Point Choreographic Fellow. Her choreopoem *Ampy!* earned an Isadora Duncan Award for Ensemble

Performance. Whitaker performed in and co-choreographed Marc Bamuthi Joseph's *Scourge* with Rennie Harris and Stacey Prinz. Whitaker's work has been seen at El Museo Del Barrio, The Museum of Art & Design, Lincoln Center, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Summerstage in NYC, Oberlin Dance Collective, The Whitney Museum, E-Moves at Aaron Davis Hall and Harlem Stage, Thelma Hill Performing Arts, The Kitchen, The Caribbean Cultural Center, and The Schomburg Center, among others.

TIFFANY SMITH (VISUAL IMAGERY) is an interdisciplinary artist from the Caribbean diaspora who works with photography, video, installation, and design to focus on identity, representation, cultural ambiguity, and displacement. Smith received a BFA in Photography from the Savannah College of Art and Design and an MFA in Photo/Video from the School of Visual Arts, NY. Her work has been included in recent exhibitions at MassArt, Boston; St. John's University, Queens, NY; The Bronx Museum of the Arts; and the National Gallery of Jamaica and exhibited at Photoville, NY; Photo NOLA, New Orleans; and Spring Break Art Show, NY. She has presented public art installations in Newark Penn Station through The Gateway Project and Marcus Garvey Park during Flux Art Fair, Harlem, and recent solo exhibitions at Space Create, Newburgh, NY, and The Wassaic Project, and a forthcoming solo exhibition at Mosteratt College of Art, Boston.

SARAH OLSON (VISUAL IMAGERY) has created paintings, drawings, performances, and sculptural installations in New York City and abroad in various galleries, public spaces, and in residencies in India, Scotland, England, and El Salvador. Her public performance work has taken place in Zucotti Park and Central Park, with the NYC Parks Department. Her live video work was displayed at Summer Stage in Central Park during a 2016 Tamar-Kali performance. Other NYC performances have taken place at the Joyce Theater, Littlefield

Performance and Art Space, and The Education Alliance. Her sculpture and painting have been displayed at the 3LD Art and Technology Center, and Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, DA Gallery, Gallery Satori, The Dahesh Museum, Columbia University in NYC; and the Rivington Gallery and Museum of Design in London. She holds an MFA from the New York Academy of Art and a BFA from the University of Colorado, Boulder.

# DATE NIGHT



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

RESTAURANT AND BAR  
AT THE MCA

205 E PEARSON ST  
CHICAGO, IL 60611

## SEASON CALENDAR

Summer/Fall 2018

- Aug 18 Tamar-kali and Damon Locks  
*Demon Fruit Blues and Where Future Unfolds*
- Aug 24-25 Chicago Dancemakers Forum  
SHareOUT!
- Aug 31-Sep 1 Chicago Dancemakers Forum  
SHareOUT!
- Oct 3-4, 6-7 Dorothee Munyaneza / Kadidi  
*Unwanted*
- Nov 2-3 Ishmael Houston-Jones, Ralph Lemon, and Bebe Miller  
*Relations*
- Dec 5-9 Claudia Rankine, Will Rawls, and John Lucas  
*What Remains*

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Program notes compiled by  
Hana Okamoto and  
Giannella Ysasi Tavano

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AGO

## SUPPORT FOR MCA STAGE

Lead support for the 2018-19 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

Ellen Stone Belic  
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Additional support for  
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Ms. Shawn M. Donnelley  
and Dr. Christopher  
M. Kelly

Nicholas and Nancy  
Giampietro

Cynthia Hunt and  
Philip Rudolph

Anne L. Kaplan

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D. Elizabeth Price and  
Lou Yecies

\*Enact Chair  
As of August 2018

MUSEUM OF  
CONTEMPORARY ART  
CHICAGO

## ABOUT ENACT

MCA Stage is supported by Enact, a group of MCA donors dedicated to supporting the Museum's renowned Stage programs.

Join today for opportunities to meet artists and gain behind-the-scenes access alongside MCA curators—all while providing vital support.

Circle Donor membership is required to join Enact. Enact donations begin at \$1,000 annually. For more information on benefits or to join, contact us at [enact@mcachicago.org](mailto:enact@mcachicago.org) or 312-397-4044.

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

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## 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  
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