Eyes Wide

Lights Low

at MCA Stage

Summer/Fall 2018

SHareOUT! is the MCA’s new mini-festival of works, presented over two weekends
Chicago Dancemakers Forum
SHAREOUT!

Fri, Aug 24

6-9 pm  A HOUSE UNBUILT
        in the Sculpture Garden and Plaza*

7-9 pm  YOSHINOJO FUJIMA,
        PRODUCTION: COLORS**
        in the Edlis Neeson Theater

8:30–9:30 pm CHICAGO URBAN DANCE COLLECTIVE
in the Commons

Sat, Aug 25

2–5 pm  A HOUSE UNBUILT
        in the Sculpture Garden and Plaza*

3–5 pm  YOSHINOJO FUJIMA,
        PRODUCTION: COLORS**
        in the Edlis Neeson Theater

4:30– 5:30 pm CHICAGO URBAN DANCE COLLECTIVE
in the Commons

SHAREOUT! is the MCA’s new mini-festival of works that have been developed in a year of research supported by Chicago Dancemakers Forum. Cofounded by the MCA, Links Hall, and the Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago, the Chicago Dancemakers Forum is celebrating fifteen years of supporting audacious and imaginative dancemakers.

FROM THE CURATOR

The premieres you are seeing today would not be possible without Chicago Dancemakers Forum, nonpareil for its dedication to nurturing individual artists’ inner journey and advancement in dance. The six 2017 Lab Artists are the inspiration for organizing SHAREOUT!, a new festival for works created with commissioning support by the MCA.

I’m grateful to Brittany, Daniel, Rika, Jumaane, Victoria, and Joshua, whose dance is clearly distinctive, for sharing their processes over the past year. The complexity they bring on stage seems destined to be a defining portrait of these times. The artists also have fierce individualism and a generosity for collaboration. You are the first to see works that question relationships with power from multiple perspectives. The performances are playful yet, at the root of it all, inquisitive and invite reflection on the joy and disappointment of the present and on the potential for change that we desire.

Yolanda Cesta Cursach,
Curator of Performance

*Durational performance, audience members are invited to come and go
**ASL interpretation by Veramarie Baldoza and Julikka LaChe.
VICTORIA BRADFORD/
A HOUSE UNBUILT

“Declivity”
(first movement, Relay of Voices: The Great River Run)

Performers
Zack Bailey, Angela Gronroos, Carla Gruby, Lisa Leszczewicz, and Ben Sanders

Conceived, directed, and written by
Victoria Bradford

Original music
Todd Mattei

Movement
Victoria Bradford and Angela Gronroos, in collaboration with Zack Bailey, Carla Gruby, Lisa Leszczewicz, and Ben Sanders

Team Coach
Nic Ruley

Managing Director
Dinah Bradford

ABOUT THE WORK

“Declivity” is the first movement of Relay of Voices: The Great River Run, a site-responsive performance that will last for 120 days, engage 104 towns and cities, and cover 2,300 miles along the Mississippi River Valley from Minnesota to Louisiana. Bradford’s team will travel the river’s entirety on foot and follow its natural downward slope, also called a declivity, the water increasing impact as it goes.

Relay also begins in Chicago, the city that brought the team together in order to reach out to and engage with the people of 104 mostly rural communities. The MCA is located 642 miles away from the headwaters of the only river that connects 40 percent of the contiguous United States.

Relay always begins in response to a location, listening to the place, and, in the case of MCA, it brings the river to the museum. In “Declivity,” the team listens to the might of the river’s crosscurrents and the story of labor told by the water, the land, and the people who work and live with it. During a 180-minute relay cycle that begins on the back lawn, moves around the building, and uses the front steps, performers walk the bottom of the “river,” run upstream, get caught in the current, meander, wait, maneuver, levee, breech, and remind us of their paths as they go.
ABOUT THE WORK

Asobi: Playing within Time mixes tradition with experimentation and past with present to provide an eastern and western musical dance exposition that raises the question: how is gender expressed and perceived? A few traditional devices are used to communicate this, such as Teru teru bozu, or “flying monks,” talismans hung from the eve of a house to ward off rain. Green bamboo is also used; the material is prized for its strength and flexibility, unlike mature bamboo, which is rigid and unbendable. The music, Yu (to play) is a kind of classical music that was first created for theater taiko in the 1960’s Tokyo underground. Based on Buddhist prayer, Yu was ironically written as a deliberately rigid piece belied by the conceptual play and composure that a skilled practitioner would incorporate into the timing and execution of a performance. Perspective affects introspection, and so Asobi encourages performers and viewers to play and have fun with movement and music that seems to move in and out of synchronization with us.

YOSHINOJO FUJIMA

Asobi: Playing within Time

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Dance
Grandmaster Shunojo Fujima, Erin Ikeuchi, and Rika Lin (aka Yoshinojo Fujima)

The Reduction Ensemble
Shamisen, electronics, and taiko
Tatsu Aoki

Saxophone
Edward Wilkerson Jr.

Cello
Jaime Kempkers

Taiko, tsuzumi, and shamisen
Kioto Aoki

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Choreography, scenic design, and video
Rika Lin

Additional scenic design
Eric Leonardson and Steve Ducklow

Original music
Tatsu Aoki

Costumes
Nakakoma Orimono

Costume dresser
Fujima Shunojo
ABOUT THE WORK

Joshua L. Ishmon is interested in the limits and potential of conversation, music, and movement to explore and transform the underlying history and emotions motivating negative perceptions associated with all things “black.” In creating *Redefining BLACK*, he sought to test his belief that society shapes individuality by organizing a series of community discussions about black as a word, color, and race. The process included expanding his own movement vocabulary by training with artists working in South African, West African, house, ballet, and contemporary dance, developing the work with jazz musician Sam “Trump” Harris, and workshopping with dancers with and without formal training. The resulting performance weaves the stories and emotions that emerged from these community meetings into a new vocabulary of movement.

Audience members are encouraged to participate in a conversation with the artists to conclude the performance.

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**JOSHUA L. ISHMON/ PRODUCTION: COLORS**

*Redefining BLACK: Transforming Perceptions through Conversation, Music, and Movement*

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**Dance**

Dominique Atwood, Pierre Clark, Shanna Cruzat, Joshua Francique, Ahmad Hill, and Rebekah Kuczma

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**Text and vocals**

Discopoet Khari B., Kristiana Rae Colón, and Jacoby Cochran

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**Trumpet and vocals**

Sam “Trump” Harris

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**Flute**

Kedgrick Pullums

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**Trombone**

David Ben-Porat

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**Guitar**

Jeff Swanson

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**Bass**

Jeremy Jones

---

**Bass clarinet**

Geof Bradfield

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**Choreography**

Joshua L. Ishmon

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**Original music**

Sam “Trump” Harris

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**Project Manager**

Justin Clarke

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**Lighting design**

Sarah Lackner

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**SECTIONS**

1. **Frequency**
2. **Good mEvening with “Intro” by Discopoet Khari B.**
3. **Process & Grind**
4. **What Should I Tell My Children? with “should i tell (blk)” by Kristiana Rae Colón**
5. **Raising a Nebula of Your Own with “goodnight” by Kristiana Rae Colón**
6. **Freaks Come Out at Night with “morning song” by Kristiana Rae Colón**
7. **“Villainy” by Discopoet Khari B.**
8. **The AutoBLACKography of ZERO with “Brutal Imagination” by Jacoby Cochran**
9. **“Absence vs Everything” by Discopoet Khari B.**
10. **Starlight**
11. **A Brief Reminder from King**
12. **H.O.U.S.E. = Here’s Our Unapologetically Sincere Efforts**

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Right: Joshua Ishmon, Sam Trump, and JP Clarke. Photo: Nijole Shuberg.
ABOUT THE WORK

With her ongoing project *Breathing Through Vernacular Movement*, Brittany Harlin is gathering knowledge of American vernacular dance of the African diaspora through the concert dance lens. Focusing on street dance, which includes elements of funk, house, and hip-hop, she uses somatic theory connecting body and mind in order to develop a pedagogy under the mentorship of the art form’s pioneers. This method also connects movers to physical techniques and mindfulness of the implications of adopting street movement, putting special attention on hip-hop as a sociopolitical movement.

*Delinea Renda* is a street dance–inspired production featuring movers and musicians from various backgrounds and with diverse understandings of movement. The title is an ethereal moniker for Harlin; derived from the words *delineate* and *render*, the title also refers to the deliverance of a message through music, poetry, and movement.
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

VICTORIA BRADFORD is a 2017 recipient of the Chicago Dancemakers Forum Lab Artist Award. A choreographer working through social practice, public art, performance, and installation, she and her company A House Unbuilt have produced work for the MCA, McColl Center for Art + Innovation, and the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, among other spaces across the country. Bradford understands the body as a physical presence that not only has the power to intervene in systems much larger than itself, but also bring a sense of scale to modern paradoxes and conundrums. As Executive and Artistic Director of the movement research company A House Unbuilt, she creates collaborative projects rooted in site-based, response-driven practices. Her current work with Relay of Voices: The Great River Run, among many past projects, ties back to her origins in Coastal Louisiana and the environmental, political, and cultural dialogue specific to that region.

RIKA LIN (aka Grandmaster Yoshinoko Fujima) is a 2017 recipient of the Chicago Dancemakers Forum Lab Artist Award. She is a grandmaster in Fujima-style Japanese classical dance and a shin-nisei, a part of the postwar Japanese American diaspora. She is recognized for her original choreography and performance and is an active collaborator with a number of multidisciplinary artist groups such as Toyoaki Shamisen, Asian Improv aRts Midwest, and Tatsu Aoki’s The Miyumi Project.

GRANDMASTER SHUNOJO FUJIMA is the founder of Shubukai, a Chicago platform for Japanese classical dance. He received his natori, or professional performance title, at a young age, opening his first studio of classical dance in Tokyo and frequently traveling with his dance troupe to the United States. For more than forty years, Grandmaster Shunojo Sensei has directed his dance group Fujima in Chicago. In 2013 he received the Japanese Foreign Minister’s Commendation Award for his ongoing work promoting Japanese culture in the US.

TATSU AOKI (aka Sanjuro Toyoaki) is a prolific composer, filmmaker, producer, recording artist, and multi-instrumentalist. He is the president of Asian Improv Records and founder and artistic director of the Chicago Asian American Jazz Festival, Asian Improv aRts Midwest, and the taiko drum community Tsukasa Taiko. He is an adjunct professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a visiting professor at Northwestern University. He has received a 3Arts Artist Award (2010); National Jazz Journalist Association Jazz Heroes Award (2015); and the 2017 Commendation for the Promotion of Japanese Culture awarded by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan.

JOSHUA L. ISHMON is a 2017 recipient of the Chicago Dancemakers Forum Lab Artist Award. He has studied dance at Emerson School for Visual and Performing Arts, M.A.D.D. Rhythms, Ballet Chicago, and Deeply Rooted Dance Theater (DRDT). He joined DRDT’s second company in 2007, where he continued professional training in Horton, Graham, Ballet, and African Pyragrammic dance and received choreography and leadership coaching. He has danced with DRDT’s first company since 2009 and serves as co-rehearsal director and cofounder/director of its Emerging Choreographer’s Showcase. He also performs with Between Lines, Seamless Dance Theater, Ballet Chicago, and Dayton Contemporary Dance Company; teaches dance at West Side Leadership Academy and Purdue University; and has choreographed for Ballet Chicago, South Shore Dance Alliance, and DRDT.

SAM “TRUMP” HARRIS is a multi-instrumentalist, singer, and songwriter from Houston, Texas, who has been a student of music since first picking up the trumpet at age seven. He moved to Chicago in 2009 to obtain his fine arts degree in music and is heavily involved in Chicago’s live music scene where he is widely known as a bandleader, sideman, mentor, and curator.

BRITTANY HARLIN is a 2017 recipient of the Chicago Dancemakers Forum Lab Artist Award. She is the founding artistic director of Chicago Urban Dance Collective and a 2018 recipient of the Sybil Shearer Fellowship. She cites as major influences the pioneers in modern dance and hip hop, modern, funk, waacking, and house. In addition to her company work, her dancing and choreography has been featured at the Ragdale Foundation, Links Hall, Elastic Arts, Aragon Ballroom, DRAMA Duo Music Productions, Black Ensemble Theatre, and Hip Hop International. She combines her dance practice with studies in somatics and kinesiology in order to establish an expressive therapy to align with a life philosophy of opportunity and inclusion, and bring dance education to a place of complete body awareness, spiritual expression, and connection. When not dancing, Harlin pursues her dual passions of poetry and songwriting.
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  Dorothée 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
Lead support for the 2018–19 season of MCA Stage is provided by Elizabeth A. Liebman.

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Sharon* and Lee Oberlander
Maya Polsky and Nicholas Bridon
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*Enact Chair
As of August 2018

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

Join today for opportunities to meet artists and gain behind-the-scenes access alongside 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 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.

MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART CHICAGO
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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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