Program Notes
Sat–Sun, Sep 14–15
Sat–Sun, Sep 21–22
Roving throughout the MCA and Prop Thtr
The Storefront Project
FROM THE CURATOR

When we first chatted, it was easy to bond over our similarities: new leadership roles in longstanding Chicago institutions; and mutual passions for working toward racial equity, for wearing many hats as programmers and artists, and for articulating the challenges Chicago artists chip away at to make theater. Both of our institutions harbor artists making visually arresting, surprising, and playful work, however, the differences between MCA Chicago and Prop Thtr—large art museum vs. small industrial storefront, Magnificent Mile vs. residential neighborhood, large touring productions vs. close-to-home “DIY” theater—birthed The Storefront Project.

This weekend, three directors tangle with the MCA’s crevices and crannies, while three other directors adapt to Prop’s spaces; next weekend they switch. To both venues they bring their experiences beyond directing—from working as a house sitter, to performing as a drag queen, to chairing a university theater department—and their ingenuity in navigating Chicago’s robust storefront, DIY, underground, experimental, and devised theater scenes. By asking them to work in distinct buildings and infrastructures, we hope to highlight their unique strategies for devising theater and to demystify a lesser-known part of Chicago’s creative ecology. There are endless compromises, adaptations, and processes involved in getting from point A—source material—to point B—performance. We’re here to experience them all, together.

Tara Aisha Willis, Associate Curator, Performance & Public Practice
Olivia Lilley, Artistic Director, Prop Thtr
THE STOREFRONT PROJECT
Roving throughout the MCA and Prop Thtr. At the MCA, performances begin at the entrance to the Edlis Neeson Theater.
Running time is approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.
Please note that the order may change as the works continue to evolve.

PROGRAM A
Sat–Sun, Sep 14–15, noon and 3 pm at Prop Thtr
Sat–Sun, Sep 21–22, 7 and 8 pm at the MCA

And Words Were Her Weapon: In honor of Ida B. Wells, inspired by Wells’s 1892 text Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases
Director, writer, and educator: Sydney Chatman
Adult performers: Michelle Davis, LaTanay Grundy, Sandra Hall, and Candace Hunter
Youth performers: Briohna Booker (12), Ayah Sol Hall (9), Brooklyn Truman (8), Arianna Washington (15), Marilyn Washington (8), and Laiyla Wilder (8)

Choupette, inspired by Karl Lagerfeld’s obituaries
Director: Coya Paz
Cocreators and performers: Hunter Bryant, Mia Vivens, and Vic Wynter

Nine Lives of a Cat, adapted from Charles Bennett’s story of the same name and the life of Antonio Ligabue
Director: Denise Yvette Serna
Assistant director: Aliza Feder
Live art/production designer: Josie Koznarek
Performers: River Coello, Erik Strebig, and Sophie Wingland

SUPPORT FOR THIS MCA PROJECT
Many thanks to Olivia Lilley, Stefan Brun, David Rosenberg, Peter Bussi, Marilana Carlson, and Prop Thtr for your generous partnership and coordination.
Thank you to our colleagues on the Facilities and Operations, Security, Visitor Experience, Special Events and Rentals, and Housekeeping teams for making the entire museum campus a place for performance.
Gratitude to Ira S.牟tin for his excitement and John Green of Columbia College Chicago, European Devised Theater department, as well as to The League of Chicago Theatres, for creative programmatic support.

PROGRAM B
Sat–Sun, Sep 14–15, 7 and 8 pm at the MCA
Sat–Sun, Sep 21–22, noon and 3 pm at Prop Thtr

Great Depression, inspired by Charles K. Harris’s “After the Ball” and other songs and diaries from the 1930s
Director: Lucky Stiff
Devisers and performers: Luc Ami, Danika Bonet, Ari Gato, Sterling Harris, Graham Hawley, Campbell Krausen, Mary Iris Loncto, and Willy LaQueue
Stage manager and administrator: Jimmie Swaggerty

BURROW, adapted from Franz Kafka’s The Burrow
Creators and directors: April Cleveland with Mikael Burke
Performers: Kya Brickhouse, Gregory J. Fields, and Nicholas Wren
Dramaturg and assistant director: Grace Grindell
Translator and script supervisor: Kit Slover
This performance contains some nudity, sexual themes, and violence.

Demmsuge, adapted from a vacuum cleaner advertisement from 1915
Director: dado gyure
Composer and music director: Elena Sindler
Sculptor and scenic design: Sam Rausch
Performer and movement: Laurie Roberts
Production manager: Jordan Tregash
Producing theater: A Red Orchid and c a k e
“Like most storied artistic vanguards, Chicago’s storefront theatre movement has historically been entwined with a specific set of aesthetics, personalites, and cultural circumstances. By reputation, storefront theatre defaults to authorial control, verisimilitude, charismatic presence, and centering the straight white male working class experience. Memorable as many of the performances that established that template may have been, it has never described the totality or diversity of Chicago’s performance scene. Yet the legend of Chicago storefront theatre continues to overshadow the full range of performance practices in Chicago, tethering the city’s theatrical reputation to a mythologized past.

With The Storefront Project, Olivia Lilley and Tara Aisha Willis, both relatively newly occupying leadership roles in two longstanding institutions—one an apparently quintessential Chicago storefront, the other a stop on the global contemporary performance touring circuit—have made the simple yet surprisingly audacious move to see past the entrenched assumptions of history. Using their respective resources to present new work in ways that center differences—individual, institutional, architectural, geographical, aesthetic—and to support relocating authorship to the collective process of theatrical creation, they are advancing a history of Chicago theatre and performance that we are only now beginning to be able to remember, one that looks and feels much more like the city in which we live.”

—Ira S. Murfin, PhD

Excerpt from The Storefront Project: Toward a Revised Category of “Chicago Theatre”, available in full at mcachicago.org/storefront.
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

OLIVIA LILLEY is a director, writer, and producer. Her work runs the gamut from irreverent takes on classic texts (Feast: Save me or I’ll Die, Neverland) to dance theater biographies (The Party House, In Sarah’s Shadow) to new plays that tackle contemporary intersectional issues (Mary Shelley Sees The Future, The Whiner & The Whiskey, Expectations (Mixed girls). Lolley is the founding artistic director of the Runaways Lab Theatre (voted “Best New Theatre Company” in the Chicago Reader’s Best Of 2014). She is the head of Pop Magic Productions, an artistic associate with Pivot Arts, and the artistic director of Prop Tht.

PROGRAM A:

COYA PAZ (Director, Choupette) (she/her) is the artistic director of Free Street Theatre and is an associate professor in The Theatre School at DePaul University. She is the co-creator of Ensemble-Made Chicago: A Guide to Devised Performance, and served as the founding co-artistic director of Teatro Luna for nine years. Paz believes in the power of coffee to save the morning, lip gloss to save the day, and poetry and performance to save a life.

HUNTER BRYANT (Co-curator/Performer, Choupette) (he/him) is humbled to be performing at the MCA. Some theater credits include The Shipment (Red Tape Theatre), The Aristophanesathon (The Hypocrates), and Dontrell Who Kissed The Sea (First Floor Theatre). His upcoming performances include Middle Passage at Lifeline Theatre. Bryant’s film credits include “Raj” in How Is This The World, he was featured in OXYGEN (Tribeca Documentary) and this web and television credits include Empire (Season 6) and Conspiracy Theorist. He is proudly represented by DDO Agent Agency.

DENISE YVETTE SERNA (Director, Nine Lives of a Cat) is a theater practitioner and art activist based in Chicago. Chicago credits include La Kula (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), The Revolutionists (Strawdog Theatre Company), Cambodian Rock Band (Vortex Gardens Theatre), HIR (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), For the Love of (Prize Films & Plays), HOMESET (Pop Magic Productions), and The Night Season (Strawdog), The Recommendation (Windy City Playhouse), Neighborhood 3: Requiem of Doom (The Bomber Theatre Company and SpeakEasy Theatre, an internationally devised project with Pop Magic Productions and Global Hive Laboratories.

JOSIE KOZNAREK (Live art/Production designer, Nine Lives of a Cat) is an artist based in Chicago who specializes in paintings of flowing beauty. Working in live settings using an evocative stream-of-consciousness style, she is able to problem-solve using many different mediums and styles to tailor-make artistic experiences that can both accentuate live productions and stand on their own as singular finished pieces.

ERIK STREBIG (Performer, Nine Lives of a Cat) is an New York–based performing and teaching artist. They are thrilled to be back in Chicago and a part of Nine Lives of a Cat. Their credits include Stopping Glass, Mercury Theatre, and Broadway Playhouse. Their current interests include ashtanga yoga, radical faeries, and unintentional art.

SOPHIE WINGLAND (Performer, Nine Lives of a Cat) is a musician, facilitator, and yoga instructor, originally from California. She is a classically trained singer and plays ukulele. Choupette, toy accordion, and anything else she can get her hands on. Rooted in the belief that everyone is a musician, her work explores the nature of collaboration, playfulness, and healing. Wingland has a B.S. of Music in vocal arts from USC Thornton School, graduating with honors, and a Master of Music in new audiences and innovative practice from The Royal Conservatory in the Hague, where she studied community building through music. Wingland has performed across the United States and Europe, singing opera, jazz, contemporary, and folk music. She has partnered with and music projects with the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Chamber Opera of University of Southern California, Calefax Reed Quintet, the Oerol Festival, and Opera on Tap Los Angeles. She has taught vocal and music at the Abrons Center for the Arts in New York City, Musik Den Haag in the Netherlands, and the Old Town School of Folk Music and Ravinia Music Festival’s Reach, Teach, Play program at DePaul University. She is currently the community engagement director for Harmony, Hope & Healing, where she leads chairs at shelters, recovery centers, and Cook County Jail.
SYDNEY CHATMAN (Director/Writer/Educator, And Words Were Her Weapon) is the 2019 Goodman Theatre Maggio Directing Fellow. She is a director, educator, mentor, producer, writer, and founding director of Hollyin’ Circuit featuring the self-penned, award-winning play Black Girls (Can Fly!), which she also directed. Chatman is an African American Arts Alliance awardee and a 3Arts Make A Wave scholar. Her credits include the Tony-nominated The Trip to Bountiful and a directing fellowship with the Lincoln Center’s Directors Lab. Rooted in her community, she brings the divide between audience and stage through theatrical performances and collaborations with the Adler Planetarium, Hyde Park Jazz Festival/Back Alley Jazz, The Rev and David Logan Center, Court Theatre, and Victory Gardens Theatre.

AYAH SOL MASAII HALL (Performer, And Words Were Her Weapon) is an unapologetically black, empathetic, creative nine-year-old child wonder. She is a fifth-grade student at the National Teachers’ Academy who loves reading and writing. Hall is a stargazer who loves space, nature, learning about her ancestors, and creative expression. Past credits include performing in the eighty-eighth annual Bud Billiken Day Parade with Sydney Chatman, and as a Fly Girl, Lookingglass Theater Company’s Summer Camp on The Lake at the Rev and David Logan Center for the Arts, and Hela (“Suhailla/bridges her collective”) by J. Nicole Brooks at Sideways Theater Company. She is a member of the World Scholars Program where she’s traveled to Costa Rica. Hall wants to thank her Mama Sonja, Baba Elisha, littles Ajani and Ameen, and the entire village who loves, supports, and encourages her to follow her dreams. Follow her on Instagram @readingwith_sol. SANDRA HALL (Performer, And Words Were Her Weapon) is a writer, author, publisher, social worker, trainer, mother, grandmother, and mentor. Her publications include I Miss My performance (A Memory Book), Karen, Don’t Forget Your Glasses, Perfect Pee & Poop, Life in Grandma Land, and Mothers R Special, Celebrating Momm’s N’em. This is her first time participating in a play.

ABENA MICHELLE HUBBARD (Performer, And Words Were Her Weapon; credited as Michelle Davis) first became interested in drama and singing as a child, participating in a National Baptist Congress Youth Rally. She has also sung in the Illinois Baptist State Youth Choir, Lindblom High School chorus and Acapella Chorus, and yearly in Glen Burleigh’s Christmas Cantata. Hubbard graduated from National Baptist Convention Gospel Music Workshop, Hubbard created the first Drama Ministry at West Point M.B. Church and directed their first productions written by Jon Ross. She has also acted in several plays during the existence of New Beginnings Church Drama Ministry and spent a few years as an extra in movies and TV shows through Holzer and Ridge Casting Company.

CANDACE HUNTER (Performer, And Words Were Her Weapon) is a self-sustaining visual artist residing in Chicago and calling the world home. Her touring one-person shows, including DUST IN THEIR VEINS: a Vessel of Global Water Crisis, HOODED TRUTHS, and SO BE IT. SEE TO IT., have enjoyed robust viewings in multiple cities. Her multidisciplined work, LOSS/SCAPE, the Landscape of Loss, now in its fifth and final year, is bringing the major loss of human capital on the western shores of Africa during the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Hunter is a proud recipient of the 3Arts Award (2015, 2016), honored by the collective Diasporal Rhythms (2014, 2015), and most recently received the Joyce Foundation’s SPARK grant.

BROOKLYN TRUMAN (Performer, And Words Were Her Weapon) is an eight-year-old, loving, ambitious, and kind-hearted girl. She’s known as “The Boss” because of her quick and adaptive learning and exceptional leadership. Truman’s parents credit art with helping her to maintain a 4.0 GPA and fly high in her gymnastics, cheer, and dance competitions. Her great sense of humor and keen attention to detail make her a wonderful asset to any project. Her voice can melt your heart. She loves her dogs, anything Vsco girls, and making Tik Tok videos.

ARIANA WASHINGTON (Performer, And Words Were Her Weapon) is a freshman in high school. She was a returning participant in A Long Walk Home’s Girl/Friends program, a Chicago-based national nonprofit that finds, inspires, and mobilize young people to end violence against girls and women. She is an activist who enjoys performing in plays and poetry slams. Washington hopes to develop her passion as a writer.

Marilyn Washington (Performer, And Words Were Her Weapon) is an inquisitive, full-of-life, and loving third grader who loves literacy and performing arts. You can catch Washington belting out her favorite songs and learning full dance routines from YouTube. She is a powerful actor with a great sense of comic timing and compassion. In February 2019, Washington played the title role in The Queen of Soul by Sydney Chatman, a musical tribute celebrating the life of Aretha Franklin. Her rendition of “Respect” tore the house down! Washington has been steadfast in her dreams of making it to Hollywood. She wants to become a professional singer and actor.

LAIYLA WILDER (Performer, And Words Were Her Weapon) is a freshman, a cabin charming, eight-year-old. Wilder tied for first place in the Drama Queen & King Monologue Competition at her school. One can always count on her to be there to lend a helping hand. Her humor, energy, and zest for life keeps her family on their toes! Although this is her first professional performance, Wilder is eagerly hoping for more opportunities.

PROGRAM B:

LUCKY STIFF (Director, Great Depression) is a director and performer who is a realist at heart. They build original experiences that often combine nightclub culture with performance art, as well as classic stories. Their work spans theater, burlesque, and performance art and takes inspiration from Weimar, Germany, Pierrot clowns, and golden age musicals. Their performances have been featured at Steppenwolf Theatre Company, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Disco Dining Club, and Bushwig Festival of Drag, among many others. They are a coproducer of GODDESS at Berlin Nightclub and a cohost of The MFA in directing for theater from Northwestern University.

Luc Ami (Performer, Great Depression), also known as Cassandra Kendall, is a freelance immersive theater artist, a Chicago-based raconteur, specializing in devised theater, light design, and special effects makeup. They are a graduate of the Theatre Arts program at DePaul University. Doubling as a genderqueer drag performer, Luc Ami hosts a monthly immersive psychedelic club event at Berlin Nightclub called Unlimited Too and is a recent winner of Crash Landing! Their work can be seen on Instagram at Luc.Ami.
Originaly from New Orleans, Louisiana, DANIKA BONET (Performer, Great Depression) moved to Chicago two and a half years ago to pursue her dream of becoming a successful drag performer. She has since won Runt of the Drag Race, been a resident performer at Charlie’s Chicago and now Scarlet Bar, and has performed all over the Midwest. She is crazy excited to be performing alongside her cast at the MCA, something she never thought she would do. From ten years of community theater and twelve years of competitive dancing, she is very excited to use those skills again to bring the story Lucky is trying to tell to life.

A Chicago-based drag queen, ARI GATO (Performer, Great Depression) is the winner of Crash Landing Cycle 27 at Berlin Nightclub and has traced the stages of Boy Toy, A Steppenwolf, and Black Girl Magic. Out of drag, Ari Gato is known as Chicago actor Darren Patin, and has appeared in many theater productions around town including Chair Boy at Raven Theatre, Grand Hotel with Kokandy Productions, and High Fidelity with Refuge Theatre Project (Jeff Award winner for Best Musical in 2017).

STERLING HARRIS (Performer, Great Depression), a Chicago native, fell in love with tap at the age of six and hasn’t stopped dancing since. He has choreographed for and performed in a variety of shows across the city ranging in various dance styles. While dance is his passion, Harris also holds a BA in neuroscience from Northwestern University. He’s been performing as a hip-hop dancer, teacher, and choreographer for two decades, venturing into burlesque in the past two years and has traveled on stages and bar floors across the United States, Canada, and Europe. LaQueue has opened for Lizzo and Sandra Bernhard, been featured in burlesque festivals across the country, and performed at the historic Roscoe’s Drag Race, been a resident drag performer. She has since won a Midsummer Night’s Dream by William Shakespeare; and Native Son by Richard Wright, adapted by Namib E. Kelley.

APRIL CLEVELAND (Creator/ Codirector, BURROW) is a theater director with a background in philosophy and mathematics. An MFA graduate of The Theatre School at De Paul University, Cleveland directs fast-paced thrillers across genres, from plays set in dystopic futures to contemporary versions of classic texts. Her favorite kind of theater interrogates reality, perception, and certainty. Her off-Broadway credits include The Two Noble Kinsmen in a modern version by Tim Slover (Classic Stage Company and OSF) for the Play On! Festival. Her recent directing credits include musicals in a variety of shows across the city ranging in various dance styles. While dance is his passion, Harris also holds a BA in neuroscience from Northwestern University. He’s been performing as a hip-hop dancer, teacher, and choreographer for two decades, venturing into burlesque in the past two years and has traveled on stages and bar floors across the United States, Canada, and Europe. LaQueue has opened for Lizzo and Sandra Bernhard, been featured in burlesque festivals across the country, and performed at the historic Roscoe’s Drag Race, been a resident drag performer. She has since won a Midsummer Night’s Dream by William Shakespeare; and Native Son by Richard Wright, adapted by Namib E. Kelley.

JIMMIE SWAGGERTY (Stage manager/Administrator, Great Depression) is a Chicago-based performance artist, event producer, and entrepreneur. Jimmie is also the founder of Boy Toy’s Pocket Cabaret, a monthly burlesque and variety show celebrating its fifth year running this October! As a creator and a producer, Jimmie Swaggerty utilizes his education in business administration and marketing to promote and help grow burlesque and performance art in Chicago while also fostering new male presenting performers in the Chicago industry. He has performed throughout the country in cities like Seattle, New York, Savannah, and more. In 2016, Jimmie Swaggerty made his international debut at the Vienna Boylesque Festival and has since traveled and performed in other burlesque festivals. Through creative costume and choreographic reveals, high-energy acrobatic transitions, and a boystish charm, Jimmie Swaggerty captivates audiences with his bold identities and sexualities, inspiring his tagline, “everyone’s favorite boy next door.” Through Dauntless Entertainment Group, he has been involved in many large-scale events including Satanic Panic in Motel Fest, a Michigan Avenue immersive performance art event focused on the satanic panic paranoia of the 1980s and 1990s, and has done promotional items, websites, logos, and design for many of Chicago’s productions. Jimmie Swaggerty is currently the senior administrative director of the Fashion Design department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he coproduces their annual fashion show and exhibition at Speratus Institute as well as assists in other large-scale projects including Ingrid Fiskal’s collaborations with Henrik Vibskov: Theophily at the MCA and Friedrich Floen on Diorama at Anish Kapoor’s Cloud Gate in Chicago.

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GREGORY J. FIELDS (PERFORMER, BURROW) IS AN ACTOR AND SCREENWRITER FROM LOS ANGELES. HE IS A GRADUATE OF THE THEATRE SCHOOL AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO (BFA IN ACTING) AND HAS WORKED IN MANY THEATERS AROUND THE UNITED STATES. HE IS EXCITED TO WORK ALONGSIDE HIS ENSEMBLE MEMBERS.


KIT SLOVER (TRANSLATOR/SCRIPT SUPERVISOR, BURROW) IS A DOCTORAL CANDIDATE IN PHILOSOPHY OF THEATER AND ART CRITICISM. FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS INCLUDE “TIME AND TRANSCENDENTAL AFFECT: THE SENSIBLE ROLE OF THE THING IN ITSELF” IN PROCEEDINGS OF THE 13TH INTERNATIONAL KANT CONGRESS. HE IS CURRENTLY DEVELOPING FEED, A PLAY ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA, POLITICAL COLLAPSE, AND THE ILLUSION OF FACTUAL TRUTH.

NICHOLAS WREN (PERFORMER, BURROW) STUDIES ACTING AT THE THEATRE SCHOOL AT DEPAUL UNIVERSITY (CLASS OF 2020). WREN’S THEATER CREDITS INCLUDE KRAPP’S LAST TAPE (13TH STREET REP), PETE (THEATRE EAST), AND PERSPEIPIYI RHESOPOIY (STELLA ADLER STUDIO).

DADO GYURE (DIRECTOR, DAMMSUGA) IS AN ENSEMBLE MEMBER AT A RED ORCHID THEATRE WHERE HER RECENT PRODUCTION, KILLING GAME, CONTAINS ORIGINAL MATERIAL BY EUGENE IONESCO NEVER BEFORE SEEN IN THE UNITED STATES. HER PRODUCTION OF SAM SHEPARD’S SIMPATICO TOURED TO THE MccARTER THEATRE CENTER IN 2017. IN 2018, GYURE STARRED AS “KARLA STOCK” IN THE WORLD PREMIERE AND THREE-TIME JOSEPH JEFFERSON AWARD-WINNING PRODUCTION OF TRAITOR BY BRETT NEVEU, DIRECTED BY MICHAEL SHANNON. AS THE 2018 ARTIST IN RESIDENCE FOR EMERGING ARTISTS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, GYURE PRODUCED DAVID LANG’S PULITZER-WINNING LITTLE MATCH GIRL PASSION AT FACILITY THEATRE IN A VACANT MIDDLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA. GYURE ALSO DIRECTED THE CHICAGO PREMIERE OF JEN SILVERMAN’S PHOEBE IN WINTER AND THE RUSE OF MEDUSA BY ERIC SATIE FOR FACILITY THEATRE, WHERE SHE IS A RESIDENT DIRECTOR. GYURE HAS DIRECTED THE MUTILATED (TENNESSEE WILLIAMS), A RED HANDED OTTER (ETHAN LIPTON), THE HOATHOUSE (HAROLD PINTER), MEGACOSM (BRETT NEVEU), AND THE UNSEEN (CRAIG WRIGHT), AMONG OTHERS, AT A RED ORCHID THEATRE. SHE HOLDS AN MFA FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO IN VISUAL ART. SHE HAS DIRECTED AND ACTED AT GOODMAN THEATRE, STEPPENWOLF THEATRE COMPANY, NATIVE OTHER THEATRE COMPANY, SHATTERED GLOBE THEATRE, MARY-ARCHRICE THEATRE COMPANY, TUTA THEATRE, TRAP DOOR THEATRE, AND FACILITY THEATRE, AMONG OTHERS. GYURE WAS AWARDED THE GOODMAN THEATRE’S JENNIFER JEFFERSON FELLOWSHIP AND THE JOSEPH JEFFERSON AWARD, AND AN AFTER DARK AWARD. SHE TEACHES AT DEPAUL UNIVERSITY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO AS WELL AS PRIVATELY.

SAM RAUSCH (SCULPTOR/SCENIC DESIGN, DAMMSUGA) IS A JEFF-NOMINATED THEATRICAL SET DESIGNER AND A CONCEPTUAL ARTIST WORKING IN SCULPTURE, SITE-SPECIFIC INSTALLATION, AND PERFORMANCE ART. RAUSCH CREATES IMMERSIVE ENVIRONMENTS THAT TRANSFORM AND EXAMINE HOW WE ENGAGE WITH TIME, SPACE, AND RELATIONSHIPS. HER ART AND DESIGN HOLD PLAYFUL GESTURES OF RAINBOW-BLAZING ACROSS THE STAGE, INTO GALLERIES AND OUTDOOR PUBLIC ART SPACES. RAUSCH’S ART PRACTICE ACTS AS AN ALTERNATIVE VERSION OF THE WORLD, CREATING SITUATIONS THAT UNITE PEOPLE TOGETHER AS SHE DEVISES COSMIC NARRATIVES THAT EXPLORE MYSTICAL SYMBOLS AND ALLEGORIES AS AN ABSTRACT MEANS TO CRITICALLY EXAMINE THE ABSURDITY OF LIFE. RAUSCH CURRENTLY LIVES AND WORKS AS AN ARTS EDUCATOR IN CHICAGO. RAUSCH HAS BEEN DESIGNED FOR THEATER COMPANIES SUCH AS A RED ORCHID THEATRE, FACILITY THEATRE, ECLIPSE THEATRE, REDMOON THEATRE, AND FACTORY THEATRE. HER ARTWORK HAS BEEN SHOWN AT THE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY AND AT ART GALLERIES ACROSS THE EAST COAST AND THE MIDWEST. RAUSCH’S COMMITMENT TO TRANSFORMING PUBLIC SPACES HAS LED TO RECEIVING GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS FROM THE BALTIMORE OFFICE OF PROMOTION & ARTS, CHICAGO SCULPTURE INTERNATIONAL, AND CHICAGO PARKS DISTRICT. SHE HAS BEEN AN ARTIST RESIDENT AT THE VERMONT STUDIO CENTER IN JOHNSON, VERMONT, THE ARTHUR BELZOSKI CENTER IN NEBRASKA, AND THE WINDY MOVING MILLS RESIDENCY IN HALIFAX, VERMONT.

A SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA NATIVE, LAURIE ROBERTS (PERFORMER/MUSICIAN, DAMMSUGA) IS AN ACTOR, DANCER, MOVEMENT DIRECTOR, AND TEACHER. ROBERTS RECEIVED AN MFA IN ACTING FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA AND HAS COLLABORATED WITH HELL IN A HAT PRODUCTIONS, A RED ORCHID THEATRE, AND FACILITY THEATRE IN CHICAGO, AND IS AN ENSEMBLE MEMBER WITH THEATRE Y. SHE HAS ALSO ENJOYED WORKING WITH EXTRAORDINARY GROUPS OF ARTISTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND INTERNATIONALLY. AS A P3/EAST STUDIO MEMBER, ROBERTS HAS TAUGHT THE WORK OF TADASHI SUZUKI AND SHOGO OTA WITH THEATRE Y, CINCINNATI PLAYHOUSE IN THE PARK, AND XAVIER UNIVERSITY. HER MOVEMENT DIRECTED WORK MATURED IN KILLING GAME AT A RED ORCHID THEATRE.

ELLENNA SINDLER (COMPOSER/MUSIC DIRECTOR, DAMMSUGA) IS A PERFORMER-COMPOSER WHO LIKES TO CREATE WORKS THAT BRIDGE MULTIPLE GENRES AND ARTISTIC DISCIPLINES THROUGH A FEMINIST LENS. SHE HAS PERFORMED ORIGINAL COMPOSITIONS THROUGH THE CHICAGO ARTS INITIATIVE, WITH THE MENTORSHIP OF JESSE LANGEN (DAL NIENTE) AT MUSIC FESTIVALS EARTAXI, OMAHA UNDER THE RADAR, AT THE INTERNATIONALEN FERIENKURSE FUR NEUE MUSIK (DARMSTADT, GERMANY) WITH STUDIO MUSIKFABRIK, AND AT MCA CHICAGO WITH EIGHTH BLACKBIRD. SHE RECENTLY WROTE AND CO-DEvised A PERFORMANCE AND SOUND PIECE FOR COLLABORATION’S PEABOOk AND LIGHT FESTIVALS THAT EXPLORES THE INNER THOUGHTS OF A SURVIVOR OF SEXUAL ASSAULT’S EXPERIENCE RIDING THE CTA. LAST SPRING, SHE WORKED AS THE COMPOSER AND MUSIC DIRECTOR FOR A RED ORCHID THEATRE’S (AROT) SPRING PRODUCTION, KILLING GAME BY EUGENE IONESCO, AND WILL BE RETURNING TO AROT THIS FALL AS MUSIC DIRECTOR FOR GREY HOUSE BY LEVI HALLWAY. SHE IS A CURRENT STUDENT AT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY’S BIEEN SCHOOL OF MUSIC.
Dinner and a Show

Transform your performance experience into an evening out. Marisol offers a $45 seasonally inspired prix fixe menu exclusively for MCA event ticket holders.*

Book your table at marisolchicago.com or call 312-799-3599.

*Menu does not include tax or gratuity. Please allow at least 75 minutes before showtime.

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

KIM BRANDT, LEVEL

How do we share space with others? How does architecture influence how we move? Choreographer Kim Brandt brings performance out of the theater and into the museum with a critical mass of dancers from Chicago and New York that navigates movement scores amidst visitors. Featuring live sound by composer Nate Wooley.

Sun, Oct 27
Free
Kovler Atrium, 2nd Floor

Between Gestures: Trajal Harrell and Ola Maciejewska

Two solo pieces by choreographers Trajal Harrell and Ola Maciejewska unfold over an afternoon in the museum’s main atrium. These performances are part of Between Gestures, a one-week festival connecting Chicago to international contemporary dance and performance. For exact times, visit mcachicago.org/stage.

ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

Select 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.

BUY TICKETS

ONLINE
mcachicago.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 performance ticket stub to receive FREE ADMISSION* and 15% 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.
Support for MCA Performances

Lead support for the 2019–20 season is provided by Elizabeth A. Liebman.

Generous support is provided by Julie and Larry Bernstein, 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, Susan Manning and Doug Doetsch, Ock Ju Noh, Sharon* and Lee Oberlander, and Carol Prins and John Hart/The Jessica Fund.

Additional support is provided by Ms. Shawn M. Donnelley and Dr. Christopher M. Kelly, Nicholas and Nancy Giampietro, Anne L. Kaplan, and D. Elizabeth Price and Lou Yecies.

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

*Enact Chair as of March 2019

About Enact

MCA performances are supported by Enact, a group of MCA donors dedicated to supporting the museum’s renowned performance 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 how to join, contact us at enact@mcachicago.org or 312-397-4044.

Foundation Season Sponsor

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Chicago’s True Independent Boutique Hotel

About MCA Performances

As an internationally renowned institution devoted to contemporary culture, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago is committed to presenting the most thought-provoking visual and performing arts of our time. The MCA commissions and presents theater, dance, and music by leading artists from Chicago and around the world, holding performances in spaces throughout the museum, including the three-hundred seat Edlis Neeson Theater.

The MCA’s groundbreaking performances are an integral part of the museum’s cutting edge, multidisciplinary programming. Along with exhibitions and public programs, MCA performances welcome visitors to experience the work and ideas of living artists and find their own civic voices.

Parking
Validate your ticket at the coat check for $12 parking in the MCA garage (220 E Chicago Ave) and the Bernardin garage (747 N Wabash Ave). 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 noisemaking 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
mcastage@mcachicago.org