Program Notes

**Tue, Oct 1, 3 and 6 pm**

**Wed–Thu, Oct 2–3, 12:30 pm**

A roving performance, beginning on the MCA’s front steps.

KIM BRANDT Level
FROM THE CURATOR

If you’re reading this, you are probably experiencing Kim Brandt’s performance Level. You may not have noticed it unfolding around you, or you may have already tuned in to the dancers and musicians filling the museum with movement and sound. When I first experienced Kim’s work, it was as a performer, trying to fit my body into a pyramid of dancers, hold that shape together, then slowly dissolve it to the ground, with subtle lighting changes that drew out each weight adjustment, breath, and shift of muscle. The way our minimal actions held the audience’s attention intrigued me.

This performance was made specifically for the MCA’s architecture: Kim visited Chicago a year ago to spend time in the museum’s public spaces, study the city’s architecture and geography, and do research in the MCA’s library. But creating Level meant making detailed observations of her own senses—of how people move through space and how the performers negotiate each movement together. Level carefully and simply asks us to think about how we see bodies in space and, by extension, how we see the walls, floors, shapes, and volumes of the room around those bodies. How are you looking? What does it mean to be here together? What does it feel like to move with a group? If you pay close attention, you may start to feel your own perceptions implicated in the performance.

Tara Aisha Willis
Associate Curator
Performance & Public Practice
Kim Brandt

Level

A roving performance, beginning on the MCA’s front steps
Running time is 60 minutes with no intermission.

Choreographer  Kim Brandt
Composer   Nate Wooley
Costume designer  Strauss Bourque-LaFrance
Performers   Martita Abril, Anna Adams Stark, Liz Charky, Courtney Cooke, Jessica Cook, Leslie Cuyjet, Ayano Elson, Joanna Furnans, Berit Godo, Gina Hochstall, Kyli Kleven, Emily Navarra, Zachary Nicol, Lydia Okrent, Jessica Ray, and Nora Stephens
Musicians   Katinka Kleijn, Ryan Packard, Seth Parker Woods, and Nate Wooley

ABOUT THE WORK

Level is the latest of Brandt’s works that explore the interconnectedness of people and the spaces they inhabit. Her recent works have been staged in a Brooklyn cemetery and in an art center’s basement, timed with the changing light of a room at dawn and sunset, and evocative of a horizon line or topographical map. Each work highlights the act of congregation as equally important as the performance itself. The text below provided context for her artistic inquiry.

“The property of matter and light is very strange. How can we accept that everything can be, at the same time, an entity confined in volume (a particle) and a wave spread out over huge regions of space? This is one of the paradoxes of quantum theory, or as the Hindu mystics put it centuries ago, ‘smaller than small, bigger than big’. We are and we are not our bodies. . . .

Moreover, ‘we’ and the sum universe cannot be separated in the way of the old Cartesian dialectic of ‘I’ and ‘World’. Observer and observed are part of the same process. What did Paracelsus say? ‘The galaxa goes through the belly.’

What is it that you contain? The dead, time, light patterns of millennia, the expanding universe opening in your gut.”

—Jeanette Winterson, Gut Symmetries, 1998
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

KIM BRANDT (Choreographer) creates performances that ask motion to answer questions about how a body can be, and to explore how a coming together alters the tone of our environment. She has presented her work at The Shed (2019), MoMA/PS1 (2018), SculptureCenter (2017), Abrons Arts Center (2017), Pioneer Works (2016), Artists Space (2015), AVA Gallery (2015), and The Kitchen (2014). Her work has been supported by a NYFA/NYSCA Fellowship in Interdisciplinary Arts (2018), a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grants to Artists Award (2017), Mertz Gilmore Foundation (2016–18), The Jerome Foundation Travel & Study Grant (2016), and Brooklyn Arts Council (2016). She has received residencies at MoMA/PS1 (2017–18), Djerassi (2018), Movement Research (2016–18), Bogliasco Foundation (2016), and Issue Project Room (2015). She has performed in works by Bruce Nauman, Ryan McNamara, and Walter Dundervill, and her press and interviews have appeared in Artforum, The New York Times, Bomb Magazine, and Girls Like Us, among others. Brandt received an MFA in sculpture from Tyler School of Art.

NATE WOOLEY (Composer/Musician) works as an interpreter, improviser, and composer within the contemporary conjuncture of contemporary classical, jazz, noise, and electronic music. He has performed as a soloist or a commissioned composer at SWR Donaueschingen, Musica Polonica Nova, Wroclaw Jazztopad, Festival International de Musique Actuelle de Victoriaville, Alarmp Berlin, Music Unlimited, and numerous international jazz festivals. Wooley has been an artist in residence at London’s Café Oto and Brooklyn’s Issue Project Room and was a 2016 recipient of the Foundation of Contemporary Arts Grants to Artists Award in Music/Sound. He made his New York Philharmonic debut in 2018 as a soloist in Ashley Fure’s triple concerto Filament. Wooley is the founder of the For/With Festival, which commissions and premiers works created through collaboration between composer and performer, all with an emphasis on radical timbral techniques and improvisation within composition. He is currently the editor of Sound American, the curator of the Database of Recorded American Music, and a teacher at the New School for Social Research.

STRAUSS BOURQUE-LAFRANCE (Costume designer) is a New York–based artist who has exhibited work throughout the United States and Europe. Outside of his studio practice Strauss works with other artists to help articulate visual and conceptual aspects of their work. He has recently collaborated with Tere O’Connor, Mariah Evans, Tess Dworman, Lydia Okrent, and Kim Brandt.

MARTITA ABRIL (Performer/NYC) is a performer, choreographer, curator, and teaching artist from the border city of Tijuana, México. She’s worked with dance artists and companies throughout México, South America, and the United States, and is currently working with Kim Brandt, Yanira Castro, Yoshiko Chuma, and Simone Forti.

ANNA ADAMS STARK (Performer/NYC) is a performer and arts administrator living and working in New York. She hails from Normal, Illinois, and holds a BFA from the University of Iowa. She is grateful to be working with Kim and this beautiful group of humans.

LIZ CHARKY (Performer/NYC) is a performing artist and director working across film and live performance. She is a 2019 artist in residence at Outpost Artist Resources and Cucalorus Film Festival, and her work has been created with support from 6BASE, AUNTS at Superchief Gallery, Bowery Poetry Club, Chez Bushwick, Dixon Place, Outpost Artist Resources, Movement Research at the Judson Church, YoungArts at Baryshnikov Arts Center, and Green Space LIC.

eductor in Brooklyn, New York. Cooke has worked with Kim Brandt for the past five years and has also recently danced with choreographers Jennifer Monson and Emily Wexler. She also works as a teaching artist and has a private practice leading meditation and healing services.

JESSICA COOK (Performer/NYC) has presented her work in venues such as Lmak Gallery, MoMA PS1 (with Laurel Atwell), Judson Memorial Church, Roulette Intermedium, 92nd St Y, Pieter Performance Space, and AUNTS (New Museum, Mana Contemporary, Chasama Gallery). Cook is a 2019 Artist-In-Residence at Movement Research.

LESLIE CUYJET (Performer/NYC) is thrilled to return to her family’s hometown of Chicago. She has been working with Kim Brandt since 2014 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York.

AYANO ELSON (Performer/NYC) is an Okinawan-American choreographer and performer based in Brooklyn, New York. She has recently performed in works by Kim Brandt, Jessica Cook, Simone Forti, Kyli Kleven, and Haege Yang at Danspace, MoMA, MoMA PS1, Movement Research at Judson Memorial Church, Pioneer Works, Roulette, and The Shed.

JOANNA FURNANS (Performer/Chicago) is an independent dance artist. Her work has been supported by a 2019 MANCC (Maggie Alleeis National Center for Choreography) Forward Dialogues Laboratory, a 2019 Institutional Incubator Sponsorship at High Concept Labs, a 2018 Chicago Dancemaker’s Forum Lab Artist Award, the Illinois Arts Council Agency, the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), the Chicago Dancers’ Fund, the Chicago Moving Company, Links Hall, and the Walker Art Center. Furnans is also managing director of the Performance Response Journal.

BERIT GODO (Performer/Chicago) is a Seattle native. Godo’s home in Chicago is at the Joel Hall Dancers and Center, where they are a first company apprentice, assistant studio manager, and teacher. Their dance/movement credits include Firebird, Masks and Myths, Unwinding (Mandala South Asian Performing Arts), Rite of Spring (Brittany Harlin), and The Fly (Honey Show (The Inconvenience), as well as movement direction work for Grace or the Art of Climbing (Brown Paper Box Theatre Co.) and Les Innocents ((re)discover theatre). Godo appears courtesy of the Joel Hall Dancers.

GINA HOCHSTALL (Performer/Chicago) has been described by ThinkingCook as one of [Philadelphia]’s strongest dancers.” Hochstall is a choreographic deviser and movement-based artist who serves as the artistic director of RealLivePeople, a contemporary dance theater company. Hochstall recently earned her MFA in dance from The Ohio State University on a Dean’s Distinguished three-year fellowship.

KYLI KLEVEN (Performer/NYC) is a choreographer and performer based in New York. She has performed in the work of Ryan McNamara, Kim Brandt, Neil Greenberg, Mike Dicicco, and Jennifer Monson. She is a 2018-19 Movement Research Artist in Residence, works at The Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, and started life in Alaska.

KATINKA KLEIN (Musician/Chicago) is a member of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the International Contemporary Ensemble. Klein is known for her work in the Humen-Machine, a duo for cellist and brainwaves, and Water on the Bridge for cellos and brainwaves, and Water on the Bridge for cellos and brainwaves, and Water on the Bridge for cellos and brainwaves. Her work has been presented in the United States, Europe, Southeast Asia, and Australia.

EMILY NAVARRA (Performer/Chicago) has contributed as a collaborative and performing artist to re(discover) theatre, works by Kim Brandt since 2014 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. She has been working with Kim Brandt since 2014 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. She has been working with Kim Brandt since 2014 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. She has been working with Kim Brandt since 2014 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. She has been working with Kim Brandt since 2014 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. She has been working with Kim Brandt since 2014 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. She has been working with Kim Brandt since 2014 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. She has been working with Kim Brandt since 2014 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. She has been working with Kim Brandt since 2014 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. She has been working with Kim Brandt since 2014 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. She has been working with Kim Brandt since 2014 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. She has been working with Kim Brandt since 2014 and currently lives in Brooklyn, New York. She has been working with Kim Brandt since 2014.
UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

Sun, Oct 27, various times
Between Gestures: Trajal Harrell and Ola Maciejewska Free

Two solo pieces by choreographers Trajal Harrell and Ola Maciejewska unfold over an afternoon in the museum’s main atrium along with screenings and a panel discussion. This program is part of Between Gestures, a one-week festival connecting Chicago to international contemporary dance and performance.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

10:30 AM–NOON

A panel of curators and scholars envision the ways dance in the museum might become a more inclusive and encompassing practice.

NOON–4:30 PM
Selections of rare performance footage from the Nouvelle Cinémathèque de la Danse screen in the Commons

12:15–12:45 PM
Trajal Harrell performs Okidoki in the Kovler Atrium

2–2:40 PM
Ola Maciejewska performs LOIE FULLER: Research in the Kovler Atrium

3:30–4 PM
Trajal Harrell performs Okidoki in the Kovler Atrium

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.

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

Ola Maciejewska, LOIE FULLER: Research. Photo: Martin Argyroglo.