Between Gestures: Trajal Harrell and Ola Maciejewska

Program Notes
Sun, Oct 27
Various times
Throughout the MCA
FROM THE CURATOR

How does it feel to watch a performance in a museum? Does it change how you walk through the galleries or how you think about the art you see? Does the museum affect how you view the performance or how you relate to the performers?

If you witness Trajal Harrell’s and Ola Maciejewska’s pieces in the museum today, you may feel performance’s uncanny ability to appear anywhere, alter your perceptions, then quickly disappear. Trajal and Ola both create dances that shift the tone of the room. But a performance never shows up out of nowhere nor completely goes away: It responds to the situation and leaves an effect in its wake. It can draw on and intervene in the white walls of a museum, and on dance history itself.

Join us to not only experience performances in the MCA’s public spaces, but to hear curators and scholars discuss the agency of performers and audiences in museums, and to watch video of contemporary choreographers Mathilde Monnier, Noé Soulier, Ana Rita Teodoro, and Miet Warlop throughout the day in the Commons. We’re excited to share with you part of Between Gestures, a city-wide festival connecting Chicago to international contemporary performance and dance, proposed by the Cultural Service of the Consulate of France in Chicago and the Goethe Institut Chicago.

Tara Aisha Willis, Associate Curator
Christy LeMaster, Assistant Curator
Performance & Public Practice
Between Gestures: Trajal Harrell and Ola Maciejewska

SCHEDULE

10:30 am–noon
NOTES ON AGENCY: DANCE IN THE MUSEUM
The Commons, second floor

A panel discussion with January Parkos Arnall, Hendrik Folkerts, Elisabeth Lebovici, and Mlondi Zondi.

Noon–4:30 pm
VIDEO SCREENINGS
The Commons, second floor

Screenings of recently released selections from the Portraits collection created by the Centre National de la Danse (CN D).

12:15–1 pm
Trajal Harrell, Okidoki
Kovler Atrium, second floor

2–2:40 pm
Ola Maciejewska, LOIE FULLER: Research
Griffin Lobby, fourth floor

3:30–4 pm
Trajal Harrell, Okidoki
Kovler Atrium, second floor

SUPPORT FOR THIS MCA PROJECT
Between Gestures is a program supported by the cultural services of the French Embassy in the US, the Goethe Institut, the Franco-German Cultural Fund, FACE in Chicago, and the Friends of the Goethe.

Videos screened in the Commons appear courtesy of the Centre National de la Danse in France.

Special thanks to our colleagues in the Facilities and Operations, Security, Visitor Experience, Special Events and Rentals, and Housekeeping teams for making the entire museum campus a place for performance.

SUPPORT FOR THE ARTISTS
Ola Maciejewska’s LOIE FULLER: Research is produced by SO WE MIGHT AS WELL DANCE and commissioned by TENT Rotterdam/NL, with the support of ZEEBELT THEATRE/NL. Maciejewska gives special thanks to Judith Schoneveld.

Trajal Harrell’s Okidoki was commissioned by the Pulitzer Arts Foundation, St. Louis, Centre National de la Danse, and Wiesbaden Biennale.

TRAJAL HARRELL

Okidoki (2018)

Choreographer and performer
Trajal Harrell

Costume designer
Vetements, Undercover, and the performer’s own

Music composer
Tom Monteiro

OLA MACIEJEWSKA

LOIE FULLER: Research (2011)

Choreographer and performer
Ola Maciejewska

Costume designer
Jolanta Maciejewska

Producer and administrator
Caroline Redy
ABOUT THE WORK

Trajal Harrell and Ola Maciejewska explore new ways of engaging with their audiences by placing their works in nontraditional venues such as museums and other spaces for public gathering. Both artists also intervene in dance history by revisiting performances of the past through their own physical practices and through current philosophical perspectives. Harrell's work illuminates connections between postmodern dance and vogue aesthetics, while Maciejewska reimagines one of the most recognizable solos in Western concert dance history as a work of moving sculpture.

These programs are part of Between Gestures, a ten-day festival, running October 24–31, which connects Chicago to international contemporary performance and dance through performances, workshops, conversations, and screenings, proposed by the Cultural Service of the consulate of France in Chicago and the Goethe Institut Chicago. Other participating venues include The Dance Center at Columbia College Chicago, Stony Island Arts Bank, the Poetry Foundation, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Chicago International Film Festival. For more information and a complete listing of festival programs, visit betweengestures.org.

RELATED PROGRAMS

DANCE AND ACTIVISM

Sat, Oct 26, 3:30 pm
Stony Island Arts Bank

Tara Aisha Willis, MCA Associate Curator, Performance and Public Practice, engaged Elisabeth Lebovici in a free, public conversation on the long history of dance as social practice in the realms of embodiment, race, and representation. The conversation was followed by a performance by Trajal Harrell.
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

TRAJAL HARRELL (Choreographer/Performer, Okidoiki) came to visibility with the Twenty Looks or Paris is Burning at The Judson Church series of works, which theoetically juxtaposes the early postmodern dance tradition with the early postmodern dance tradition. He is now considered one of the most important choreographers of his generation. Harrell’s work has been shown in many American and international venues including The Kitchen, New York Live Arts, TBA Festival, Walker Arts Center, American Realness Festival, Philadelphia Fringe Festival, LA’s RedCAT, The Festival d’Autonne, Holland Festival, Festival d’Avignon, Vienna’s ImpulsTanz, Berlin’s TanzimAugust, and Panorama Festival, among others. He has also shown performance work in visual art contexts of MoMA, MoMA PS1, Perfoma Biennial, Fondation Cartier, The New Museum, The Margulies Art Warehouse in Miami, Stedelijk Museum, Porto’s Serralves Museum, The Barbican Centre, Centre Pompidou-Paris and Metz, ICA Boston, and Art Basel-Miami Beach. His work Judson Church is Ringing in Harlem (Made-to-Measure)/ Twenty Looks or Paris is Burning at The Judson Church (M2M) has the distinction of being the first dance commission of MoMA PS1. He has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Doris Duke Impact Award, and a Bessie Award for Antigone Sr./Twenty Looks or Paris is Burning at The Judson Church (L), as well as fellowships from The Foundation for Contemporary Art, Art Matters, and the Saison Foundation, among others. In 2016, he completed a two-year Annenberg Residency at MoMA, where he turned his attention to the work of the Japanese founder of butoh dance, Tatsumi Hijikata. By looking at butoh through vogue’s theoretical lens of “realness” and modern dance through the theoretical lens of butoh, Harrell is creating a number of works that combine a speculative view of history and the archive with contemporary dance practice and composition. He has created Used Abused and Hung Out to Dry, premiered and commissioned by MoMA in February 2013; The Ghost of Montpellier Meets the Samurai, premiered at Montpellier Danse Festival in July 2015; The Return of La Argentina, premiered in October 2015 at Paris’s Centre National de la Danse and commissioned by MoMA; In the Mood for Frankie, premiered in May 2016 at MoMA; Ceen Amour, premiered at Festival Avignon 2016; and Juliet and Romeo, produced by Munich Kammerspiele in October 2017. Hoochie Koochie was Harrell’s first survey (1999–2016) and performance exhibition presented by the Barbican Centre Art Gallery in London during July–August 2017.

Born in Poland and currently based in Paris, OLA MACIEJEWSKA (Choreographer/Performer, LOIE FULLER: Research) obtained her MA in contemporary theatre and dance studies at the University of Utrecht in 2012. While still in school, Maciejewska created LOIE FULLER: Research (2011), which has since been presented in France for the opening of CN D Pantin as well as in Programme at De Appel in Amsterdam from 2009 until 2011.

HENDRIK FOLKERTS (Panel moderator) is the Dittrich Curator of Contemporary Art at the Art Institute of Chicago. He studied art history at the University of Amsterdam, specializing in contemporary art and theory, feminist practices, and contemporary curatorial practices. Prior to his position at the Art Institute of Chicago, Folkerts was curator of New Settings #6. Between 2014 and 2017, he was Curator of Performance, Film & Discursive Programmes at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and co-curator of the 19th International Performance Festival at the MAMCO in Geneva. In 2015, he was invited to curate the exhibition LOIE FULLER: Research. Folkerts is currently involved in writing and lecturing on contemporary curatorial practices. He has been the chief editor of Beaux-Arts Magazine and has written for, among others, Artforum, Art in America, and Art Journal. His latest book Whet AIDS Has Done To Me: Art and Activism at the End of the 20th Century, received the Prix Pierre Daix in art history in 2017. Lebovici holds a PhD in aesthetics, and Natala Petresin-Bachelez, a weekly seminar at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris titled Something You Should Know: Artists and Producers. Lebovici is a research professor and critical, performing artist in contemporary performance studies at Northwestern University. "Mlondi" Zondi is a performance artist, performer, and writer. Zondi’s dissertation focuses on contemporary black performance and visual art engagements with death and corporeal integrity. Using Afro-Pessimism and other aspects of the black radical tradition, the research probes the relationship between black ontology and the ontology of performance. Zondi received an MFA in dance from the University of California, Irvine, and a BA (Hons) in cultural studies and performance studies from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal.
UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

Jan 30–Feb 1, 7:30 pm

Ligia Lewis

Water Will (in Melody)

Berlin-based artist Ligia Lewis returns to Chicago with the final installment of her red, white, and black trilogy of performances exploring race and identity. Lewis’s surrealist choreography wrestles with the language and notions of “the will” by creating a dystopian fantasy that negotiates desire, imagination, and feelings of an encroaching end.

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.

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

Accessability 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.

See More and Save

Save 20% when you purchase tickets to two or more eligible performances, talks, and events. MCA Members save an extra 10%. If your plans change, "Pick 2" purchases qualify for free ticket exchange. For more information, visit mcachicago.org/programs/pick2.

Winter/Spring performances will be announced in November. Check mcachicago.org/stage for up-to-date listings.

Ligia Lewis, Water Will (in Melody)

Photo © Maria Baranova

Asparagus with chilled mussel vinaigrette and tarragon raita. Photo: Neil Burger
SUPPORT FOR MCA PERFORMANCES

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

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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.

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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
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