ON STAGE & ON VIEW

PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS | FALL 2017

ABRONS ARTS CENTER
HENRY STREET SETTLEMENT
An intriguing contemporary performance hotbed. THE NEW YORK TIMES

In a venerable 100-year-old community center on the Lower East Side, there’s an arts program with an exciting new feeling—revitalized, innovative, and vibrant, with student courses, artist residencies, and a teeming calendar of events that involve some of the best-known, some of the newest, and some of the bravest downtown artists. To celebrate its reinvigorated life, the judges have voted to present the Ross Wetzsteon Award to the Abrons Arts Center of the Henry Street Settlement.

OBIE CITATION

COME TO ABRONS EXPECTING TO BE EITHER ENTERTAINED OR UNSETTLED ... OR BOTH.

FALL 2017

You are welcome here.

Abrons celebrates the idea that a community is a place of intersecting ideas and action. Abrons is both a physical place — with three theaters, galleries and classrooms — and also a space that makes room for imagination, free expression and diverging opinions. Over the last 101 years we have been a home to experimental artists, radical ideas and burgeoning social movements. As we launch our Fall season, we continue our legacy of challenging the status quo by confronting the issues that are shaping our lives. Gun control, immigration and gentrification are central themes in the performances and exhibitions that will take over our stages and galleries in the coming months. We are also thrilled to present a variety of family and neighborhood events that will entertain and delight — including a Holiday show in our historic Playhouse that celebrates the vibrancy of the Lower East Side.

Come to Abrons to explore, laugh and engage. You are welcome here.

CRAIG PETERSON
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

The Abrons galleries at the Henry Street Settlement have a long record of nurturing socially conscious art…
THE NEW YORK TIMES

THE ABRONS ARTS CENTER REVELS IN THE RISKY.
THE NEW YORK TIMES
MUSIC

INTERNATIONAL CONTEMPORARY ENSEMBLE [ICE]
OpenICE FALL SERIES
PLAYHOUSE/EXPERIMENTAL/UNDERGROUND
SEPTEMBER 7 – 10, 27 – 29, DEC 14 – 15 | VARIOUS
FREE
This September, the International Contemporary Ensemble celebrates four years since their first OpenICE concert at Abrons and the launch of their FIFTH OpenICE season. ICE activates Abrons’ various spaces with interactive performance and education events, looking to the past with a retrospective and into the future with premieres of new works. December’s residency features ICE’s pianist’s brainchild, the UNcaged Toy Piano Festival, as well as the world premiere performance of Wojtek Blecharz’ “Music for Invisible Places.”

PERFORMANCE

LINCOLN CENTER’S BORO-LINC
LA CASITA
AMPHITHEATER
SEPTEMBER 16 | 2 PM | 120 MINS
FREE
For Lincoln Center’s Boro-Linc performance, La Casita, an impressive lineup of artists convenes to explore the far-reaching social, political, and expressive powers of oral and visual traditions. Here, wordsmiths share the stage with musicians and dancers to uncover how poetry, song, movement and storytelling can unleash personal truths, construct identity, and fundamentally alter historical narratives. The event includes performances by Lahore-born, Brooklyn-based musician Arooj Aftab, the Mariachi Academy of New York, and Latinx poetry collective El Grito de Poetas.

PERFORMANCE/READING

MAYA CIARROCCHI
A REMEDY FOR A CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS
AMPHI THEATER
SEPTEMBER 17 | 12 PM | 8 HRS
FREE
In honor of National Constitution Day, Maya Ciarrocchi will hold an eight-hour reading of the United States Constitution. Read in multiple languages by multiple performers, the document will be interwoven with text from the Iroquois Great Law of Peace, whose ideals of individual liberty and separation of powers is thought to have influenced the founders. This celebration of we the people will take place in Abrons’ outdoor amphitheater and will include food and drink, participatory writing and political discussion. A Remedy for a Constitutional Crisis is conceived and created by Maya Ciarrocchi in collaboration with Clarinda Mac Low and George Emilio Sanchez.

THEATER

CABORCA
DISTANT STAR
[WORLD PREMIERE]
UNDERGROUND THEATER
SEP 14 – 17, SEP 21 – 24, SEP 28 – OCT 1
7:30 PM | 100 MINS
$25
The year is 1973. In Chile, a group of young poets meet to write, argue, critique and flirt. Days later, the government collapses and the president is shot. Amidst the brutality, one poet rises to fame as a skywriting daredevil — and, possibly, as a killer. The drama unfolds in Puerto Rican-American theater company Caborca’s adaptation of Roberto Bolaño’s novel Distant Star, a wrenching tale of political protest. The work weaves the author’s memories of life (and death) under Pinochet’s American-backed dictatorship into a perversely seductive noir of urgent political necessity.

DANCE

a canary torsi
STAGE
[WORLD PREMIERE]
Part of a trilogy CAST, STAGE, AUTHOR co-presented with the Chocolate Factory Theater + Invisible Dog Theater
PLAYHOUSE THEATER
SEP 14 – 16, 21 – 23 | 9 PM | 45 MINS
$20 ($30 FOR TRILOGY)
a canary torsi, led by choreographer Yanira Castro, presents the world premiere of STAGE, a visual and aural fantasia that positions the Abrons Playhouse as a center for spectacle. As a live improvised sound score accompanies choreographed stage machinations, this collaborative work reveals the manipulative possibilities of theatrical devices to determine what we perceive. STAGE is part of a trilogy of works premiering concurrently, including CAST (The Chocolate Factory) and AUTHOR (The Invisible Dog), that examine how we re(present) ourselves.

ON STAGE

BETH GILL: BRAND NEW SIDEWALK
SEPT 28 – OCT 1
BOUCHRA QUIZGUEN: CROWS
SEPT 30 & OCT 1
The Power of Emotion: The Apartment
Katherine Brook / Tele-Violet
Underground Theater
October 11–14, 18–21
It is seventeen minutes past midnight, Oceanic Time. In a theater of sorts, a show is about to begin. There is an occasional flicker of light, a sonic shudder, an atmosphere of electronic energy. Conjuring a live cine-performance through the interplay of otherworldly video, music, sound and technology, Why Why Always is a sci-fi misadventure of secret agents and seductresses, where Alphaville meets ASMR. Mesmeric whispers fill the air, lighters flash, otherworldly video, music, sound and technology—tackle the migration debate. In a humble demonstration of community, the book is passed around for the audience to touch and read while Vinovrški experiments with the iPad's potential for eye contact. Teetering between the heartfelt and the absurd, Staying Alive is a precarious situation—one that gradually becomes a state of emergency. Support provided by the Trust for Mutual Understanding.

The Power of Emotion: The Apartment
Katherine Brook / Tele-Violet
Underground Theater
October 12–15, 18–21
The Power of Emotion is a collaborative multi-part project led by director Katherine Brook, writer Shonn Enelow, and composer Taylor Brook exploring how humans watch, hear and perform emotion. The Apartment—the project's third and final iteration—is informed by an Alexander Kluge film of the same name, the director's experience as a juror on a criminal trial, various operas including Wagner's Ring Cycle, and an ongoing exploration of acting style and method. Musicians and actors take center stage in this story of a fight between two women that leads to an apartment fire.

Perfect City Fall 2017
Main Gallery
October 23 – November 4
Since 2016, Abrons playwright-in-residence Aaron Landsman has been building Perfect City—a paid working group and creative team made up of artists, activists, students and other citizens fighting displacement and gentrification in the Lower East Side. This fall they launch a pay-what-you-can public season of performances, mapping workshops, live discussions about zoning, rock concerts, urban walks, visual art exhibitions and other provocations that ask: how can we build a more equitable Lower East Side for its diverse community of people? Support provided by the Shelley and Donald Rubin Foundation.

Extend Play with Joel Fan, Lafawndah, Teengirl Fantasy, ADR and more
Playhouse Theater
November 18 | 10 PM
Open Source Music Festival explores the groundbreaking phenomenon of open source through performances, new compositions, and collaboration. Founded by pianist and artistic director, Joel Fan, the event crosses boundaries of contemporary and electronic music while challenging ideas of festival organization. Performers at this daylong concert event include John Pickford Richards, Jay Campbell, Tigue; electronic luminaries Lafawndah, Teengirl Fantasy; and composers include Augusta Read Thomas, Bernard Rands, Evan Ziporyn, Julia Wolfe, Michael Gordon. Remixed by Chris Botta.

Staying Alive
Jasna L. Vinovrški [Croatia]
Experimental Theater
November 17 & 18
In Staying Alive, Croatian artist Jasna L. Vinovrški and her collaborators—a book and an electronic tablet—tackle the migration debate. In a humble demonstration of community, the book is passed around for the audience to touch and read while Vinovrški experiments with the iPad's potential for eye contact. Teetering between the heartfelt and the absurd, Staying Alive is a precarious situation—one that gradually becomes a state of emergency. Support provided by the Trust for Mutual Understanding.
THEATER
ONEOFUS
[Julie Atlas Muz & Mat Fraser]
JACK & THE BEANSTALK
[WORLD PREMIERE]
PLAYHOUSE THEATER
DEC 6 – 10, DEC 13 – 17, DEC 20 – 23
7:30 PM & 2 PM | 90 MINS
$25 – $45
This holiday season is the time to experience a radical, joyful, uproarious family spectacle promoting equality in all forms. Written by disabled actor and writer Mat Fraser and directed by legendary downtown performer Julie Atlas Muz, Jack & the Beanstalk brings tap-dancing animals, pie fights, cross-dressing characters and the most glittery of sets to the Lower East Side. This riotous all-ages morality tale brings together the whole family, taking part in the 300-year-old theatrical tradition of the panto. Now more than ever, New York City needs family theater that is inherently irreverent and lightly political—with good eventually triumphing over evil. Get ready to cheer the heroes, boo the villains and look out behind you!

THEATER
GEORGE EMILIO SANCHEZ
BANG, BANG, GUN AMOK
24 HOUR PERFORMANCE FILIBUSTER
[WORLD PREMIERE]
Co-presented with La Mama
UNDERGROUND THEATER
DEC 8 THROUGH 9 | 6 PM – 6 PM | 24 HRS
$20
Amid the contemporary political noise, the sounds of gun violence continue to ricochet throughout. The U.S. Performance artist George Emilio Sanchez’s BANG, BANG, GUN AMOK is a 24-hour “performance filibuster” attempting to incorporate all necessary means to expose the reality of gun violence embedded in American culture. Uniting art making with activism, BANG shines a light on the glorified pain of gun culture.

DANCE
JAAMIL OLAWALE KOSOKO
SÉANCERS
[WORLD PREMIERE]
EXPERIMENTAL THEATER
DEC 6 – 9 | 8 PM | 90 MINS
$20
Jaamil Olawale Kosoko’s Séancers collapses lyrical poetry, psychic movement forms and strategies of discursive performance to investigate concepts of black magic, resurrection and paranormal activity. Interrogating issues related to American history and terrorism, Séancers journeys into the surreal and fantastical states of the Black imagination to traverse the “fatal” axis of abstraction, illegibility and gender multiplicity. Commissioning support provided by the Jerome Foundation and MAP Fund.

THEATRE
ON VIEW

JAAMIL OLAWALE KOSOKO: SÉANCERS
DEC 6 – 9

ORIGINAL NEW YORKERS
OCT 14 – NOV 17

THEN A CUNNING VOICE AND A NIGHT WE SPEND GAZING AT STARS: Quilt Installation by Emily Johnson/Catalyst and Makwa Studio SEPTEMBER 1 – OCTOBER 8, 2017
An installation of 84 hand-sewn, community-made quilts designed by Makwa Studio textile artist Maggie Thompson that served as a platform for Emily Johnson/Catalyst’s performance of Then a Cunning Voice and A Night We Spend Gazing at Stars. Inscribed with answers to “What do you want for your well-being? For the well-being of your chosen friends and family? For your neighborhood? For your town, city, reserve, tribal nation, world?” the blankets hold the visions and intentions of hundreds of quilting bee participants.

VOLLEY
Nadia Ayari, Ben Browne, Mira Dayal, Cindy Ji Hye Kim, Ellie Krakow, Emily Kohl Mattingley, Russell Perkins, Amanda Turner Pohan, & Edwin Smalling SEPTEMBER 1 – NOVEMBER 17, 2017
Conceived as a series of overlapping two-person exhibitions, Volley is an experiment that foregrounds conversation and collaboration as essential aspects of artistic production. Volley’s dynamic structure formulates the exhibition as an active site, aiming to stimulate dialogue between the participating artists as they engage each other’s work over three months. The open-ended evolving format allows for a fluidity that, like a conversational tangent, inflects subsequent iterations. Each exhibition in progress will be punctuated by programming staged as a series of public dialogues.
PERFECT CITY PRESENTS THE ORIGINAL NEW YORKERS: Haruka Sakaguchi

OCTOBER 14 – NOVEMBER 17, 2017

An extension of Aaron Landsman’s Perfect City project, The Original New Yorkers is an ongoing portrait series of New York natives who have been affected by gentrification. Subjects are photographed in their homes or workplaces and asked to submit a handwritten note, either depicting the way gentrification has affected them personally or in an “open letter” addressing newcomers to New York City. The unedited note is then positioned next to the portrait, in diptych format. Haruka Sakaguchi is a Japanese photographer currently residing in Brooklyn, New York. Her work focuses on cultural identity and sense of place.

AIRSPACE CURATORIAL RESIDENT PROJECT
Christian Camacho-Light & Alexis Wilkinson

OCTOBER 14–NOVEMBER 17, 2017

Abrons’ AIRspace curatorial residents Christian Camacho-Light & Alexis Wilkinson will present collaborative and independent projects exploring the practice of exhibition-making throughout 2017 and 2018. Emerging from research and writing, themes will range from investigating form as a vessel for political content to the (controlled) mobilization of bodies by power structures.

IMPERCEPTIBLE
Irini Muga, Daniel Cerrajón, Victor Esther, Cristina Camacho, & Claudia Peña Salinas
Curated by Xavier Acarín

NOVEMBER 22 – DECEMBER 26, 2017

IMPERCEPTIBLE is an exhibition that exposes fragility and correlates objects and subjects to address precariousness, working conditions and the un-visible circumstances behind creative work. Fragility has become one of the features of contemporaneity: a state of precariousness that spreads from objects to labor conditions, defining personal relations and affecting connectivity with one’s surroundings. As semi-capitalism champions flexPerfectibility and adaptability of immaterial producers, the artist becomes the model of the entrepreneur, a freelancer valued for their innovative creativity. The resulting economy is a model that appropriates progressive values (sharing, hosting, inventing) while reducing the rights and benefits of workers.

SAYS WHO? SEZ ME!

NOVEMBER 22 – DECEMBER 26, 2017

The SEZ ME web series is all about breaking down stigma when it comes to children and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community. This exhibition will be a live-format extension for combating anti-queer pundits who try to use children to justify discrimination against queer people. Abrons’ galleries will become a platform for children to meet with members of the queer community who will act as mentors in fun, casual settings and engage in dialogues about queer issues that affect kids. Performances will be hosted by drag queen Charmin Ultra, aka Jeff Maras, and created by Mor Erlich with soundscapes provided by Lee Free.

ABRONS ARTS CENTER FUNDERS

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And numerous individual supporters.

THERE’S EVEN MORE at the ABRONS!

The Abrons offers a full range of arts engagement programs in music, theater, dance and visual arts for youth and adults. For details, visit abronsartscenter.org