

ABRONS
ARTS HENRY STREET
CENTER SETTLEMENT

AIRSPACE
GRANT FOR
PERFORMING ARTISTS
**SHOW +
SHARE**

June 29, 2018

AIRSPACE GRANT FOR PERFORMING ARTISTS SHOW + SHARE

June 29, 2018, 7:30pm

In September 2017, Abrons Arts Center launched the AIRspace Grant for Performing Artists, which offers time-based residencies to five early-career performing artists working in movement-based, theater, and performance practices. To culminate their time at Abrons, the 2017-2018 cohort, Brother(hood) Dance!, Leyya Mona Tawil, Oxana Chi, and Johnnie Cruise Mercer will share excerpts of work they have developed over their residency period.

2017-18 AIRspace Performing Artist Grantees:

The Anthropologists

Brother(hood) Dance!

Johnnie Cruise Mercer

Leyya Mona Tawil

Oxana Chi

JOHNNIE CRUISE MERCER

Excerpted material from

The word, the spirit, and Little Rock

Choreographed by

Johnnie Cruise Mercer

Performing Artists

Johnnie Cruise Mercer, Shanice Mason, and Adrienne Ansley

This is material from the fourth process-memoir of eight, the practice shared is a part of a 10-part creation process towards *and to the decades of hell*, a two part work documenting and questioning the development of the millennial generation and its metamorphosis into post-contemporary ideas.

Johnnie Cruise Mercer (Company Director) is a choreographer, educator, and freelance performer in the New York City area. As the choreographer/artistic director of Johnnie Cruise Mercer/TheREDprojectNYC, his work has been presented/commissioned by The Center for Performance Research-CPR, Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance (BAAD!), The Dance Place of DC, Gibney Dance: Agnes Varis Performing Arts Center, Judson Church Movement Research, Greenspace, The Bolls Theater of Detroit, The Jamaica Performing Arts Center, 92Y Harkness Dance Center, The Billie Holiday Theater, The Milton G. Bassin Performing Arts Center, NYU Tisch School of Dance, Brooklyn Arts Exchange (BAX) as well as recently at NYU Skirball's AUNTS, the NADA Conference, and the 2018 Fusebox Festival. He has been in residence at Chez Bushwick Inc, 92Y Harkness Dance Center (2016-2017 AIR), NYU 2017 Summer Residency Program, 2017 BAX Fall Grant Recipient and is currently a 2017-2018 CUNY Dance Initiative Artist in Residence, a 2018 Choreoquest AIR at RestorationARTS, and a 2017-2018 AIRspace Grantee at Abrons Arts Center. Mr. Mercer is a native of Richmond, Virginia, a BFA graduate from Virginia Commonwealth University's Department of Dance and Choreography.

Adrienne Ansley (Collaborating Artist) holds a BFA in dance from The Florida State University. She recently moved from her hometown of Sarasota, Florida - where she taught creative movement at Sarasota Ballet's after-school program Dance the Next Generation - in order to further her aspirations as a professional choreographer. Since becoming a resident of New York, she has been given the opportunity to work on projects alongside Stefanie Nelson and Douglass Gillespie. Adrienne is currently establishing herself as a dancer in the New York City area and continues to focus on creative efforts within the field.

Shanice Mason (Company Partner: Asst Director), a native of Virginia, is a dance artist, teacher and art administrator. Along with tRpNYC, Shanice holds company positions with dance theatre X, led by Charles O. Anderson, UNUM Dance Collective, led by Tariq O'Meally, and Kyoko Dansu, led by Kyoko Ruch. As an art administrator, Shanice is dedicated to helping maintain art subjects as an integral part of the education system. Through nationally known enrichment dance company, Tippi Toes®, she has been able to provide and maintain functional dance classes for students across the DMV area. She is a graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University, receiving her BFA in Dance & Choreography and minor in General Business. Shanice is thrilled to continue with tRpNYC as company member and rehearsal assistant for the season.

LIME RICKEY INTERNATIONAL

Future Faith

Composition/Choreography/

Performance by

Leyya Mona Tawil

Costume by

Scott Tallenger/Left Handed Branded

Lime Rickey International's Future Faith is a performance work of Arab Experimentalism. Lime performs fictional folk dances and cries out to a homeland that is yet to exist.

Lime Rickey International is the superconsciousness of **Leyya Mona Tawil**, an artist working with dance, sound and performance practices. Tawil is a Syrian, Palestinian, American engaged in the world as such. Her articulation of Arab Experimentalism embeds political sub-narratives and cultural confusions into the performance fabric. Lime Rickey International emerged as a container for the world of lost homelands. The works of Lime are built under the influence of Arabic dabke, maqam, noise, improvisation and contemporary dance. Lime's appearances include DOCK11 (Berlin), AUNTS at NYU Skirball Theater (NYC), Der Bloede Dritte Mittwoch (Vienna), MD301 (Amsterdam), Love Supreme Festival (Barcelona), Sonic Circuits Festival (Wash. DC) and Active Music Series (Oakland).

Tawil has a 23-year record of choreographies and performance scores that have been presented throughout the US, Europe and the Arab world; highlights include Irtijal18 (Beirut), After the Last Sky Festival (Berlin), New York Live Arts: Live Ideas (NYC), ConVerge/Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (SF), Bimhuis (Amsterdam) and Soap Factory (Minneapolis). She is a 2018 Saari Residency Fellow (Finland) and an AIRSpace Resident Artist at Abrons Art Center (NYC). Tawil was a 2016 Columnist-in-Residence for SF MOMA's Open Space; and has also been published in Movement Research's Critical Correspondence, QED: A Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking and Detroit Research Journal. Tawil is the director of DANCE ELIXIR and TAC, a venue in Oakland-CA.

Lime Rickey International is supported by the Abrons Arts Center AIRspace Grant, the East Bay Fund for Artists at the East Bay Community Foundation, Saari Residence/Kone Foundation and DANCE ELIXIR's ArabAMP.

Special thanks to Wael Buhaissy, Marwa Helal, Brian Rogers, Dominic Cramp, Ricardo Esway, Lenny Gonzalez, Craig Flanagan and Ali Rosa-Salas.

OXANA CHI

feelingJAZZ

A duo for a body and a saxophone

Dance choreographed and interpreted by
Oxana Chi

Music composed and interpreted by
Dr. Layla Zami

Costume by
Modou Diop

feelingJAZZ flew to me while attending several great jazz concerts in Manhattan and Brooklyn. Enjoying the rhythms of Black people when walking down the street, or in the subway when they shorten my waiting time with their gorgeous plays. I felt my body memory, the rich heritage of Eastern Nigeria and Eastern Europe, felt Western African dance and rhythms, the tragedy and the romance of the Russian classical ballet in my bones. I started a conversation, first with myself, questioning and answering JAZZ, as a music developed out of restrictions and hope...a mix of influences from Africa, the Americas and Europe. I want to bring out all of this *feelingJAZZ!*

I have the pleasure to collaborate with saxophonist and composer Layla Zami. We both grew up in Europe (Germany and France), started with classical training in our fields, and switched to contemporary adventures in Fusion and Afro-futurism. We get so much inspiration around the globe to jump into a personal interpretation of *feelingJAZZ*.

Oxana Chi is an award-winning choreographer, dancer, filmmaker, curator and publisher. An Afro-German artist based in New York since 2015, she is currently 2017-2018 Artist-in-Residence at Abrons Arts Center and JCAL. As the Founder and Choreographer of Oxana Chi & Ensemble Xinren since 1991, she produced 18 feature-length productions including two commissioned works for the Humboldt-University, Berlin. She developed her own style: a transcultural fusion blending Western African, Egyptian, South East Asian and European traditional and contemporary techniques. She toured at theaters, universities and festivals in France, India, Finland, UK, Indonesia, Germany, Taiwan, Martinique, Turkey, Singapore and Australia. In NYC, she has appeared at NYU Jack Crystal Theater, MR@Judson Church, BAAD!, Dixon Place, CUNY, Martin E. Segal Theatre, LaMaMa, LAVA Dance, WOW Cafe Theatre, University Settlement, JCAL, Triskelionarts and CPR. Chi has received several international awards and grants, and was honored as a Filmmaker of Inspiration and Ambassador of Peace at the DOSHIMA 2016 in Jakarta.

A somewhat delicate presence, she is, nevertheless, a woman writ large, claiming concert dance space for a diverse and teeming world, blessing that space.

Eva Yaa Asantewaa

www.oxanachi.de

Dr. Layla Zami is an independent artist and scholar working with words, music, theater, video and photo art. She graduated from Humboldt-University, Berlin with a Ph.D. in Gender & Cultural Studies, and holds an MA from Sciences Po Paris School of International Affairs. Layla studied saxophone at the Conservatory of Music in Le Mans, as well as with Fuasi Abdul-Khaliq, Pascal Maffei and Parageet. Born in Paris, Layla is rooted in an Afro-Indian-Caribbean and Jewish-Russian-European cultural heritage and blossoms on stage as a Resident Artist (saxophone, poetry, kalimba, chalumeau) with her partner Oxana Chi. They performed across the globe at events and venues such as Delhi International Queer Theatre and Film Festival, SIPA Indonesia, HAU Theater, Technical University Berlin, Rutgers University Philadelphia, Maison Heinrich Heine Paris, University Yeditepe Istanbul and Gallery La Maison D'Art New York. Layla is currently an Assistant Producer for the International Human Rights Art Festival (IHRAF) and serves on Dance/NYC's Research Task Force and Symposium Programming Committee.

www.laylazami.net

Thanks to Abrons Arts Center (AIRspace Grand) and all gorgeous staff & team for always welcoming me warmly, and thanks to Ketty Smith.

BROTHER(HOOD) DANCE!

Hawa (The Ride)

[Work-in-process]

Performers

Orlando Zane Hunter Jr & Ricarrdo Valentine

Choreographer

Brother(hood) Dance!

Costumes by

Shane Ballard & Gabriel Garcia Roman

Music credits

**The Last Poets: *Tribute to Obabi*;
Garrett H.T Steagall**

Text by

Orlando Zane Hunter Jr.

Brother(hood) Dance! is an

interdisciplinary duo that seeks to inform its audiences on the socio-political and environmental injustices from a global perspective, bringing clarity to the same-gender-loving African-American experience in the 21st century. Brother(hood) Dance! was formed in April 2014 as a duo that research, create and perform dances of freedom by Orlando Zane Hunter, Jr. and Ricarrdo Valentine. We have performed our works at FiveMyles, Center for Performance Research, B.A.A.D! (Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance), VCU-The Grace Street Theater, DraftWork at St. Marks Church, JACK, Movement Research at Judson Church, Colby College, Denmark Arts Center, Universidad de Las Americas Puebla, Viso Festival and other venues.

ABOUT ABRONS

Abrons Arts Center is a home for contemporary interdisciplinary arts in Manhattan's Lower East Side neighborhood. A core program of the Henry Street Settlement, Abrons believes that access to the arts is essential to a free and healthy society. Through performance presentations, exhibitions, education programs and residencies, Abrons mobilizes communities with the transformative power of art.

Abrons values freedom of expression and creativity, ever striving to provide creative communities with a space that celebrates diversity of thought and experience. Abrons aims to be an anti-oppressive home to people from all backgrounds and does not discriminate on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, citizen status, ancestry, age, religion, disability, sex or gender, gender identity and/or expression (including a transgender identity), sexual orientation or any other characteristic.

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

Abrons Arts Center is situated on the Lenape island of Manhahtaan (Mannahatta) in Lenapehoking, the Lenape homeland. We pay respect to Lenape peoples, past, present, and future and their continuing presence in the homeland and throughout the Lenape diaspora. We offer our care and gratitude to the land, water and air of Lenapehoking, and are committed to resisting colonialism and imbalance with Mother Earth through the support of Indigenous-led programming and Indigenous artistic practices.

Nulelîntâmuhëna èli paèkw Lenapehoking
Kulawsihëmo ènta ahpièkw.

Nooleelundamuneeen eeli payeekw Lunaapeewahkiing.
Wulaawsiikw neeli apiiyeeekw.

We are glad because you people came to Lenapehoking.
Live well when you are here.

Thank you to the Lenape Center and Emily Johnson for their partnership in developing Abrons Arts Center's Indigenous Land Acknowledgment.

You are welcome here.

For tickets and showtimes:
abronsartscenter.org



**HENRY STREET
SETTLEMENT**

Abrons Arts Center Henry Street Settlement

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abronsartscenter.org/plan-your-trip/dining-and-attractions

and get a discount when you bring this program!

