

CLAUDIA RANKINE AND WILL RAWLS
WHAT REMAINS

Program
Notes

Wed-Sun,
Dec 5-9

MCA
Warehouse

1747
W Hubbard St

Eyes
Wide

Lights
Low

at MCA
Stage

Winter/Spring
2018-19

What Remains running
time is 70 minutes with
no intermission.

SUPPORT FOR THIS MCA STAGE PROJECT

The MCA Stage staff gives special thanks for their advice and support to Lee Bey; Naomi Beckwith, the MCA's Manilow Senior Curator; John Green; Jeffreen Hayes and Regina Martinez of Threevalls; Onye Ozuzu; Amina Ross of the Rebuild Foundation; Nikki Springer; and Lauren Williams.

Generous support for *What Remains* at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago is provided by the Nathan Cummings Foundation, with the support and encouragement of Jane Saks.

Lead support for the 2018-19 season of MCA Stage is provided by Elizabeth A. Liebman.

Generous support is provided by 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, Maya Polsky and Nicholas Bridon, Carol Prins and John Hart/The Jessica Fund, and Ellen Stone Belic.

Additional support for MCA Stage is provided by Ms. Shawn M. Donnelley and Dr. Christopher M. Kelly, Nicholas and Nancy Giampietro, Carol Honigberg, Cynthia Hunt and Philip Rudolph, Anne L. Kaplan, Anne and John Kern, 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.



CREATED IN COLLABORATION WITH
AND PERFORMED BY:

Leslie Cuyjet
Jessica Pretty
Jeremy Toussaint-Baptiste
Tara Aisha Willis

----- PRODUCTION

Direction and choreography	Will Rawls
Text	Claudia Rankine
Creative consultation	John Lucas
Production design	David Szlasa
Costume design	Eleanor O'Connell
Sound design	Jeremy Toussaint-Baptiste
Music	Jeremy Toussaint-Baptiste with Will Rawls
Producer	Live Arts Bard

----- ABOUT THE MCA WAREHOUSE

Many museums, including the MCA, cannot store all of their collection works on-site due to space limitations. The MCA Warehouse is designed in part to house and protect a portion of the more than 2,500 artworks in our permanent collection while they are not on rotating display at the museum.

FROM THE CURATOR

What Remains presents contemporary black life as constructed by the dominant values of our society—its weight and pain, but also its joy and light.

The work is an opportunity to reflect on how we exist with and perceive those around us and how we, in turn, might be perceived. What new information is gleaned with a simple shift in perspective? Curator and performer Tara Aisha Willis has described the repetitive deep lunging in *What Remains* as an embodied moment where such a shift might be possible: is the lunge the result of collapsing under a great burden, or is it the starting place from where the performer might take off in a sprint?

The performance asks how we might come to see ourselves, and each other, more fully as humans. How might we abandon assumptions that hinder the communication of our truths? How can we learn to see, and see differently?

Situated in a corner of the MCA Warehouse and framed by the backdrop of Chicago's gleaming skyline, Claudia Rankine, Will Rawls, and the cast of *What Remains* do not allow us to forget the pain or darkness of their world, but they do share their light—and for that, I am hopeful.

Laura Paige Kyber
Curatorial Assistant, Performance

The performance was curated by Associate Curator of Performance Tara Aisha Willis, who has invited Curatorial Assistant Laura Paige Kyber to write this note.

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What Remains was commissioned, developed, and premiered by Live Arts Bard, the commissioning and residency program of The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College. *What Remains* was developed with additional commissioning support from the French Institute Alliance Française's (FIAF) Crossing the Line Festival, the American Repertory Theater at Harvard University, Yale Repertory Theater, and Summer Stages Dance at ICA/Boston. Rehearsal space support was provided by Gibney Dance. *What Remains* was developed in part during a BRIClab Residency at BRIC (Brooklyn, New York).

ABOUT THE WORK

"In making *What Remains*, we are trying to imagine the state of being both living and already slated for death as a habitable place, a vast void or tundra where we use our voices and bodies to call ourselves into existence. It may be the 'already-dead' space, but it is ours, or at least a space where we are already accustomed to its particular discomforts. What does it mean for us to welcome an audience into our space?"

Tara Aisha Willis,
"What Remains: Reflections on Blackness,
Dance, and Curation," *Performa Magazine*,
October 2018

RELATED PROGRAMS

POST-SHOW TALK

Fri, Dec 7, immediately following the performance

The audience is invited for a conversation with Will Rawls and the performance cast moderated by MCA Manilow Senior Curator Naomi Beckwith.

MCA TALK: CLAUDIA RANKINE WITH WILL RAWLS

Tue, Dec 4

The MCA's Learning and Public Programs department hosted Claudia Rankine in a public symposium with Will Rawls on Tue, Dec 4. The MCA Talks series highlights cutting-edge thinking and contemporary art practices across disciplines.

GUEST TEACHING AT COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO

Tue, Nov 6

Through an ongoing partnership with Dr. John Green, Director of the Graduate Program in Theatre at Columbia College Chicago, Will Rawls participated as a guest lecturer in the Department of European Devised Theater.

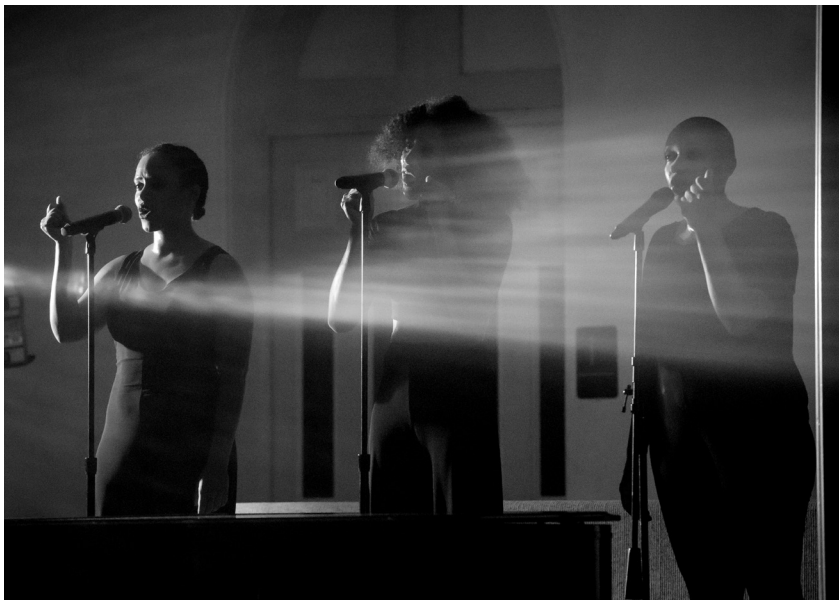
THREEWALLS IN-SESSION

What Remains is presented in association with Threewalls In-Session 2019, a series of discussions and performances with Chicago-based artists centered on Claudia Rankine's book-length poem *Citizen*, which captures the invisibility and hypervisibility of black Americans. During his November 2018 visit to Chicago, Will Rawls met with several local artists associated with the Threewalls Research and Development Lab Outside the Walls program.

ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCE

Fri, Dec 7  AD)))

ASL Interpretation by Veramarie Baldoza and Julikka LeChe
Audio Description by Victor Cole



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

CLAUDIA RANKINE (TEXT) is the author of five collections of poetry, including *Citizen: An American Lyric* and *Don't Let Me Be Lonely*, two plays including *The Provenance of Beauty: A South Bronx Travelogue*, and video collaborations, and is the editor of several anthologies, including *The Racial Imaginary: Writers on Race in the Life of the Mind*. Her recent play *The White Card* premiered in February 2018 (ArtsEmerson/American Repertory Theater). Among her many awards and honors, Rankine is the recipient of the Bobbitt National Prize for Poetry, the Poets & Writers Jackson Poetry Prize, and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the Lannan Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, United States Artists, and the National Endowment of the Arts. She is a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets and teaches at Yale University as the Frederick Iseman Professor of Poetry. In 2016, she cofounded The Racial Imaginary Institute.

WILL RAWLS (DIRECTION AND CHOREOGRAPHY) is a choreographer, writer, and lifelong performer based in New York. His practice combines dance with other media to investigate the poetics of blackness, ambiguity, and abstraction. Rawls has presented his work at The Chocolate Factory Theater, MoMA PS1, Performa 15, the Whitney Museum of American Art, ImPulsTanz, and the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art. He cocurated the Danspace Project Platform 2016: *Lost and Found* with Ishmael Houston-Jones. Focusing on the intergenerational impact of the AIDS epidemic on dancers, women, and people of color, he helped organize performances, reconstructions, discussions, and coedited the catalogue, *Lost and Found: Dance, New York, HIV/AIDS, Then and Now*. His other writings have been published by *Artforum*, *Triple Canopy*, *les presses du réel*, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Hammer Museum. He is recipient of a 2017–18 Guggenheim Fellowship, a 2017 Robert Rauschenberg Foundation Residency, the 2017 Bessie Award for Emerging Choreographer, and a

2015 Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grant. He has held teaching fellowships at Wesleyan University and Williams College and continues to lecture widely in university and festival contexts.

JOHN LUCAS (CREATIVE CONSULTATION) is a documentary photographer and filmmaker working in the humanist tradition. Lucas has directed and produced several cutting-edge multimedia projects, including a collaborative series of video essays with poet Claudia Rankine entitled *Situations*. In 2014 he completed his first feature-length documentary film, *The Cooler Bandits*, awarded “Best Documentary” at the 2014 Harlem International Film Festival. His work has been exhibited in museums and galleries including the Brooklyn Art Museum, the Cleveland Museum of Art, REDCAT (Los Angeles), OK Harris Works of Art Gallery (New York), the Smithsonian Institution (Washington, DC), the Pulitzer Arts Foundation (St. Louis), La Panadería (Mexico City), Aeroplastics Contemporary (Brussels), and Fieldgate Gallery (London).

DAVID SZLASA (PRODUCTION DESIGN) is a designer and producer working in performance, dance, video, and social practice. Collaborators include Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Joanna Haigood, Hope Mohr, Sara Shelton Mann, Joe Goode, Myra Melford, Boots Riley, Yuri Zhukov, Rennie Harris, and Bill Shannon in venues including the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Sydney Opera House, the Walker Arts Center, the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, JazzFest Berlin, and the Harare International Festival of the Arts, Zimbabwe. His own generative works have been called “so timely as to feel timeless” by the *SF Chronicle* and have received an Isadora Duncan Dance Award, Future Aesthetics Award, and a Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation Special Award in the Arts. *Range Studio*, a public art project, mobile workspace, and micro-residency center was deemed a Living Innovation Zone by the City of San Francisco in 2015 with major funding from the Center for Cultural

ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

Select MCA Stage 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

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mcchicago.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 MCA Stage ticket stub to receive FREE ADMISSION* and 10% 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.

Innovation and The Kenneth Rainin Foundation. Szlasa has taught design at Stanford University, Saint Mary's College of California, Bard College, and New York University.

JEREMY TOUSSAINT-BAPTISTE (SOUND DESIGN AND PERFORMER) is a New York-based artist, composer, and performer considering errant relations that thrive across subjectivities. Toussaint-Baptiste was a 2017 Artist-in-Residence at ISSUE Project Room and received a Bessie Award in Outstanding Music Composition/Sound Design in 2018. He has presented visual and performance work at Performance Space New York; The Brooklyn Museum; The Kitchen; ISSUE Project Room; The Studio Museum in Harlem; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; FringeArts, Philadelphia; Tanz im August at HAU3, Berlin; and Stoa Cultural Center, Helsinki, among others. Toussaint-Baptiste is a founding member of the performance collective Wildcat! and collaborates with performers and visual artists including Yanira Castro/a canary torsi, Tiona Nekkia McClodden, Jaamil Olawale Kosoko, and André M. Zachery.

LESLIE CUYJET (PERFORMER) has been performing and dancing in New York since 2004, working with artists from David Gordon and Meredith Monk to Niall Jones and Kim Brandt to Anohni and Solange, while holding a long-standing performing and touring history with Jane Comfort & Company and Cynthia Oliver Co. Dance Theatre. Her choreographic work has been presented in New York by La MaMa, Gibney Dance, Center for Performance Research, Movement Research, AUNTS, and Danspace Draftworks. Cuyjet is a 2017-18 Movement Research Artist-in-Residence.

JESSICA PRETTY (PERFORMER) is on a quest for pleasure that transcends time and the spaces in which she claims to reside. She makes dances, performs, collaborates with other artists (Larissa Velez-Jackson, Leslie Cuyjet, Dianne McIntyre, Cynthia Oliver, Jennifer Monson, and Niall Jones), and teaches dance art. Based in New York after receiving an MFA in

Dance and Queer Studies, she spends her free time curating methodologies for living past survival through being as unapologetically black as possible.

TARA AISHA WILLIS (PERFORMER) is Associate Curator of Performance at the MCA, having previously worked at Movement Research in New York. She is a PhD candidate in Performance Studies at NYU and has held editorial positions at *Women & Performance* and *TDR/The Drama Review* and coedited a special issue of *The Black Scholar* with Thomas F. DeFrantz. Other writings appear in *Movement Research*, *Performance Journal*, *Performa Magazine*, *Dancing Platform*, *Praying Grounds: Blackness, Churches, and Downtown Dance*, and *Performance Research*. Willis performed in works by Kim Brandt and Yanira Castro. She held a 2018 SET FREE residency at Links Hall and dances with Skeleton Architecture, a Bessie Award-winner for Outstanding Performer in 2017.

LIVE ARTS BARD (PRODUCER)
The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts is a world-class destination for new productions and rediscoveries of music, dance, theater, and performance. From its landmark Frank Gehry building, the Fisher Center provides a home for artists to create intellectually and socially engaged works for local and global communities. New multidisciplinary works are developed year-round through Live Arts Bard (LAB), the Fisher Center's residency and commissioning program. LAB provides time, space, and funds to professional artists to create new work. A program of Bard College, the Fisher Center illustrates Bard's commitment to the performing arts as a cultural and educational necessity. Building on a 150-year history as a competitive and innovative undergraduate institution, Bard enriches culture, public life, and democratic discourse.



Will Rawls, Claudia Rankine, and John Lucas, *What Remains*. Photo: © Ian Douglas, courtesy of Live Arts Bard.

DATE NIGHT



Marisol Escobar. Photo: Herman Hiller.

Join us for dinner or drinks before or after the theater at Marisol, named one of the "hottest restaurants in Chicago" by Zagat and one of *Vogue's* "Six Chicago Restaurants You Should Know About Now." Call 312-799-3599 to make reservations.

MARISOL

RESTAURANT AND BAR
AT THE MCA

205 E PEARSON ST
CHICAGO, IL 60611

SEASON CALENDAR

2018

Aug 18

Tamar-kali and Damon Locks
Demon Fruit Blues and
Where Future Unfolds

Aug 24-25,
Aug 31-Sep 1

Chicago Dancemakers Forum
SHareOUT!

Oct 3-4, 6-7

Dorothee Munyaneza/Kadidi
Unwanted

Nov 2-3

Ishmael Houston-Jones,
Ralph Lemon, and Bebe Miller
Relations

Dec 5-9

Claudia Rankine and
Will Rawls
What Remains

2019

Jan 24-27

Mariano Pensotti
*Arde brillante en los bosques
de la noche (Burning bright
in the forest of the night)*

Feb 7-10

Ingri Fiksdal and
Jonas Corell Petersen
STATE

Feb 11-13

Ingri Fiksdal
Diorama

Mar 21-24

Annie Dorsen
The Great Outdoors

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Program notes
compiled by
Laura Paige Kyber.

MCA
CHIC
AGO

SUPPORT FOR MCA STAGE

Lead support for the 2018–19 season of MCA Stage is provided by Elizabeth A. Liebman.

Generous support is provided by:

Lois and Steve Eisen
and The Eisen Family
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Susan Manning and
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Ellen Stone Belic

Additional support for
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Ms. Shawn M. Donnelley
and Dr. Christopher
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Anne L. Kaplan
Anne and John Kern
D. Elizabeth Price and
Lou Yecies

*Enact Chair
As of November 2018

MUSEUM OF
CONTEMPORARY ART
CHICAGO

ABOUT ENACT

MCA Stage is supported by Enact, a group of MCA donors dedicated to supporting the Museum's renowned Stage 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 to join, contact us at enact@mcachicago.org or 312-397-4044.

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

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Chicago's True Independent Boutique Hotel

ABOUT MCA STAGE

As an internationally renowned institution devoted to contemporary culture, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago presents the most thought-provoking visual art and performing arts of our time. MCA Stage is a vibrant series presenting theater, dance, and music by leading artists from the United States and around the world in the MCA's three-hundred seat Edlis Neeson Theater.

MCA Stage's groundbreaking performances are an integral part of the MCA's artist-activated, audience-engaged programming. Along with the museum's exhibitions and educational initiatives, they encourage a broad and diverse community to experience and discuss the work and ideas of living artists.

PARKING

Validate your ticket at the coat check for \$12 parking in the MCA garage (220 E Chicago Ave) and the Bernardin garage (747 North Wabash). 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

220 E CHICAGO AVE
CHICAGO, IL 60611
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