

MICA



Museum of
Contemporary Art
Chicago

Members' Magazine
Winter/Spring 2017

IDENTIFIABLY OURS

In 2015 we created a new visual identity for our institution that has since become a familiar presence throughout Chicago—appearing on banners, flagpoles, bus shelters, and buildings around the city. It is also featured in a range of gift items available for purchase in the MCA Store.



MCACHICAGOSTORE.ORG

WINTER/
SPRING 2017

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MCA
CHIC
AGO

Museum Hours

Mon	Closed
Tue	10 am–8 pm
Wed–Sun	10 am–5 pm

Admission is free for Illinois residents every Tuesday.

Information 312-280-2660
Box Office 312-397-4010
Member Services 312-397-4040

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

Cover image: Installation view of *Charles Atlas and Collaborators, MC²*, 2012. BMW Tate Live, The Tanks, Tate Modern, 2013. Nine-channel synchronized video work with sound; 18 minutes. Edition of 3 and 2 artist's proofs. © Charles Atlas and Tate, courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine.

Interior cover image: Installation view of *Pictures to be Read, Poetry to be Seen*, October 24–December 3, 1967. MCA Chicago. Work shown: Allan Kaprow, *Words*, 1962. Courtesy of Allan Kaprow Estate and Hauser & Wirth.



In honor of the MCA's fiftieth anniversary in October, we are dedicating each issue of 2017 to topics that explore the MCA's ongoing commitment to innovation and experimentation. The installation shown here was included in our first exhibition, *Pictures To Be Read/Poetry To Be Seen*. Dependent on visitor participation, the work reminds us that the museum has been fostering audience engagement for fifty years.

TODAY MORE
THAN EVER,
PEOPLE ARE
KEEN FOR
CIVIC
DIALOGUE IN
PUBLIC SPACES.

The physical anchor of the Vision is a renovation to be unveiled summer 2017 that will convert 12,000 square feet of our current building into free public space with extended opening hours. Our audiences, we have learned, want the museums they visit to serve as spaces of social and civic exchange.

Below: Visitors enjoy jazz on the Anne and John Kern Terrace.

Participants in a zine workshop at Prime Time.

Kids learning about art at Family Day.



WHERE NEW IDEAS
ARE SHOWN AND TESTED

We are thrilled to dedicate the first magazine of 2017, the MCA’s fiftieth anniversary year, to the concept of citizenship, as this notion is precisely what has been driving our staff and board for the past five years as part of an initiative we call the Vision. You will see the full manifestation of the Vision this summer and fall, coinciding with the MCA’s birthday on October 21, 2017. This issue of our magazine is dedicated to the ideas that propelled us to undertake initiatives that, taken together, make the MCA one of the most relevant museums of its kind. Among the initiatives is the unveiling of a renovation that will transform a large portion of our current square footage into a flowing and lively public space for congregation, learning, and enjoyment. To better serve the needs of our visitors, the redesign—reconfigured by Johnston Marklee—will put civic space at the core of our building with a state-of-the-art education wing, a street-level restaurant, and a refreshed theater lobby.

It is our hope that these offerings will demonstrate to our visitors that we continue to be “a place where new ideas are shown and tested,” a description that appears in the very first of our museum publications and continues to remain relevant. Since 1967, the MCA has consistently been a catalyst for many of the most important works of our time.

The MCA’s goal is the same as that of a great work of art: to create a heightened sense of awareness in individuals and foster independent thinking. In that way the museum becomes a place where consciousness is not only raised but shaped. Ultimately, as a director I am driven by this notion of civic engagement and responsibility—an ethical imperative to provide the public with experiences that continually reawaken us to a fresh consideration of the world and people around us.

The fiftieth anniversary marks the culmination of our Vision to be an “artist-activated, audience-engaged” museum in equal measure across all activities. Recent research by the National Endowment for the Arts shows that 70 percent of today’s museum audiences want a social experience. We believe that every space and service the MCA offers should create a meaningful social and cultural experience. Designed by world-class talents—including artist Chris Ofili, chef Jason Hammel, and designers Pedro y Juana—a new restaurant will connect to a social engagement space titled the Commons that will be activated with workshops, performances, talks, and artists’ projects. The renovation also situates classrooms and a flexible meeting space in the visible architectural heart of the museum, a physical manifestation of our central commitment to learning.

These investments are essential if we are to live up to our responsibility as a museum of contemporary art in this era. We at the MCA often speak about cultivating citizens as opposed to consumers and being a “third place” (a term

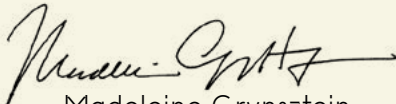
popularized by social scientist Ray Oldenburg) outside of work and home that anchors community life and facilitates discourse. I believe the “third place” is a fundamental definition of a museum as a space for people to congregate, observe, and interact. Today more than ever, people are keen for civic dialogue in public spaces. The MCA must be where the public sphere can be consistently activated through the lens of art and culture.

A deeply supportive board and a superb staff are essential to such ambitions. Our team’s exhibitions, acquisitions, and programs are making the MCA a more inclusive institution, as we continually and deliberately take worldviews other than our own into account. Their thought-provoking vision in turn creates an even greater need for the welcoming social spaces we are building where visitors can feel supported to connect, debate, and share experiences. The challenges to our society today are numerous and should be viewed as opportunities for us to model the future we want and the citizens we wish to be.

Our ongoing construction project will be described in detail in a special edition of the magazine later this year. In the meantime, we’re pleased to introduce some of the teams that are undertaking the monumental endeavor of reimaging our museum (on pages 4–7 of this issue). The project has truly been a team effort, and I am grateful to everyone involved.

Our current roster of exhibitions has been just as much of a team effort, and just as civically minded as well. On view this season, *Witness* raises questions about individual responsibility and personal agency, while *MCA DNA: Riot Grrrls* and *Eternal Youth* remind us that we must continue to strive for equal representation for women and queer artists within the halls of museums and beyond. And *Merce Cunningham: Common Time* invites us to think critically about ideas of creation and cooperation.

Our galleries will be even more accessible when construction is completed—in summer 2017—and better integrated into the landscape of our surrounding city. The President of the Chicago History Museum and the city’s Museums in the Park association, Gary Johnson, has penned a thoughtful editorial about our nation’s changing museum landscape on pages 8–9 of this magazine, suggesting that “communities want their stories to be heard and museums can give them a voice.” I firmly believe that the MCA has long sought to help community members come together to discuss the most important issues of our time, and that once our redesign is completed and we begin gearing up for our fiftieth anniversary, we will be able to do even more to help artists and audiences come together to shape the culture of our city.


Madeleine Grynsztejn
Pritzker Director

Below: Youth artists perform an original dance, “Sirens,” at 21Minus on June 11, 2016. Photo: Jonathan Zuluaga.

MCA Prime Time is one of our most popular after-hour events.

Opening of *Diana Thater: The Sympathetic Imagination*, October 28, 2016.



Work above: *Untitled Videowall (Butterflies)*, 2008. Six video monitors, one player, six 48 in. Fluorescent light fixtures, and Lee filters; overall dimensions variable. Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Museum Purchase, the Suzette Morton Davidson Art Acquisition Endowment Fund.

This issue addresses ideas of citizenship and collaboration. In the pages that follow, you will find articles that consider the role museums play on our national stage, civic engagement in our city, and much more.



BUILDING A BETTER MCA

If you’ve been to the MCA recently, you may have seen a suite of bright yellow signage reminiscent of caution tape. The likeness isn’t accidental. The museum is in the midst of an exciting redesign project that will culminate in summer 2017, transforming our building from treasure box to tool box.

To renovate the MCA, we have convened a creative team of artists, architects, designers, and others, who have reimagined our floor plan so that it better serves the needs of our audiences. Thanks to their efforts, the redesigned museum will feature three new amenities. First, a new street-level restaurant will delight the eye and the palate in an immersive, artist-designed space. Second, the Commons, where the former café was located, will introduce an art-filled gathering space—activated by a constellation of performances and programs—putting civic activities at the core of the MCA’s building. With views of the terrace, the Commons also provides a bridge between the atrium and the outdoors. Led by Dr. Robert Nathan Mayer Director of Education Heidi Reitmaier and her team, the Commons invites visitors to linger, converse, explore, and socialize. Directly above the Commons, new light-filled classrooms and a meeting room will offer views of the lake and opportunities for visitors of all ages to learn more about the art and culture of our time. In all, the project reconfigures 12,000 square feet within our building into public space for visitors.



Pritzker Director Madeleine Grynsztejn worked closely with Board Chair Anne L. Kaplan and Vision Campaign Chair King Harris on financing the redesign.

Above: Our trustees celebrated a “Day of Wreckoning” in October of 2016. Shown sitting, from left to right: Anne L. Kaplan, Lois Eisen, Marlene Breslow-Blitstein, and William J. Hokin. Shown standing, from left to right: Cynthia Hunt, Helen Zell, Jennifer Aubrey, Sara Albrecht, Dorie Sternberg, Dia S. Weil, Michael Canmann, Daryl Gerber Stokols, Stefan Edlis, Sara Szold, Marquis D. Miller, Larry Fields, Gerhard Bette, Julie Bernstein, Kristin Stevens, Madeleine Grynsztejn, Elissa Hamid Efroymson, Sally Meyers Kovler, Cari Sacks, Jay Owen Jr., Helyn D. Goldenberg, Naomi Mori Reese, Michael Alper, Carol Prins, Nicholas Giampietro, Laura Keidan Martin, Jack Guthman, and John C. Kern.

Not shown: Marilyn B. Alsdorf, Rob Bellick, Leslie Bluhm, Marc Brooks, John D. Cartland, Carol Cohen, Nancy Crown, Dimitris Daskalopoulos, Robert H. Defares, Donald J. Edwards, Marshall Front, James A. Gordon, Kenneth C. Griffin, Nickol Hackett, John B. Harris, King Harris, David Hartt, William Hood, Mary Ittelson, David Jacobson, Gretchen Jordan, Don Kaul, Liz Lefkofsky, Ron Levin, James H. Litinsky, Lewis Manilow, Mrs. Robert B. Mayer, Sylvia Neil, Judith Neisser, Kate Neisser, Martin Nesbitt, Michael O’Grady, Eve Rogers, Marjorie Susman, Donna A. Stone, and Allen M. Turner.

The redesign was set into motion seven years ago, when Pritzker Director Madeleine Grynsztejn and the Board of Trustees conceived of a new Vision for the MCA, one that would put our audiences at the center of our mission and transform the museum into an active space for artistic, civic, and cultural engagement. The new Vision establishes the MCA as a model twenty-first-century museum: one that foregrounds audience experiences and nurtures an informed and open-minded citizenry.

Behind the scenes, preparation for this ambitious reinvention has been a collaborative effort undertaken by trustees, staff, and various community leaders—a network of support that has been humbling in its expansiveness. Together we have convened rigorous brainstorming sessions with thought leaders both in and outside of the museum, flying in colleagues from across the country and abroad to think about how people gather and how the museum can support community, conversation, and citizenship.

From the outset, this reconceptualization of the museum’s mission received unanimous Board approval and was energized by three gifts of \$10 million each—the largest individual gifts ever received by the MCA. They came from Stefan Edlis and Gael Neeson, in whose honor we have named the Edlis Neeson Theater; Helen and Sam Zell, on behalf of the Zell Family Foundation; and the Kenneth C. Griffin Charitable Fund. Other board members contributed greatly to the success of the redesign as well, and we thank in particular the chairs and members of our Executive, Building, Education, Finance, and Investment Committees, all

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the members of our Building Committee, who have helped oversee our construction project from planning to execution:

Jay Owen, Chair
Leslie Bluhm
Marc Brooks
Michael Canmann
Keating Crown
Jack Guthman
King Harris
David Hartt
Anne L. Kaplan
Michael O’Grady
with special appearances by
Stefan Edlis!



Board Chair Anne L. Kaplan and the Building Committee, chaired by Jay Owen, spearheaded much of the project.



A construction team has convened weekly throughout the redesign project. The team is made up of members of several MCA departments, as well as architects, consultants, and other professionals from companies such as CBRE, Norcon, Harley Ellis Devereaux, and Johnston Marklee. Shown standing, from left to right: Ken Self, Patricia Fraser, Maggie Haggerty, Enrique Suarez, and Gina Crowley. Shown sitting, from left to right: Bernice Chu, Jeff Jozwiak, Michael Darling, Teresa Samala de Guzman, Michael Tobin, Alexandra Shinewald, Scott Whitebone, Keith Olsen, Gary Wang, and Vivek Singla. Construction team members not pictured: Lindsay Erickson, Nicholas Hofstede, Jason McNinch, and Heidi Reitmaier.

spurred on by Board Chair Anne L. Kaplan. We are deeply appreciative of their leadership abilities, their expertise, and their generous donations.

Overseeing the complex construction project and supervising dozens of contractors and in-house staff, from building representatives to visitor services employees, Chief Operating Officer Teresa Samala de Guzman and her colleagues have played a critical role in ensuring that the museum’s redesign will meet or exceed audience expectations. Chief Development Officer Lisa Key, with her hardworking development team, has also led a fundraising campaign to secure funds for our newest program initiatives and construction. Developing a new kind of programming that will offer day-to-night access and experiences in the museum’s newly configured public spaces has been a labor of love for many MCA staff members. Shaping fruitful collaborations across departments, our curatorial staff, led by James W. Alsdorf Chief Curator Michael Darling, is putting the shared purpose of the museum’s mission into practice.

Visitors can still attend the museum during our normal operating hours—exhibitions will be on view and programs continue throughout construction. And we look forward to sharing more about the redesign in the months to come.

You can learn more about the project and follow along on our progress on our website: mcachicago.org/redesign.

THE MUSEUM
IS IN THE
MIDST OF AN
EXCITING
REDESIGN
PROJECT
THAT WILL
CULMINATE
IN SUMMER
2017 . . .



Our curatorial team, which also encompasses education, performance, and library staff members, has been presenting rich programming throughout construction while also envisioning an exciting roster of live arts events to enliven our new space. Joining their efforts are colleagues in communications and design, publishing, and new media. Shown here, left to right, from top to bottom: Grace Deveney, Ann Meisinger, Ellen Chu, Cori Whitby, John Rich, Yolanda Cesta Cursach, Grace Needlman, Heidi Reitmaier, Erin Toale, Lydia Ross, Maria Jenkins, Mary Richardson, Joey Orr, José Esparza Chong Cuy, Naomi Beckwith, Sofia Retta, Nina Wexelblatt, Erin Matson, Michael Darling, Claire Ruud, Rosie May, Marissa Reyes, and Lynne Warren. Not pictured: Phillip Cabeen, Omar Kholeif, Megan Cline, Jeanine Pollard, and Richard Norwood.



Members of the MCA’s development and finance teams have ensured that we have the funds necessary to provide visitors with an unparalleled experience. Shown here, from left to right: Stephanie Morgan, Linsey Foster, Lisa Key, Rebecca Holbrook-Erhart, Nash Hott, Khushboo Rami, Gwendolyn Perry Davis, and Chief Financial Officer Peggy Papaioannou. To date, 63 generous gifts have been given to the Vision campaign.

COMMUNITIES WANT THEIR STORIES TO BE HEARD, AND MUSEUMS CAN GIVE THEM A VOICE.

LEADING BY EXAMPLE: MUSEUMS AS COMMUNITY CONNECTORS

Gary T. Johnson
*President of the Chicago History
Museum and Museums in the Park*

Gary T. Johnson is President of the Chicago History Museum and also serves as President of Museums in the Park, the association of eleven museums—the MCA among them—that partner with the Chicago Park District to promote culture and civic engagement throughout the city. We invited him to share his thoughts about Chicago’s museum landscape.

In our current political climate, few of us would disagree with author Roger Cohen that Americans are living in an “age of distrust.” Museums, however, earn high rankings from the public for trustworthiness. What can museums do to put that sense of trust to work for our society? The answer, I believe, is to find new ways for museums to connect with communities.



For decades our great Chicago museums have been offering experiences that we all can share, whether we live in the city or the suburbs. School buses come from far and wide for museum visits, and so do family groups. After the museum closes and the guests return home, they cherish the memories of their visits, and social media sites hosted by museums offer new ways for Chicagoans to connect around shared interests even when the museum’s doors are closed.

Some Chicagoans, however, may not be able to visit at all unless the museums first make connections in their neighborhoods. Chicago’s major museums are fortunate to have as their partner the Chicago Park District, with its network of field houses throughout the city. Since 1998, those field houses have hosted Park Voyagers, a free program whose goal is to encourage curiosity in children and equip them for full participation in the civic and cultural life of Chicago. The program includes neighborhood-based workshops for children and their families, as well as facilitated museum visits. It culminates with free passes to eleven museums.

Museums are also finding new ways to use their buildings to make community connections. They are, in this regard, less like locked

In 2004 the MCA joined Museums in the Park (MIP), a unique coalition of Chicago museums located on Chicago Park District land. The eleven world-class MIP institutions are visited by roughly eight million people each year. All of these museums add cultural value to the city and its citizens, and together they are the number one tourist attraction in Illinois. Contributing economically, educationally, and culturally to city and state residents, the MIP are key economic engines generating jobs and tax revenues.

Right: Ping Tom Memorial Park Fieldhouse.
Photo (cc) Kenneth Spencer.



jewel boxes and more like civic spaces in a nation where neutral spaces are in short supply. It is common today for museums to serve as polling places and host debate screenings, creating a shared experience for a civic event that is typically experienced privately.

Communities want their stories to be heard, and museums can give them a voice. With the Juneteenth celebration at the DuSable Museum of African American History, the Day of the Dead festivities at the National Museum of Mexican Art, and the Raices celebrations at the National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture, community museums honor their own traditions, and the wider public is invited to join in as well.



Museums are increasingly turning their grounds into public spaces, and placemaking also happens within museum buildings themselves.

Right: The DuSable Museum of African-American History and other members of the MIP often offer space to civic groups and nonprofits at a reduced rate, reinforcing the role of the museum as a much-needed civic space. Photo courtesy of the DuSable Museum of African American History.

Below: The Chicago History Museum is making some gallery space available to those who have not bought tickets, while also providing for less formal gatherings, whether they be school groups sitting on the floor or book groups sitting in circled chairs. Photo: Joseph Aaron Campbell.



Right: Adler Planetarium and the MCA both belong to Museums in the Park, a consortium of eleven institutions located throughout the city. Photo courtesy of Adler Planetarium.

Below: Teachers participating in a Teacher Institute Summer Residence at the MCA.



Museums should take inspiration from the words of Lonnie Bunch, a former director of the Chicago History Museum and the founding director of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History and Culture, at the latter institution’s dedication ceremony this last summer: “We remember not out of nostalgia but out of a country’s need—especially today—for contextualization and clarity that comes from understanding an unvarnished history. And maybe—just maybe—that understanding can help America find a bit of healing and reconciliation.” Bold art, brave science, and unvarnished history. These are the bedrocks for trust in museums, trust that can serve our larger society in many ways.



Above: Basim Magdy, *An Apology to a Love Story that Crashed into a Whale* (details), 2016. 64 chromogenic development prints from chemically altered slides on FujiFlex Crystal Archive metallic material; each: 18 9/10 x 28 3/10 in.; installation dimensions variable. Commissioned by Deutsche Bank Art. Courtesy of Gypsum Gallery, Cairo; hunt kastner, Prague; and artSümer, Istanbul.

MAPPING ART'S HISTORY: THE MCA'S GLOBAL INITIATIVE

Since 1967, the MCA's curators have helped shape the history of contemporary art. And now, as we approach our fiftieth anniversary, our curators are more dedicated than ever to influencing contemporary art history and scholarship. To support this work the museum is launching the Global Visions Fund, a new initiative that dramatically expands our programmatic reach and provides new ways for MCA supporters and donors to engage with artists from around the globe through interactions with artists, curators, and collectors working outside of the United States and Western Europe.

The Global Visions Fund will help the museum reshape the history of art to be more inclusive of artists addressing issues relevant to Africa, East Asia, South Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.



Right: Michael Rakowitz, *May the Arrogant Not Prevail*, 2010. Found Arabic packaging, newspapers, glue, cardboard, and wood; 19 feet 7 1/4 inches x 16 feet 2 1/4 inches x 3 feet 1 1/2 inches. Photo courtesy of the artist and Rhona Hoffman Gallery.

Right: Otobong Nkanga, *The Weight of Scars*, 2015. Textile (Viscose, Laine, Mohair, and cotton) and 10 drill plates; 99 3/5 x 240 9/10 in. Edition of 3, aside from 1 artist proof. © M HKA, Anvers. Courtesy of Galerie In Situ—Fabienne Leclerc, Paris.

Below: Shulamit Nazarian, founder and President of the Shulamit Nazarian Foundation.

Sultan Sooud Al Qassemi, founder of the Barjeel Art Foundation. Photo courtesy of Ahmed Naguib.



By expanding upon the artistic canon, we hope to help previously marginalized or under-recognized artists gain recognition. Led by the museum's senior curatorial team, the fund will enable exhibitions of works by artists such as Egyptian artist Basim Magdy, Iraqi-American artist Michael Rakowitz, and Nigerian artist Otobong Nkanga, among many others. These exhibitions will be accompanied by acquisitions to the museum's collection, scholarly publications, research excursions, and other programmatic activities.



Art history is constantly shifting to reflect the world in which we live and work. As the world becomes more global, we must too: more global in our understanding, our work, and our relationships. The Global Visions Fund will help us bring the best artists from across the globe to the United States and, specifically, to our city, one of the world's most vibrant cultural centers.

DONOR HIGHLIGHTS

Two key donors have stepped up as initial investors in the Global Visions Fund: the Barjeel Art Foundation and the Shulamit Nazarian Foundation. Both of these global foundations are represented by international collectors who have seen the importance of the MCA's focus on working globally and want to support its efforts.

Los Angeles-based Shulamit Nazarian, founder and president of the Shulamit Nazarian Foundation, was impressed with Manilow Senior Curator Omar Kholeif's dedication to presenting the art of the Middle East—specifically works by underrepresented artists. "We are truly excited to begin this partnership with the MCA, and I am excited by Omar's ideas about how to translate work from artists in remote parts of the world to Western audiences and bring their voices here," Nazarian explained. Similarly, Sultan Sooud Al Qassemi, founder of the Barjeel Art Foundation, seeks to establish partnerships with international arts and cultural institutions like the MCA to encourage public awareness of modern and contemporary Arab art. According to Al Qassemi, "We are building bridges of communication with the Western world and the Eastern world. And I think that art is a global language that can speak to us all."

We look forward to sharing more about the scope and aim of the Global Visions Fund in the year to come.

VOTING IS LEFT ENTIRELY TO EMERGE MEMBERS

EMERGE MEMBERS ACQUIRE
JULIA DAULT

Linsey Foster, *Director
of Individual Giving*

Are you interested in helping the museum bring a new work of art into our collection? Emerge is a support group of art patrons and collectors who work directly with MCA curators to acquire a work from an artist not yet represented in the museum’s permanent collection. Members meet five times a year to discuss and vote for one artwork they feel adds to the significance, breadth, and depth of the collection. The discussions are led by MCA curators, but the voting is left entirely to Emerge members.

The final meeting is a celebratory dinner. At the beginning of the evening, three finalists remain. By dessert, Emerge members have cast their votes and selected the museum’s latest acquisition.



Right: Artist Julia Dault and Sara Albrecht, Emerge Chair.

Julia Dault, *Untitled 38, 10:30 AM–2:00 PM, April 4, 2016, 2015*. Formica, Plexiglas, Everlast boxing wraps, and string; installed, approximately 91 × 49 × 36 in. © 2015 Julia Dault.

Below: Artist Julia Dault visits with Biff Ruttenberg.



Emerge’s most recent acquisition, *Untitled 38, 10:30 AM–2:00 PM, April 4, 2016* (2015), is a sculptural work by the Brooklyn-based artist Julia Dault. Dault uses prefabricated materials, like Formica and Plexiglas, to realize her large-scale sculptures—bending and otherwise manipulating them by hand to create an interplay between the media and their underlying supports. Dault explained in a 2014 interview with reporter Robert Everett-Green that she is interested in “evidencing the hand in the action. On closer inspection, you can start to discern where that labor took place.”

To celebrate the acquisition, the group invited Dault to a cocktail party in September, providing an opportunity for Emerge members to meet the artist and learn more about her practice firsthand.

This season, Emerge members will once again hear from artists, visit private collections, and attend art fairs—including Miami Basel and NADA—all while learning about the museum’s collection and participating in the acquisition process.

For more information about joining Emerge, please visit mcachicago.org/emerge.

CURRENT AND FUTURE EXHIBITIONS

CLOSING SOON

Diana Thater: The Sympathetic Imagination Through Jan 8

Since the 1990s Los Angeles-based artist Diana Thater has been a pioneer of film, video, and installation art. Her immersive, colorful works—which stretch across the walls, ceilings, and floors of the MCA’s fourth-floor galleries—often depict animals and encourage viewers to ponder their relationship with the natural world.

Witness Through Feb 12

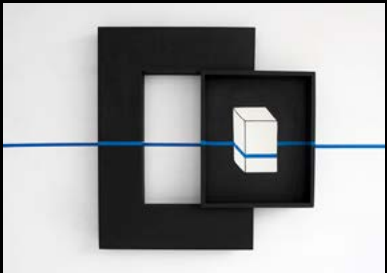
What differentiates art from other forms of media? The photographers featured in this exhibition, which showcases works made over a fifty-year period, blur the boundaries between fine art photography and documentary journalism, as well as between artist and subject.

Basim Magdy: The Stars Were Aligned for a Century of New Beginnings Through Mar 19

Basim Magdy creates paintings, collages, photographs, and films that depict uncomfortably cheery, colorful dystopian scenes. Many of his works address issues that are at once specific to his native Egypt and relevant to the world at large.



Basim Magdy: *The Stars Were Aligned for a Century of New Beginnings*



Above, Before & After



Riot Grrrls



Chicago Works: Chris Bradley

ON VIEW NOW

Above, Before & After Through Apr 16

Several mobiles by the iconic artist Alexander Calder—along with works by other artists featured in the MCA’s permanent collection—appear in this exhibition, which examines ideas of form and function.

Riot Grrrls Through Jun 18

Though the art world is more egalitarian than it once was, male artists still garner the highest prices for their work and are disproportionately represented in exhibitions. The eight female painters featured in the exhibition, which is named after the feminist hardcore punk movement that began in the 1990s, create large-scale abstract paintings that remind us to continue to fight for equality in the art world and beyond.

ON VIEW NEXT

Chicago Works: Chris Bradley Jan 17–Jul 2

Sculptor Chris Bradley is inspired by household objects. He transforms cardboard boxes, junk food, and other run-of-the-mill items into sculptures that are so expertly rendered they become nearly indistinguishable from their source materials. They invite us to consider the distinction between fine art and everyday objects.

Merce Cunningham: Common Time Feb 11–Apr 30

Merce Cunningham was highly regarded within the contemporary dance community for his virtuosic performances and his partnerships with other artists, who created costumes, lighting, and set designs for his company. This major retrospec-



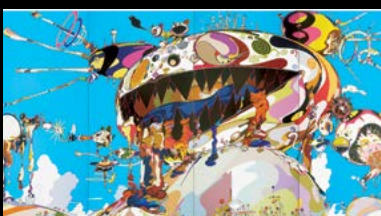
Merce Cunningham: Common Time



Eternal Youth



Tania Pérez Córdova: Smoke, nearby



Takashi Murakami: The Octopus Eats Its Own Leg

tive exhibition, organized by the Walker Art Center, appears simultaneously at the Walker and the MCA. Its MCA presentation is complemented by a roster of related programming.

Eternal Youth Mar 11–Jul 23

The artists featured in this exhibition examine how young people are often portrayed as simultaneously innocent and desirous. In this regard, they reveal the ways in which young bodies are so often transformed into sexualized, radical, and medicated objects.

Tania Pérez Córdova:

Smoke, nearby Apr 15–Aug 20

Mexican artist Tania Pérez Córdova inscribes traces of contemporary life into her sculptures through subtle gestures that offer insight into a complex infrastructure of social relationships. Seemingly static, her work connects the viewer to the active lives of others beyond the museum's walls.

Takashi Murakami: The Octopus Eats Its Own Leg Jun 6–Sep 24

Japanese artist Takashi Murakami is known around the world for his commercial ventures and anime aesthetic. Much of the work in this large-scale exhibition—which features fifty works spanning three decades—showcases his consummate skill as a painter, along with his interest in examining the dualities of high and low, traditional and contemporary, East and West.

Michael Rakowitz Sep 16–Mar 4, 2018

Chicago-based, Iraqi-American artist Michael Rakowitz creates illustrated objects, installations, and performances that encourage viewers to consider the way they relate to the world around them—both politically and personally.



Michael Rakowitz

Edward Krasinski, *Interwencja (Intervention)*, 1983. Acrylic on wood with blue adhesive tape; wooden panel: 39 ¾ x 37 ¾ x 5 ¾ in.; installed dimensions variable. Courtesy of Paulina Krasinska and Foksal Gallery Foundation, Warsaw.

Charline von Heyl, *Alastor*, 2008. Acrylic on linen; 82 ½ x 78 ½ x 1 ½ in. © 2008 Charline von Heyl.

Chris Bradley, *Ceiling Fan (Blue)*, 2015. Steel, wood, enamel, acrylic, pencil, and monofilament; 9 x 7 ¼ x 7 ¼ in. Courtesy of the artist and Shane Campbell Gallery.

Basim Magdy, *Every Decade Memory Poses as a Container Heavier than Its Carrier*, 2013. Spray paint and acrylic on paper; 27 ¾ x 39 ¾ in. Deutsche Bank Collection.

Merce Cunningham Dance Company performing *Canfield*, Brooklyn Academy of Music, 1970. Photo: James Klosty, courtesy of the photographer.

Jack Pierson, *Angel Youth*, 1990. Edition 2 of 25. Chromogenic development print; 30 x 20 in. © 1990 Jack Pierson.

Tania Pérez Córdova, *They say it's like a rock*, 2015. Glass from a window facing south and Nag Champa incense; 8 ½ x 11 ½ x 9 ½ in.

Takashi Murakami, *Tan Tan Bo Peking—aka Gero Tan*, 2002. Acrylic on canvas mounted on board; four panels, each 141 ¾ x 283 ½ x 2 ½ in. © 2002 Takashi Murakami/Kaikai Kiki co., Ltd. All rights reserved.

Michael Rakowitz, *Stela fragment; relief carving shows two men wearing skirt and head band and four animals (lions) (IM23477) (Recovered, Missing, Stolen series)*, 2016. From the series *The Invisible enemy should not exist*, 2007–Ongoing. Middle Eastern packaging, newspapers, and glue; 70 x 104 x 52 cm. Courtesy of Galerie Barbara W'ien, Berlin. Photo: Nick Ash.

Lynne Warren
Curator

Feb 11–
Apr 30

MERCE CUNNINGHAM

Common Time

Barbara Morgan, Merce Cunningham performing *Root of an Unfocus*, 1944. Collection UCLA Library Special Collections Barbara and Willard Morgan Archives. Courtesy of James Klosty.



Merce Cunningham is a towering figure in dance who has had a profound influence on contemporary music and performance, particularly through his lifelong association with composer John Cage. He also made lasting contributions to contemporary art, working with such figures as Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, and Bruce Nauman—who created costumes, sets, and backdrops for his dances. These influences are traced in our exhibition *Merce Cunningham: Common Time*, which is organized by the Walker Art Center and draws from that museum’s extensive Merce Cunningham Dance Company Collection, acquired by the Walker from the Company after the dancer/choreographer’s death in 2009 at the age of ninety.



Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg working, c. 1950. Collection Robert Rauschenberg Foundation.

Cunningham began his career with the legendary Martha Graham, an early twentieth-century dance pioneer (perhaps best known for her ballet *Appalachian Spring*) who explored the independence, individuality, and strong bonds of family and community that characterized the American spirit. Cunningham soon showed his own penchant for radical innovation, especially during a fertile period at Black Mountain College, where he worked with John Cage and founded the Merce Cunningham Dance Company in 1953. Black Mountain College was established in 1933 in western North Carolina by two émigrés, Josef and Anni Albers, who had escaped an increasingly hostile climate for the arts in their native Germany. The school attracted a mix of students from around the country, as well as teachers—many of whom were fleeing war-torn Europe. All this mixing was formative: dancers,

Not quite collaboration, and definitely not appropriation, Cunningham’s method demonstrated his faith in his fellow artists . . .

designers, painters, photographers, poets, musicians, and sculptors all contributed to this part of Cunningham’s career. Although ensconced in rural North Carolina, Black Mountain opened up the world to Cunningham and others who participated in its utopian experiment in education.

Cunningham closely observed animal and human movement and drew on these observations of the world around him as inspiration for costumes and decor. By the 1940s his unique choreography was well established, and in the 1960s his dance company began to tour internationally. It was Cunningham’s confident, singular dance and choreography—eschewing narrative and not directly linked to music—that perhaps allowed him to be so open to the creative efforts of others. Because his method did not use other art forms merely to support his dances, he could bind them together in a manner he described as “independent and interdependent, working in common time.” Not quite collaboration,



Ernesto Neto, decor for *Views on Stage*, 2004. Installation view, *Dance Works II: Merce Cunningham/Ernesto Neto*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 2012. Photo: Gene Pittman.

and definitely not appropriation, Cunningham’s method demonstrated his faith in his fellow artists, whether they were dancers and choreographers to whom he could easily relate, or experimental composers, fashion designers, videographers, or rock musicians—in his later years he worked



with Radiohead and Sonic Youth. In a 1981 interview conducted at the Walker Art Center, Cunningham shared insight into how he viewed the world: “One of the marvelous things about us as humans is that we can change our minds, we can shift, we can open ourselves to something which isn’t like what it [once] was.” Cunningham’s method of working “in common time” is a model for many of today’s interdisciplinary, genre-straddling artists. His journey from



Jacques Moatti, Thomas Caley, Banu Ogan, Jeannie Steele, and Lisa Boudreau performing *Scenario* at L’Opera National de Paris Garnier, January 1998. Courtesy of Jacques Moatti.

the early 1940s to works realized in his later years is explored in *Merce Cunningham: Common Time* through original decors, backdrops, costumes, and music for such influential dances as *Antic Meet* (1958), with props and decor by Robert Rauschenberg; *Rainforest* (1968), featuring helium-filled silver balloons made by Andy Warhol; and *Scenario* (1997), for which Rei Kawakubo created costumes that featured irregular bulges. These materials are augmented with works—many drawn from the MCA Collection—by his visual arts compatriots Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Isamu Noguchi, Nam June Paik, and many others.

Above: Merce Cunningham and Carolyn Brown performing *Summerspace*, 1958. Sogetsu Art Center, 1964, courtesy of Sogetsu Foundation. Previous spread: Merce Cunningham with dancers at Westbeth, 1971. Photo: James Klosty, courtesy of James Klosty.

Merce Cunningham: Common Time is organized by the Walker Art Center with major support from the Barnett and Annalee Newmann Foundation and the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Generous support is also provided by Agnes Gund and the Roy Lichtenstein Foundation. *Merce Cunningham: Common Time* is curated by Fionn Meade and Philip Bither with Joan Rothfuss and Mary Coyne. Lynne Warren is the MCA Coordinating Curator.

Lead support for the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago’s presentation of *Merce Cunningham: Common Time* is provided by Cari and Michael Sacks. Major support is provided by Abby McCormick O’Neil and D. Carroll Joynes; anonymous; and the Nancy Lauter McDougal and Alfred L. McDougal Exhibition Fund. Additional generous support is provided by Irving W. Harris Foundation; the NIB Foundation, and the Robert Lehman Foundation.

RELATED
PROGRAMMING

MERCE
CUNNINGHAM
Common Time



SAT-SUN, FEB 11-12, 1:30-2 PM and 4-4:30 PM
MCA Cunningham Event



SAT, FEB 18, 7:30 PM
SUN, FEB 19, 3 PM and 7:30 PM
CCN—Ballet de Lorraine
Works by Merce Cunningham and Others



SAT, FEB 25, 7:30 PM
SUN, FEB 26, 3 PM
Music for Merce



SAT, MAR 11, 6 PM
Spektral Quartet
Morton Feldman: String Quartet No. 2



THU-SAT, MAR 23-25, 7:30 PM
Charles Atlas/Rashaun Mitchell/Silas Riener
Tesseract

Many programs will be presented in conjunction with *Merce Cunningham: Common Time*. You can purchase tickets at the MCA Box Office, over the phone (at 312-397-4010), or online at experience.mcachicago.org.

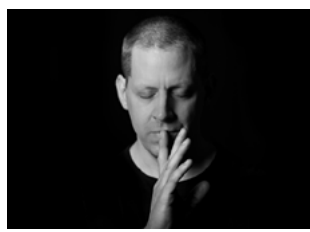
The MCA is thrilled to have the Harris Theater, Hubbard Street Dance, and the Joffrey Ballet as our Community Partners.



SUN, APR 1
Hourly from NOON-4 PM
BOOMERANG



SUN, APR 15
Hourly from NOON-4 PM
Neighborhood Dances



SUN, APR 23, 3 PM
Matthew Duvall + Guests
Whisper(s)



SUN, APR 29
Hourly from NOON-4 PM
CabinFever

Event 1 at Dia: Beacon, in the Richard Serra gallery, Pictured: Daniel Squire, Holley Farner, Jennifer Goggans, Marcie Munnerlyn, and Silas Riener. Photo: Anna Finke. Courtesy of the Merce Cunningham Trust. All rights reserved. CCN—Ballet de Lorraine, *SOUND DANCE*. Photo: Laurent Philippe. Zeena Parkins. Photo: Heike Iiss. Spektral Quartet. Photo: Elliot Mandel. Charles Atlas/Rashaun Mitchell/Silas Riener, *Tesseract*, 2015. Pictured: Rashaun Mitchell/Silas Riener. Photo courtesy of EMPAC. BOOMERANG. Photo: Erin Wilson. Neighborhood Dances Workshop, *Defibrillator Gallery*, 2015. Photo: Michael Courier. Matthew Duvall, *Whisper(s)*. Photo: Elliot Mandel. CabinFever, *Heart Content*, 2013. Dancers Emily Sferra, Dylan Ward, and Sarah Lustbader at Stimson Green House, Seattle. Photo: Joy Jacobs.

Omar Kholeif
Manilow Senior
Curator

Mar 11–
Jul 23

IN
SEARCH
OF
ETERNAL
YOUTH

Melanie Schiff *Spit Rainbow*, 2006. Chromogenic development print, 29 x 39 1/2 in. Collection Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, restricted gift of Kay and Malcolm Kamin and Kay Torshan in honor of the MCA's 40th anniversary, 2007.34. © 2006 Melanie Schiff.

Before I joined the MCA, I was invited to look at the collection and consider its history, to ask critical questions and imagine how it might evolve. While burrowing through the nearly three thousand objects in the museum's inventory, I noted that the museum owned a complete set of Larry Clark's photographic series *Kids* from the mid 1990s, a group of photographs that emerged from Clarke's film of the same name.



Larry Clark, *Untitled (KIDS)*, 1995. Chromogenic development print; 16 x 20 in. © Larry Clark, courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York.

Kids was a movie that captured the image culture that my generation grew up with, or rather, shall we say, wrestled with. The film, which takes place over the course of a day in New York City, documents a group of teenagers—their bodies medicalized and hypersexualized. This was a youthful generation that was attempting to reconstitute its image in response to the ongoing horror of the AIDS crisis.

I used this material as a starting point to organize an exhibition called *Eternal Youth*, which considers how artists, especially those working since the late 1980s, have explored images of youth and considered how they should be presented or studied. Are these images to be objectified, devoured, or feared?

In the 1990s Wolfgang Tillmans, another artist featured in the exhibition, exploded what it means to represent male queer sexuality by presenting work in and outside of the art world—winning major awards such as the Turner Prize as well as

YOUNG PEOPLE
REPRESENT A CROSS-
ROADS, A TURNING
POINT, A MOMENT
WHEN ALL CAN BE
WON OR LOST. . .

appearing within fashion spreads. This prompted many to question whether his work should be shown in museums. In the same decade, Mark Wahlberg appeared in Calvin Klein underwear ads, evoking a completely different idea of what the youthful body could be. Contrary to the AIDS narrative, it was strong and muscular: a perfect Adonis. It is from these tensions of image representation that this exhibition emerges.



Jack Pierson, *Ocean Drive*, 1985. Chromogenic development print; 30 x 20 in. Edition 2 of 25.

Right: Wolfgang Tillmans, *The Cock (Kiss)*, 2002. Chromogenic development print; 24 x 20 1/4 in. Courtesy of David Zwirner, New York; Galerie Buchholz, Cologne/Berlin; and Maureen Paley, London.



ARE THESE IMAGES TO
BE OBJECTIFIED,
DEVoured, OR FEARED?

The exhibition traces a journey from the 1980s, with a focus on the 1990s to the present. One of the most recent works in the exhibition, *Little Sister* (2015), by Qatari-American artist Sophia Al-Maria, depicts a young girl singing in her room for a YouTube audience (another kind of youthful embodiment!). It appears alongside evocations of ADHD youth in the epic film *The Re'search (Re'Search Wait'S)* by Ryan Trecartin and Lizzie Fitch.

Collectively, these pieces suggest that the concept of youth is perhaps one of the most powerful imaginings in contemporary culture. Young people represent a cross-roads, a turning point, a moment when all can be won or lost; they evoke fear and anxiety as much as lust. Youth is fodder for branding, for new technology; our concept of youth as we understand it is our key to the future.



Left: Larry Clark, *Untitled (KIDS)*, 1995. Chromogenic development print; 16 x 20 in. © Larry Clark, courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York.



Below: Daniela Rossell, *Untitled (Ricas y famosas) (rooftop)*, 1999. Chromogenic development print; 50 x 60 in.



NEW TO THE MCA COLLECTION

Omar Kholeif
Manilow Senior
Curator

Once associated with Germany's New Figuration movement, Marwan fell into obscurity in the following years and became largely unknown until recent attention propelled him to the front line of the international world of art. In the last years of his life, he had become one of the most renowned Middle Eastern artists of his generation. And shortly before his death in October 2016, the MCA became the first museum in the United States to acquire his work. We are saddened by Marwan's death but honored to be able to share one of the artist's signature works, his 1967 painting *Untitled (Das Knie)*. The painting depicts a man standing against a simple, earthen-hued background. The subject of the work is dressed simply and stares directly at us, as



Marwan, *Untitled (Das Knie)*, 1967. Oil on canvas; 65 3/4 x 46 3/4 in.

The German-based, Syrian-born artist Marwan Kassab Bachi (1934–2016), known professionally as Marwan, was one of most celebrated painters of our time.

Born in Syria in 1934, he moved to Germany in 1957 to study painting at the Academy of Fine Arts Berlin, and continued to live and work there for the duration of his career. For more than fifty years, he painted figures that were both expressive and enigmatic.



A portrait of Marwan taken in his studio. © Sfeir-Semler Gallery Hamburg/Beirut.

if challenging our gaze. The work, which Marwan painted in his post-surrealist style, features a few interesting details: an androgynous, fleshy appendage emerges from the figure's waist; one of his hands is thrust deep within his pocket, as if to suggest that he might be pleasuring himself; and indentations along his shoulder and chest seem to indicate the presence of bra lines. These details prompt us to look at the figure in a new light and wonder whether Marwan was slyly critiquing gender roles. When he made the painting in 1967, Syrian women did not enjoy as many political or personal freedoms as men, and notions of gender were often called into question. The work is one of several recent acquisitions the MCA has made by international artists not yet represented in the museum's collection. We hope that this will be a central piece in our collection that we as curators can use to slowly shift the discourse around contemporary art and its future.

REFLECTIONS ON PETER BROOK'S MAHABHARATA AND BATTLEFIELD

Meghan Coppoletti
Publishing
Administrative Assistant

This spring, the MCA welcomes the Chicago premiere of *Battlefield*, a production by Peter Brook and his longtime collaborator and codirector Marie Hélène Estienne, to the MCA Stage.

Within Western theater, Brook is considered one of the most influential theorists and experimental practitioners and is widely celebrated for his nine-hour 1985 production *The Mahabharata*, which he based on the epic Hindu poem of the same name. The poem is not only significant in terms of Brook's career but also within the context of world literature, particularly, within Indian and Hindu traditions. *The Mahabharata*, which dates to the fifth or sixth century BCE, is the longest poem ever recorded. The central thread of the poem follows a rivalry and war between the Pandavas and the Kauravas, members of the same extended family.

Brook, now ninety-one, returns to the same text to realize *Battlefield*. In the thirty years since he premiered *The Mahabharata*, Brook has further refined his minimalist aesthetic; his economy of space has translated into an even greater distillation of content and form. Unsurprisingly, *Battlefield* doesn't waste time or resources. In a mere seventy minutes and on a completely bare stage, Brook, Estienne, and their cast of five—four actors and one musician—manage to tackle polarizing ideologies, armed conflict, and the human condition. They utilize the war-torn backdrop of the revered Sanskrit epic to underscore the universal relevance and timelessness of the ancient poem and make a conspicuous parallel to today's national and international climates. Whereas the *Mahabharata* originally staged the central theme of the poem, *Battlefield*, in contrast,

captures the aftermath of the war.

Brook's production of *The Mahabharata* developed out of a longstanding interest in non-Western narrative technique. Beginning in the early 1970s, Brook's work took on an ethnographic dimension; every year he traveled with his international company—the Centre International de Recherche Théâtrale—to countries outside of Europe to observe the relationship between actor and audience. Brook was immediately drawn to *The Mahabharata* and recognized its pure storytelling potential as a way to effectively neutralize artificially drawn boundaries between East and West.

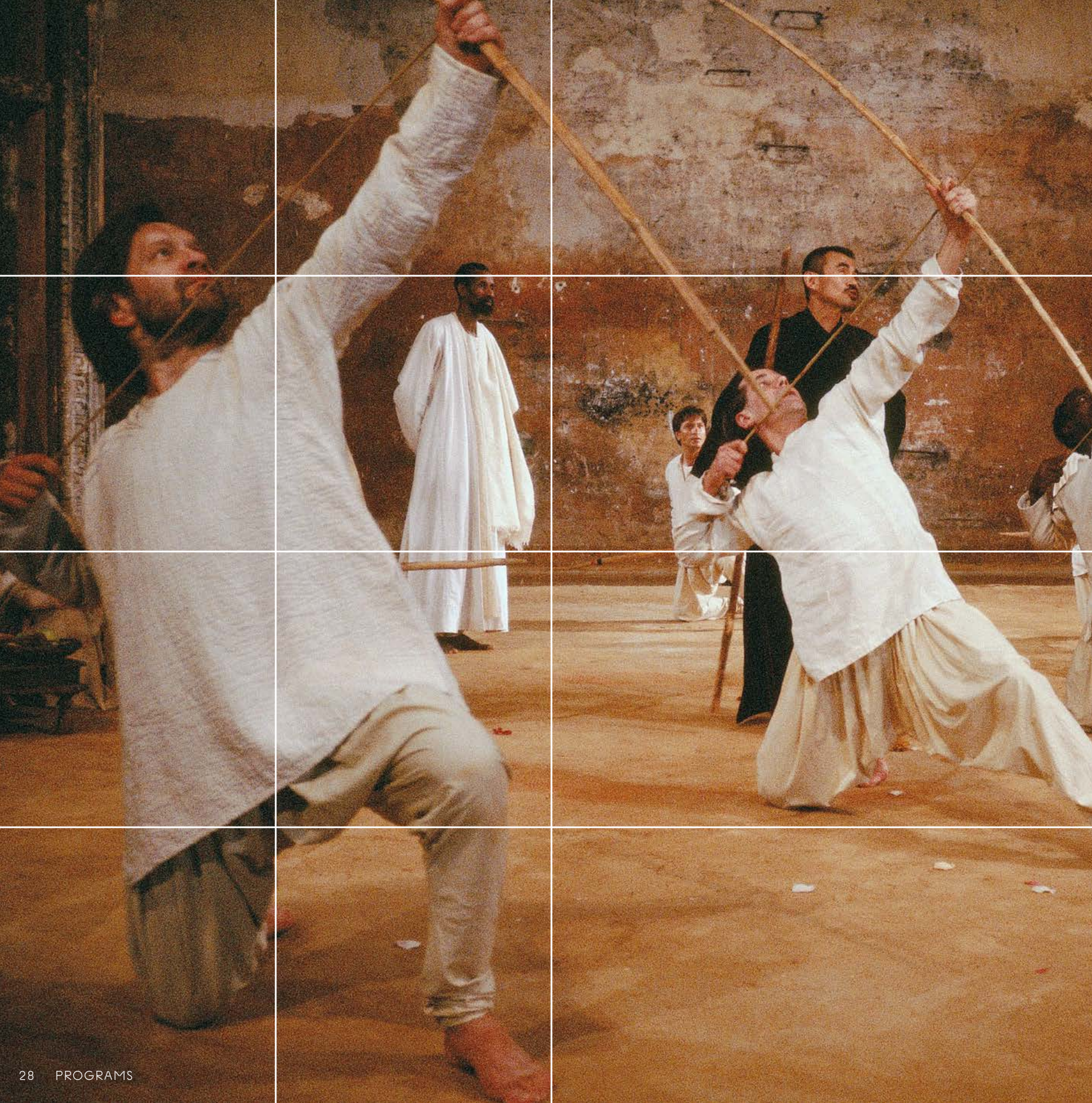
... THERE ARE
NO CONCRETE
ANSWERS
ECHOED FROM
THE FIELD OR
STAGE.

Over the course of ten years of research and subsequent travel to India, Brook, in collaboration with writer Jean Claude Carrière, devised the first-known dramatic adaption of *The Mahabharata* within the Western tradition: a nine-hour, three-act play with a cast of sixteen international collaborators that was scored by a live multi-instrumental ensemble. The work premiered in 1985, in Avignon, France, and was regarded by many critics as his magnum opus and a pioneering work of the twentieth century. Others, concerned by the archetypal ethnic renderings of Indian people and their culture, criticized Brook's work as an

APR 5–
APR 8

PETER BROOK AND
MARIE-HÉLÈNE
ESTIENNE

BATTLEFIELD



act of neocolonialist cultural appropriation. According to Brook, he freely borrowed what he referred to as “Indian flavor”—traditional dress, objects, and music—as a way to evoke India and pay homage to the text’s origins. He disliked the idea of transposing and assimilating the text directly into a Western context, since he felt that a recontextualization wouldn’t speak to the story’s universal truths: he wanted the audience to have to confront the somewhat cosmic arbitrariness of where they came from and how they identified geographically. Independent of either critical assessment, Brook’s work challenged the role of storytelling, asking audiences and critics alike to consider whether the authenticity of the storyteller is necessary to successful fiction.

Brook has always stood behind the ideas of theatrical relativity and ephemerality, and he takes on this timeless text again, three decades later, not as a direct revival but as a contemporary interpretation of the text and the world around him. In this sense, he has been preparing for *Battlefield* his entire career, and the unforgettable work carries the weight of his wisdom as both an elder in the theater and the world. Brook’s enduring interest in the poem speaks to the ethos of his work as a universal storyteller whose experimental productions are rooted in a larger search for meaning. Considered together, *The Mahabharata* and *Battlefield* parallel our global reality: a cyclical system of conflict and destruction, but always within it the potential for change. Even as Brook posits universal questions, he is aware that none of the myriad responses could be considered objective. As such, there are no concrete answers echoed from the field or stage. There is only silence.

HE HAS BEEN
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BATTLEFIELD
HIS ENTIRE
CAREER, AND
THE UNFORGET-
TABLE WORK
CARRIES THE
WEIGHT OF
HIS WISDOM AS
BOTH AN
ELDER IN THE
THEATER AND
THE WORLD

Previous: *Battlefield*, Pictured: Carole Karemera, Sean O’Callaghan, Jared McNeill, and Ery Nzaramba. Photo: Caroline Moreau.

Opposite: *Drona’s archery lesson* (from “The game of dice,” first part of the *Mahabharata*), Bouffes du Nord, Paris, 1985. © Gilles Abegg.

Lead support for the 2016–17 season of MCA Stage is provided by Elizabeth A. Liebman. Generous support for MCA Dance is provided by David Herro and Jay Franke. Additional generous support is provided by Caryn and King Harris; Shawn M. Donnelley and Christopher M. Kelly; 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; Mary E. Ittelson; Sharon and Lee Oberlander; Maya Polsky; Carol Prins and John Hart/The Jessica Fund; Ellen Stone Belic; Amphion Foundation, Inc.; Leigh and Henry Bienen; Melynda Lopin; and Elizabeth Price and Lou Yecies.

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Tue, Jan 17, 6 pm
MCA Talk: Chris Bradley
Join Andrew W. Mellon Post-doctoral Fellow Joey Orr for remarks on the occasion of the opening of *Chicago Works*: *Chris Bradley* in the Dr. Paul and Dorie Sternberg Family Gallery and the Ed and Jackie Rabin Gallery.

Thu–Sat, Jan 19–21, 7:30 pm;
Sun, Jan 22, 3 pm 
Silencio Blanco
Chiflón, El Silencio del Carbón
A shaft collapses. A young miner travels to Chiflón de Diablo, known as one of the most dangerous mines in Chile. The violence of the global economy is evoked as this renowned Chilean company performs in silence using white marionettes for their stunning North American debut.

Tue, Jan 24, 6 pm
MCA Talk: Homeroom, an Inauguration Special
Homeroom presents a “School Night” presidential inauguration special.

Wed, Feb 8, 6 pm
MCA Live: A. L. Steiner
Multimedia artist A. L. Steiner delivers a performative lecture that considers the politics of this historical moment. Steiner’s work incorporates queer and ecofeminist elements. She is a member of Chicks on Speeds and is also cofounder of Working



Chicago Works: Chris Bradley



Silencio Blanco



Architecture Is Art . . . Is Architecture Art?



Stephin Merritt

Artists and the Greater Economy (W.A.G.E.).

Tue, Feb 14, 6 pm
MCA Live: Mocrep
Opening the 2017 Frequency Festival, Chicago-based music and performance ensemble Mocrep presents music and movements that explore identity, chaos, and translation.

Mon, Feb 27, 6 pm 
MCA Talk: Architecture is Art . . . Is Architecture Art?
Mark Dion and David Rockwell
The lines between art and architecture are further blurred when artist Mark Dion meets up with architect and designer David Rockwell (Rockwell Group). They discuss their work with moderator Reed Kroloff, a principal architect at jones | kroloff.

Tue, Mar 21, 6 pm
MCA Studio: Future Geology
Stella Brown meditates on the state of construction at the MCA through an excavation of the building, imagining the past, present, and future of the site.

Wed, Mar 29, 6 pm 
MCA Talk: Dialogue 8, Shirin Neshat
Artist Shirin Neshat leads our eighth Dialogue on museums, diversity, and inclusion.

Tue, Apr 18, 8 pm 
MCA Talk: Stephin Merritt
Magnetic Fields founder Stephin Merritt discusses the band’s new album *50 Song Memoir*. This program is copresented with Pitchfork as part of In Sight Out, a conversation series exploring new perspectives in music, art, and culture.

Chris Bradley, *Gate (Banana Peels)* with *Night Stand*, 2016. Steel, oak, patina, and paint; 68 x 22 x 15 in. Courtesy of the artist and Roberto Paradise. Photo: Robert Chase Heishman and Emily Kay Henson.

Silencio Blanco, *El Chiflón*. Photo: Lorenzo Mella.

Mark Dion, *Den*, 2012. Permanent installation for the Norway tourist Routes Program, Norway. Photo: courtesy of Tanya Bonakdar Gallery.

Stephin Merritt. Photo: Marcelo Krasilcic.



MCA SEEN

VERNISSAGE: OPENING NIGHT
PREVIEW OF EXPO CHICAGO

INSTAMEET

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PLANS TO MCA PATRONS

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LINDA MEYER AT VERNISSAGE

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CHEF/OWNER JASON HAMMEL OF LULA CAFE
AT VERNISSAGE PATRON RECEPTION

DJ AUDIO JACK AT PRIME TIME

INSTAMEET

A DINNER CELEBRATING THE OPENING OF
DIANA THATER: THE SYMPATHETIC IMAGINATION

ANNE KAPLAN, MARQUIS MILLER, AND
ELLEN-BLAIR CHUBE AT DIANA THATER: THE
SYMPATHETIC IMAGINATION OPENING PREVIEW

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MCA CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, all events are free for MCA Members.

Illinois residents receive free general admission every Tuesday.

🎫 Ticket purchase required

For a complete listing of events, ticket information, and access information for people with disabilities, visit mcachicago.org, or call 312-397-4010. Events are subject to change.

STROLLER TOURS
First Wednesday of the month, 11:30 am. Experience a stimulating hour of art with your little one and keep up-to-date with contemporary art.

SEGUNDA SEMANA
Second Tuesday of the month, 6 pm. Participe en una visita guiada bilingüe el segundo martes de cada mes para recorrer las exposiciones en español.

SPEKTRAL QUARTET REHEARSALS
Spektral Quartet rehearses excerpts from *Morton Feldman: String Quartet No. 2* in the museum's fourth-floor atrium in advance of the quartet's March 11 performance. Rehearsals take place at 1 pm on Tuesday, February 28; Saturday, March 4; and Tuesday, March 7.

JANUARY

Tue, Jan 10, 6 pm
MCA Live: 2017, A Reflection
Join the Natural Information Society for musical reflection in the MCA's atrium and a discussion of past, present, and future political realities with historian Paul Durica.

Fri, Jan 13, 6 pm 🎫
MCA Talk: Genesis Breyer P-Orridge
The English musician, poet, and artist discusses h/her career. This program is copresented with Pitchfork as part of In Sight Out, a conversation series exploring new perspectives in music, art, and culture.

Tue, Jan 17, 6 pm
MCA Talk: Chris Bradley
Join Andrew W. Mellon Post-doctoral Fellow Joey Orr for remarks on the occasion of the opening of *Chicago Works: Chris Bradley* in the Dr. Paul and Dorie Sternberg Family Gallery and the Ed and Jackie Rabin Gallery.

Tue, Jan 17, 6 pm
MCA Screen: *Lota, the Devil's Blast*
Silencio Blanco presents video from their residency in Lota, Chile—known for civil unrest and community resistance—and the inspiration for the puppet work *Chiflón, El Silencio del Carbón*.

Thu–Sat, Jan 19–21, 7:30 pm; Sun, Jan 22, 3 pm 🎫
Silencio Blanco
Chiflón, El Silencio del Carbón
A shaft collapses. A young miner travels to Chiflón de Diablo, known as one of the most dangerous mines in Chile. The violence of the global economy is evoked as this renowned Chilean company performs in silence using white marionettes for their stunning North American debut.

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MCA CALENDAR

Sun, Jan 22, 10 am 🎫
The Chicago International Puppet Theater Festival
The Ellen Van Volkenburg Puppetry Symposium
This daylong symposium brings together artists with scholars from many different disciplines to consider puppetry, biology, cinema, poetry, and philosophy.

Tue, Jan 24, 6 pm
MCA Talk: Homeroom, an Inauguration Special
Homeroom presents a “School Night” presidential inauguration special.

Sat, Jan 28, 2–4 pm
The Living Room
The MCA's Teen Creative Agency (TCA) hosts this drop-in gathering for intimate conversations and activities.

Tue, Jan 31, 6 pm
MCA Screen: Open TV
Open TV screens new pilots, interviews the shows' creators, and takes questions as DJ Hijo Pródijo spins original beats.

FEBRUARY

Tue, Feb 7, noon
MCA Talk: Omar Kholeif on Basim Magdy
Manilow Senior Curator Omar Kholeif leads a tour of *Basim Magdy: The Stars Were Aligned for a Century of New Beginnings* in the Bergman Family Gallery.

Tue, Feb 7, 6 pm
MCA Studio: Sam Rolfes
Artist Sam Rolfes presents an interactive video experience in the MCA's atrium.

Wed, Feb 8, 6 pm
MCA Live: A. L. Steiner
Multimedia artist A. L. Steiner delivers a performative lecture. Steiner is a member of Chicks

on Speed and is also cofounder of Working Artists and the Greater Economy (W.A.G.E.).

Sat–Sun, Feb 11–12, 1:30 and 4 pm
MCA Cunningham Event
Former dancers of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company Dylan Crossman, Silas Riener, Jamie Scott, and Melissa Toogood perform adjacent to the fourth-floor exhibition *Merce Cunningham: Common Time*.

Tue, Feb 14, 6 pm
MCA Live: Mocrep
Opening the 2017 Frequency Festival, Chicago-based music and performance ensemble Mocrep presents music and movements that explore identity, chaos, and translation.

Sat–Sun, Feb 18–19, 7:30 pm; Sun, Feb 19, 3 pm 🎫
CCN—Ballet de Lorraine
Works by Merce Cunningham and Others
The contemporary ballet company makes its Chicago debut with *Sounddance* and *Fabrications*, two signature works by Cunningham, along with *Untitled Partner #3*, by CCN—Ballet de Lorraine artistic directors Petter Jacobsson and Thomas Caley.

Tue, Feb 21, 6 pm
MCA Talk: More on Merce
Listen to a panel discussion of some of the lesser-known aspects of Merce Cunningham's collaborative and multidisciplinary career.

Sat, Feb 25, 2–4 pm
The Living Room
The MCA's Teen Creative Agency (TCA) hosts this drop-in gathering for intimate conversations and activities.

Sat, Feb 25, 7:30 pm; Sun, Feb 26, 3 pm 🎫
Music for Merce

MCACHICAGO.ORG

MCA CALENDAR

This two-day festival features nine musical luminaries who build electronics, live instruments, and vocals as a mirror to their correspondence with Merce Cunningham.

Mon, Feb 27, 6 pm 
MCA Talk: Architecture is Art . . . Is Architecture Art? Mark Dion and David Rockwell

The lines between art and architecture are further blurred when artist Mark Dion meets up with architect and designer David Rockwell (Rockwell Group). They discuss their work with moderator Reed Kroloff, a principal architect at Jones | Kroloff.

Tue, Feb 28, 6 pm
MCA Talk: Bitch, be realistic. Join artist Kamilah Rashied for a conversation with an all-male panel that explores the experiences of the women in their own lives.

MARCH

Tue, Mar 7, noon
MCA Talk: Lynne Warren on Merce Cunningham: Common Time
Curator Lynne Warren leads a tour of Merce Cunningham: Common Time in the Griffin Galleries of Contemporary Art.

Tue, Mar 7, 6 pm
MCA Live: The Work of Light
The Work of Light is a new composition and aural display for guitars, electronics, and broken laptops.

Sat, Mar 11, 6 pm 
Spektral Quartet
Morton Feldman: String Quartet No. 2
Spektral Quartet performs an exploration of the kindred affect of Morton Feldman’s music, Merce Cunningham’s dance, and the poetics of Frank O’Hara.

Tue, Mar 14, 6 pm
MCA Talk: Abstract Experience
Explore the possibility of public and private meanings of abstract painting in this discussion between assistant professor of art history at Indiana University Bloomington Faye Gleisser and artist Molly Zuckerman-Hartung.

Tue, Mar 21, 6 pm
MCA Studio: Future Geology
Stella Brown meditates on the state of construction at the MCA through an excavation of the building, imagining the past, present, and future of the site.

Thu–Sat, Mar 23–25, 7:30 pm 
Rashaun Mitchell/Silas Riener in collaboration with Charles Atlas
Tesseract
The choreographers, both formerly with the Cunningham company, collaborate with radical video artist Charles Atlas on a project that begins as a 3D- viewing experience and unfolds into live dance with real-time mixed and projected video.

Sat, Mar 25, 2–4 pm
The Living Room
The MCA’s Teen Creative Agency (TCA) hosts this drop-in gathering for intimate conversations and activities.

Tue, Mar 28, 6 pm
MCA Live: here
Artist Danny Giles stages a group performance throughout the museum, using choreographed gestures drawn from the everyday.

Wed, Mar 29, 6 pm 
MCA Talk: Dialogue 8
Shirin Neshat
Artist Shirin Neshat leads our eighth Dialogue on museums, diversity, and inclusion.

MCA CALENDAR

APRIL

Sat, Apr 1, hourly from noon–4 pm
MCA Live: BOOMERANG
For the toward
BOOMERANG combines dance, sculpture, and text in this outdoor performance.

Tue, Apr 4, noon
MCA Talk: Omar Kholeif on Eternal Youth
Manilow Senior Curator Omar Kholeif leads a tour of Eternal Youth in the Sylvia Neil and Daniel Fischel Galleries.

Tue, Apr 4, 6 pm
MCA Studio: Axis Lab
Enjoy an evening of activities around Sōng, a cookbook and archive of Chicago’s Vietnamese American community.

Wed–Sat, Apr 5–8, 7:30 pm;
Sat, Apr 8, 3 pm 
Peter Brook, Marie-Hélène Estienne
Battlefield
The international team distill the vast Mahabharata into a timeless and profoundly relevant minimalist postwar story.

Sat, Apr 15, hourly from 1–5 pm
MCA Live: Neighborhood Dances
Victoria Bradford performs dances incorporating choreography culled from social media.

Sat, Apr 15, 3 pm
MCA Talk: Tania Pérez Córdova
The artist discusses her exhibition with Pamela Alper Associate Curator José Esparza Chong Cuy in the Bergman Family Gallery.

Tue, Apr 18, 6 pm
MCA Live: Every House Has a Door
Matthew Goulish and Lin Hixson present an evening inspired by Merce Cunningham: Common

Time that channels conceptual comedy and animates the space with live gestures.

Tue, Apr 18, 8 pm 
MCA Talk: Stephin Merritt
Magnetic Fields founder Stephin Merritt discusses the band’s new album 50 Song Memoir. This program is copresented with Pitchfork as part of In Sight Out, a conversation series exploring new perspectives in music, art, and culture.

Thu–Fri, Apr 20–21
Open Engagement
Join the MCA and the Art Institute of Chicago for a daylong preconference at both museum sites on Thursday and an open house with dance company Move Me Soul on Friday. See openengagement.info for more details.

Sun, Apr 23, 3 pm 
Matthew Duvall and Friends
Whisper(s)
The experiential concert begins in the Edlis Neeson Theater before moving to the galleries, where ninety-nine percussionists join Matthew Duvall to perform the US premiere of Marta Ptasynska’s Voice of the Winds.

Tue, Apr 25, 6 pm
MCA Studio: All Rise
Hương Ngô, Hồng-Ân Trương, Jina Valentine, and Heather Hart address institutional racism.

Sat, April 29, hourly from noon–4
MCA Live: CabinFever
CabinFever performs a site-specific dance and score in response to the MCA’s history.

Sat, Apr 29, 2–4 pm
The Living Room
The MCA’s Teen Creative Agency (TCA) hosts this drop-in gathering for intimate conversations and activities.