

Between Gestures: Trajal Harrell and Ola Młaciejewska

Program Notes
Sun, Oct 27
Various times

Throughout
the MCA



FALL 2019

MUSEUM OF
CONTEMPORARY ART
CHICAGO

Experience

dance

music

theater

everywhere

galleries

garages

hallways

as a place that performance ignites.

FROM THE CURATOR

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

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

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

Tara Aisha Willis, Associate Curator
Christy LeMaster, Assistant Curator
Performance & Public Practice

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SUPPORT FOR THIS
MCA PROJECT

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



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

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

SUPPORT FOR THE
ARTISTS

Ola Maciejewski's *LOIE FULLER: Research* is produced by SO WE MIGHT AS WELL DANCE and commissioned by TENT Rotterdam/NL with the support of ZEEBELT THEATRE/NL. Maciejewski gives special thanks to Judith Schoneveld.

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

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SCHEDULE

10:30 am–noon

NOTES ON AGENCY: DANCE IN THE MUSEUM

The Commons, second floor

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

Noon–4:30 pm

VIDEO SCREENINGS

The Commons, second floor

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

12:15–1 pm

Trajal Harrell, *Okidoki*

Kovler Atrium, second floor

2–2:40 pm

Ola Maciejewski, *LOIE FULLER: Research*

Griffin Lobby, fourth floor

3:30–4 pm

Trajal Harrell, *Okidoki*

Kovler Atrium, second floor

TRAJAL HARRELL

Okidoki (2018)

Choreographer and performer Trajal Harrell

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

Music composer Tom Monteiro

OLA MACIEJEWSKA

LOIE FULLER: Research (2011)

Choreographer and performer Ola Maciejewska

Costume designer Jolanta Maciejewska

Producer and administrator Caroline Redy

VIDEO SCREENINGS IN THE COMMONS

The MCA has selected four montages from the Portraits collection of the Nouvelle Cinémathèque de la Danse that feature the careers of four distinct contemporary choreographers working in the European context. The works in these montages span from 1991 to the present. The Nouvelle Cinémathèque de la Danse creates programs by request in the form of thematic montages of performance excerpts for screenings in theaters, festivals, and cinemas around the world. It is a project of Centre National de la Danse (CN D), a public institution created in 1998 at the instigation of the Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication that studies and supports all aspects of dance.

The following program will run three times in a loop, beginning at noon, 1:30, and 3 pm, with a five-minute break between each cycle.

Miet Warlop, la désinstallation
(2019, 16 min.)

Visual artist and performer Miet Warlop transforms the stage space in performance with a variety of materials—plaster and paint, water and plastic, inflatable objects and explosive sculptures, animal bodies and absurd prostheses—unsettling the familiar in order to reform it anew. This video contains partial nudity.

Solitude(s) de Mathilde Monnier
(2018, 33 min.)

Although there are often many dancers on stage in Mathilde Monnier's works, they are imbued with the theme of solitude. Each dancer is detached through their individuality as they struggle to find a distinct place in the group or solo. Duos and trios are also frequent in Monnier's grammar, but what dominates are solitary dancers who allow themselves to be led by their own movement and waywardness.

Ana Rita Teodoro: animal body, vegetal body
(2018, 16 min.)

Portuguese choreographer Ana Rita Teodoro seeks to inhabit space and time differently by exploring the frontiers of the human body. Creeping like a worm through the streets of Lisbon or slowly undulating her arms like seaweed, Teodoro's dance is both animal and vegetal as she seeks what a body can learn by intermingling in its environment. This video contains partial nudity.

Noé Soulier, écriture sur écriture
(2017, 16 min.)

Noé Soulier highlights the richness of choreography by incorporating text. Whether he is verbally narrating his own dancing or writing precise phrases for dancers to appropriate in their own way, he reflects on what writing can contribute to dance.

ABOUT THE WORK

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

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

RELATED PROGRAMS

DANCE AND ACTIVISM

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

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

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Program notes
compiled by
Laura Paige Kyber

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

TRAJAL HARRELL (Choreographer/Performer, *Okidoki*) came to visibility with the *Twenty Looks or Paris is Burning at The Judson Church* series of works, which theoretically juxtaposed the voguing dance tradition with the early postmodern dance tradition. He is now considered one of the most important choreographers of his generation. Harrell's work has been presented in many American and international venues including The Kitchen, New York Live Arts, TBA Festival, Walker Arts Center, American Realness Festival, Philadelphia Fringe Festival, LA's RedCat Theater, Festival d'Automne, Holland Festival, Festival d'Avignon, Vienna's Impulstanz, Berlin's TanzimAugust, and Panorama Festival, among others. He has also shown performance work in visual art contexts such as at MoMA, MoMA PS1, Perfoma Biennial, Fondation Cartier, The New Museum, The Margulies Art Warehouse in Miami, Stedelijk Museum, Porto's Serralves Museum, The Barbican Centre, Centre Pompidou-Paris and Metz, ICA Boston, and Art Basel-Miami Beach. His work *Judson Church is Ringing in Harlem (Made-to-Measure)/Twenty Looks or Paris is Burning at The Judson Church (M2M)* has the distinction of being the first dance commission of MoMA PS1. He has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Doris Duke Impact Award, and a Bessie Award for *Antigone Sr./Twenty Looks or Paris is Burning at The Judson Church (L)*, as well as fellowships from The Foundation for Contemporary Art, Art Matters, and the Saison Foundation, among others. In 2016, he completed a two-year Annenberg Residency at MoMA, where he turned his attention to the work of the Japanese founder of butoh dance, Tatsumi Hijikata. By looking at butoh through voguing's theoretical lens of "realness" and modern dance through the theoretical lens of butoh, Harrell is creating a number of works that combine a speculative view of history and the archive with contemporary dance practice and composition. He has created *Used Abused and Hung Out to Dry*, premiered and commissioned by MoMA in February 2013; *The Ghost*

of Montpellier Meets the Samurai, premiered at Montpellier Danse Festival in July 2015; *The Return of La Argentina*, premiered in October 2015 at Paris's Centre National de la Danse and commissioned by MoMA; *In the Mood for Frankie*, premiered in May 2016 at MoMA; *Caen Amour*, premiered at Festival Avignon 2016; and *Juliet and Romeo*, produced by Munich Kammerspiele in October 2017. *Hoochie Koochie* was Harrell's first survey (1999-2016) and performance exhibition presented by the Barbican Centre Art Gallery in London during July-August 2017

Born in Poland and currently based in Paris, OLA MACIEJEWSKA (Choreographer/Performer, *LOIE FULLER: Research*) obtained her MA in contemporary theatre and dance studies at the University of Utrecht in 2012. While still in school, Maciejewska created *LOIE FULLER: Research* (2011), which has since been presented in France for the opening of CN D Pantin in 2015, as well as in Switzerland, Spain, Canada, Poland, Portugal, and several venues in Holland. In fall 2015, Maciejewska premiered *BOMBYX MORI* in Paris at la Ménagerie de verre as a part of the Festival Les Inaccoutumés. It has now toured abroad in venues such as Kaaitheater, Rotterdamse Schouwburg, Veem Huis voor Performance, Museu de Arte Contemporânea de Serralves, and ImPulsTanz in Vienna, to name just few, and is supported by Fondation d'entreprise Hermès in the frame of New Settings #6. Between 2016 and 2018, Maciejewska was the associated artist of Centre chorégraphique national de Caen en Normandie. In fall 2017, her solo work *LOIE FULLER: Research* and dance film *COSMOPOL* were presented at la Biennale de Lyon. Her latest work, *DANCE CONCERT*, premiered at the National Taichung Theatre in Taiwan and was later presented at the Centre Pompidou's Festival d'Automne in France.

JANUARY PARKOS ARNALL (Panelist) is curator of Public Programs at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. She holds a PhD in cultural studies and museum theory from

Claremont Graduate University, an MFA in photography with emphasis in art history from Temple University, and a BFA in fine art from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. From 2013 until 2017, she oversaw public engagement, developed exhibition-related programs, and was on the curatorial team for exhibitions and residencies at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles.

HENDRIK FOLKERTS (Panel moderator) is the Dittmer Curator of Contemporary Art at the Art Institute of Chicago. He studied art history at the University of Amsterdam, specializing in contemporary art and theory, feminist practices, and contemporary curatorial practices. Prior to his position at the Art Institute of Chicago, Folkerts was curator at Documenta 14 from 2014 until 2017. From 2010 until 2015, he was Curator of Performance, Film & Discursive Programmes at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and coordinator of the Curatorial Programme at De Appel in Amsterdam from 2009 until 2011.

ELISABETH LBOVICI (Panelist) has been the chief editor of *Beaux-arts Magazine* and, for the last fifteen years, an arts and culture editor for the daily newspaper *Libération*. Since 2006, she has written the blog *Le Beau Vice*. An AIDS activist, Lebovici was the inaugural president of the Paris LGBT film festival and is currently a founding member of the LIG—Lesbians of General Interest—fund. Since the 1990s, she has been involved in writing and lecturing on feminism, activism, queer politics, and contemporary art. In 1998, she edited *L'Intime* (Paris, ensb-a). Together with Catherine Gonnard, she authored a history of women artists in France between 1880 and now called *Femmes/artistes, Artistes/femmes, Paris de 1880 à nos jours* (Paris, Hazan, 2007). She and Gonnard are currently involved in research on lesbian culture in the francophone media the 1950s-60s. Her latest book *What AIDS Has Done To Me: Art and Activism at the End of the 20th Century*, received the Prix Pierre Daix in art history in 2017. Lebovici co-curates, with Patricia Falguières

and Natasa Petresin-Bachelez, a weekly seminar at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris titled *Something You Should Know: Artists and Producers*. Lebovici holds a PhD in aesthetics.

MLONDI ZONDI (Panelist) is a PhD candidate in performance studies at Northwestern University. Mlondolozzi "Mlondi" Zondi is a movement artist with an interest in dance dramaturgy, curatorial practice, and pedagogy. Zondi's dissertation focuses on contemporary black performance and visual art engagements with death and corporeal integrity. Using Afro-Pessimism and other aspects of the black radical tradition, the research probes the relationship between black ontology and the ontology of performance. Zondi received an MFA in dance from the University of California, Irvine, and a BA (Hons) in cultural studies and performance studies from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal.

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

Jan 30–Feb 1, 7:30 pm
Ligia Lewis
Water Will (in Melody)

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



Ligia Lewis, *Water Will (in Melody)*
Photo © Maria Baranova

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

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Asparagus with chilled mussel vinaigrette and tarragon raita. Photo: Neil Burger.

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Single performance tickets starting at \$30; \$10 for students, limited availability.

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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.

SUPPORT FOR MCA PERFORMANCES

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

Generous support is provided by Julie and Larry Bernstein, 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, and Carol Prins and John Hart/The Jessica Fund.

Additional support is provided by Ms. Shawn M. Donnelley and Dr. Christopher M. Kelly, Nicholas and Nancy Giampietro, Anne L. Kaplan, 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.

*Enact Chair as of March 2019

MUSEUM OF
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ABOUT ENACT

MCA performances are supported by Enact, a group of MCA donors dedicated to supporting the museum's renowned performance programs.

Join today for opportunities to meet artists and gain behind-the-scenes access alongside MCA curators—all while providing vital support.

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ABOUT MCA PERFORMANCES

As an internationally renowned institution devoted to contemporary culture, the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago is committed to presenting the most thought-provoking visual and performing arts of our time. The MCA commissions and presents theater, dance, and music by leading artists from Chicago and around the world, holding performances in spaces throughout the museum, including the three-hundred seat Edlis Neeson Theater.

The MCA's groundbreaking performances are an integral part of the museum's cutting edge, multidisciplinary programming. Along with exhibitions and public programs, MCA performances welcome visitors to experience the work and ideas of living artists and find their own civic voices.

PARKING

Validate your ticket at the coat check for \$12 parking in the MCA garage (220 E Chicago Ave) and the Bernardin garage (747 N Wabash Ave). The \$12 parking is limited to six hours on the date of performance.

LOST AND FOUND

To inquire about a lost item, call the museum at 312-280-2660. Unclaimed articles are held for thirty days.

SEATING

Please switch off all noisemaking devices while you are in the theater.

Patrons are seated at the management's discretion. Food and open beverage containers are not allowed in the seating area.

REPRODUCTION

Unauthorized recording and reproduction of a performance are prohibited.

GENERAL INFORMATION
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