
THE SHED Press Release

THE **BLOOMBERG** BUILDING
545 West 30th Street
New York, NY 10001

Eighteen New York City Artists Announced for The Shed's Third *Open Call*, the City's Largest Interdisciplinary Commissioning Program for Early-Career Artists, Beginning Fall 2023

Selected by 67 Cross-Disciplinary Arts Industry Leaders and Artists

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Standing, left to right: Kayla Hamilton, Bryan Fernandez, Christopher Radcliff, Calli Roche, Garrett Zuercher, Armando Guadalupe Cortés, Jake Brush. Seated, left to right: Kyle Dacuyan, Lizania Cruz, Asia Stewart, Luis A. Gutierrez, Minne Atairu, Sandy Williams IV, Jeffrey Meris. Not pictured: Cathy Linh Che, The Dragon Sisters, Nile Harris, NIC Kay, Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre. Photo: Dana Golan. Courtesy The Shed.

NEW YORK, March 7, 2023 — The Shed today announced 18 New York City-based artists and collectives for its third *Open Call*, the city's largest interdisciplinary commissioning program for early-career artists across the visual and performing arts disciplines. Each artist, who lives or works in the five boroughs, will create and present new work after being selected by The Shed along with 67 external industry professionals and artists from across disciplines. The artists presenting in 2023 and 2024 create work in disciplines from drag performance and sculpture to filmmaking and poetry, each proposing care- and community-based responses to the urgent issues of our time. This October, an exhibition will present 10 artworks by artists who bring personal stories intersecting with global history to the Level 2 Gallery. In summer 2024, in The Shed's Griffin Theater, the remaining eight commissions will feature immersive, multidisciplinary performances. Artists receive a commissioning fee of up to \$15,000 depending on the scope of the proposed project, in addition to production support and resources to develop their new projects. Admission is free to all *Open Call* events.

"As The Shed's large-scale commissioning program, *Open Call* was launched to provide critical resources for NYC artists to push the boundaries in their respective disciplines and further bolster our city's indisputably rich culture," said Alex Poots, Artistic Director of The Shed. "I'm so proud of the program's collaboration with

industry professionals to select a truly unique combination of artists and to propel our offerings to wider audiences. With each season, the interdisciplinary cohort of both visual and performing artists brings fresh perspectives on the world around us.”

“After a highly competitive process, the selection committee was drawn to the dynamic, multiborough range of voices, experiences, and expertise represented in the third *Open Call* cohort. This group brings together artists at the vanguard of their fields, pushing boundaries and defining the now and the next of art and culture in New York,” said Tamara McCaw, Chief Civic Program Officer at The Shed. “Featuring multidisciplinary works that conjure historical threads along with personal histories, the projects commissioned for *Open Call* in 2023 and 2024 explore urgent themes of reclamation, repatriation, resistance, healing, and access.”

Open Call continues to be integral to The Shed’s institutional and civic vision to produce and welcome innovative art and ideas, across all forms of creativity, and to build a shared understanding of our rapidly changing world and a more equitable society. Panelists and reviewers from various arts disciplines reviewed more than 1,200 proposals in March, April, and June of this year, a significant increase from the 900 applications received during the inaugural call for proposals in 2018. With a citywide focus, the panels selected the following 18 inventive, thought-provoking, risk-taking, timely, and culturally sensitive proposals that will resonate with a wide range of audiences.

The third edition of *Open Call* is organized by Tamara McCaw, Chief Civic Program Officer; Sarah Khalid Dhobany, Assistant Producer of Public Programs; and Darren Biggart, Associate Producer of Civic Programs, with Eduardo Andres Alfonso, Associate Curator-at-Large, and Deja Belardo, Curatorial Assistant. Exhibition and performance dates and additional details are to be announced. More information is available at theshed.org/opencall.

VISUAL ARTISTS – FALL 2023

Minne Atairu: *To the Hand*

A work that explores how oral tradition and quotidian rituals from Atairu’s village contribute to an intersectional understanding of Benin’s art history

Minne Atairu (she/her) is an interdisciplinary artist whose research-based practice seeks to reclaim the obscured histories of the Benin Bronzes.

Jake Brush: *Petpourri*

A video installation with sculptural surroundings reimagining a public access show in which Long Island pet store owner Marc Morrone struggles to control a hoard of various animals on a three-by-five-foot table

Jake Brush (he/him) draws from reality television, horror movies, and comedy to make bombastic characters and worlds through video, performance, sculpture, and installation art. Jake Brush currently lives in Brooklyn, New York.

Cathy Linh Che & Christopher Radcliff: *Appocalips*

A multichannel video installation based on the real-life experiences of Cathy Linh Che's parents, Vietnam War refugees, who in 1976, while stateless in a refugee camp in the Philippines, were hired to play extras in Francis Ford Coppola's Apocalypse Now

Cathy Linh Che (she/her) is a Vietnamese American writer and multimedia artist from Los Angeles.

Christopher Radcliff (he/him) is a Chinese American filmmaker living and working in New York City.

Armando Guadalupe Cortés: *Palenque*

A project about the expectation and the denial of spectacle that takes the form of a palenque, a round cockfighting ring, presenting the viewer with a minimal yet intricate structure, a skeleton of the under-workings of a seating arena for violent sport

Armando Guadalupe Cortés's (he/him) practice builds on storytelling, object-making, and performance traditions. Merging forms and methods from his native Mexico and broader Latin American literary traditions, he contrasts and hybridizes performances with elements of his life in the United States.

Lizania Cruz: *Evidence 071: Frederick Douglass and The Commission of Inquiry*

A participatory multimedia installation that uses archival material, video, and sculpture to investigate the ways in which inquiry is performed and translated

Lizania Cruz (she/her) is a Dominican participatory artist and designer interested in how migration affects ways of being and belonging.

Bryan Fernandez: *Who I am, Quienes Somos*

A body of work composed of mixed-media assemblage pieces exploring the Dominican diaspora across the Northeast United States and the Dominican Republic to provide an authentic representation of this marginalized group that examines identity, culture, and history

Bryan Fernandez (he/him) is a Dominican American artist from Washington Heights located in Upper Manhattan born in 2000.

Luis A. Gutierrez: *Las Nueve Demandas (The Nine Demands)*

An interactive installation inspired by the nine historical demands made by banana plantation workers of the United Fruit Company in December 1928

Luis A. Gutierrez (he/him) is a mixed-media artist connecting our past and present through the exploration of historical events. He creates multilayered paintings and installations by dissecting canvases and abstracting historical images.

Calli Roche: *Death to Dermis: Ecdysis*

A metaphorical shucking of the body, searching for the core. Each work uses various pattern-making and sculpture techniques to peel layers of the self.

Calli Roche (she/they) is an American artist based in Brooklyn. Roche frequently works with reclaimed objects, wood, skins, and textiles. The materials take on different ontological significance in each work yet frequently reference the fraught relationships between violence, identity, and sexuality.

Jeffrey Meris: *Catch a Stick of Fire III (Dark Man X)*

A series drawing on a personal ritual of Self-Care Saturdays that provided psychological sanctuary over the past year's dual crises of continued violence against Black individuals and the global pandemic

Jeffrey Meris (he/they) is a multidisciplinary artist whose practice engages with ecology, embodiment, and various lived experiences while healing deeply personal and historical wounds.

Sandy Williams IV: *40 ACRES: Weeksville*

A multilayered public performance that will take place on the ground and in the sky above Crown Heights, Brooklyn

Sandy Williams IV (they/he/she) is an artist and educator whose work generates moments of communal catharsis. Their conceptual and research-based practice uses time itself as a material, and works collaboratively with communities to unfold hidden legacies in common spaces.

PERFORMING ARTISTS – SUMMER 2024

Kyle Dacuyan: *Dad Rock*

An episodic monologue with movement, video, and music contemplating the relationships between information, media, surveillance, and remote violence

Kyle Dacuyan (he/they) is a 2021 NEA Fellow in creative writing, author of *INCITEMENTS* (Ugly Duckling Presse, 2023), and executive director of The Poetry Project.

The Dragon Sisters: *New Information*

An equal parts concert, immersive theater, and dance party including original music, live instrumentation, dance performance, and visual art

The Dragon Sisters (Issa & Odessa) (any/all) are an award-winning multidisciplinary performance duo based in Brooklyn. Their work as artists and culture leaders has been covered in media outlets including *Billboard*, *Vogue*, *LADYGUNN* magazine, *PAPER* magazine, and the *New York Times*.

Kayla Hamilton: *How to Bend Down/How to Pick it Up*

An immersive, multidisciplinary installation and performance exploring the growth, use, and medicalization of cotton as a historical thread between Blackness and disability

Kayla Hamilton (she/her) is a performance-maker and Bessie Award-winning dancer, educator, and cultural consultant from Texarkana, Texas. Her work aims to build an embodied and collective movement that is for all of us.

Nile Harris: *Minor b*

A choreographed performance for four bodies

Nile Harris (he/him) is a performer and director of live works of art. He has done a few things and hopes to do a few more.

NIC Kay: *Must have character*

A duet between a mascot and a drag performer exploring impulse and desire

NIC Kay (they/them) is an interdisciplinary artist, performer, and conceptual choreographer who works with movement to explore relationality and yearning.

Asia Stewart: *Fabric Softener*

An interdisciplinary performance that combines song, movement, and painting to meditate on intergenerational trauma and the perverse inheritance(s) passed down by Black m/others

Asia Stewart (she/her) is a Brooklyn-based performance artist whose conceptual work centers the body as a living archive. She seeks to transform the language specific to studies of race, gender, sexuality, and diaspora into materials that can be felt and worn on the body.

Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre: *Gathering: New York City*

An interactive site-based work—part staged work, part improvisational score—that asks why and how we gather, and when we choose to act alone or as a group, utilizing technology, storytelling, sound design, and play to examine what brings people together in celebration, conflict, protest, and sport

Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre (YSdT) creates invigorating performance and education programs that expand access to—and promote understanding through—the arts.

Garrett Zuercher: *Inside/Look*

A narrative piece created entirely within the Deaf community that provides an authentic, firsthand glimpse into the lives and work of Deaf artists, opening a rare window onto the incredibly diverse prism of Deaf identity and the unique challenges Deaf folks face

Garrett Zuercher (he/him) is a profoundly Deaf theater and film artist and award-winning playwright who holds an MFA from Hunter College and currently serves as the founding artistic director of Deaf Broadway.

Open Call Panelists and Reviewers

Online reviewers

Navild Acosta, Maddie Aleman, Rocio Aranda-Alvarado, Yazmany Arboleda, Salome Asega, Monstah Black, Rafiq Bhatia, Jordana De La Cruz, Jean Cooney, Leslie Cuyjet, Emma Enderby, Jesse Bandler Firestone, Boo Froebel, Malik Gaines, Nadine Goellner, Kevin Gotkin, Anna Harsanyi, April Hunt, Adam Hyndman, Lisa Kim, Hitomi Iwasaki, Le'Andra LeSeur, Jonathan McCrory, Aaron McKinney, Mara Mills, Humberto Moro, Claudia Norman, Benedict Nguyen, Najee Omar, Stephanie Quaye, Charles Rice-Gonzalez, Carl Hancock Rux, Yusuf Siddiquee, J. Soto, Jenée-Daria Strand, Kenneth Tam, Herb Tam, Susanna V. Temkin, Gabriela Vidal-Irizarry, Natalia Viera Salgado, Charmaine Warren, Adeze Wilford, Monica L. Williams, Jay Wegman, Janet Wong, Eva Yaa Asantewaa

Panelists

Mark Beasley, Solana Chehtman, Vivian Crockett, Andria Hickey, Ishmael Houston-Jones, Shaun Leonardo, Tamara McCaw, Alex Poots, Sara Raza, Alex Rosenberg, George Emilio Sanchez, Finnegan Shannon, Kiyan Williams

About Open Call

Launched as part of The Shed's inaugural year program, *Open Call* is a large-scale commissioning program for early-career NYC-based artists. For the first iteration of *Open Call*, 52 artists and collectives were commissioned to present their intentional and boundary-pushing new work beginning in May 2019. The second iteration followed with 27 artists presenting new work beginning in June 2021. Each received commissioning fees, production support, and experience working with a large cultural institution and navigating the commissioning process. *Open Call* continues in fostering and supporting the next generation of NYC artists. *Open Call* was conceived by The Shed's Artistic Director Alex Poots; Tamara McCaw, Chief Civic Program Officer; Emma Enderby, former Chief Curator; and Senior Program Advisor Hans Ulrich Obrist.

About The Shed

The Shed is a new cultural institution of and for the 21st century. We produce and welcome innovative art and ideas, across all forms of creativity, to build a shared understanding of our rapidly changing world and a more equitable society. In our highly adaptable building on Manhattan's west side, The Shed brings together established and emerging artists to create new work in fields ranging from pop to

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classical music, painting to digital media, theater to literature, and sculpture to dance. We seek opportunities to collaborate with cultural peers and community organizations, work with like-minded partners, and provide unique spaces for private events. As an independent nonprofit that values invention, equity, and generosity, we are committed to advancing art forms, addressing the urgent issues of our time, and making our work impactful, sustainable, and relevant to the local community, the cultural sector, New York City, and beyond.

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