

THE SHED Press Release

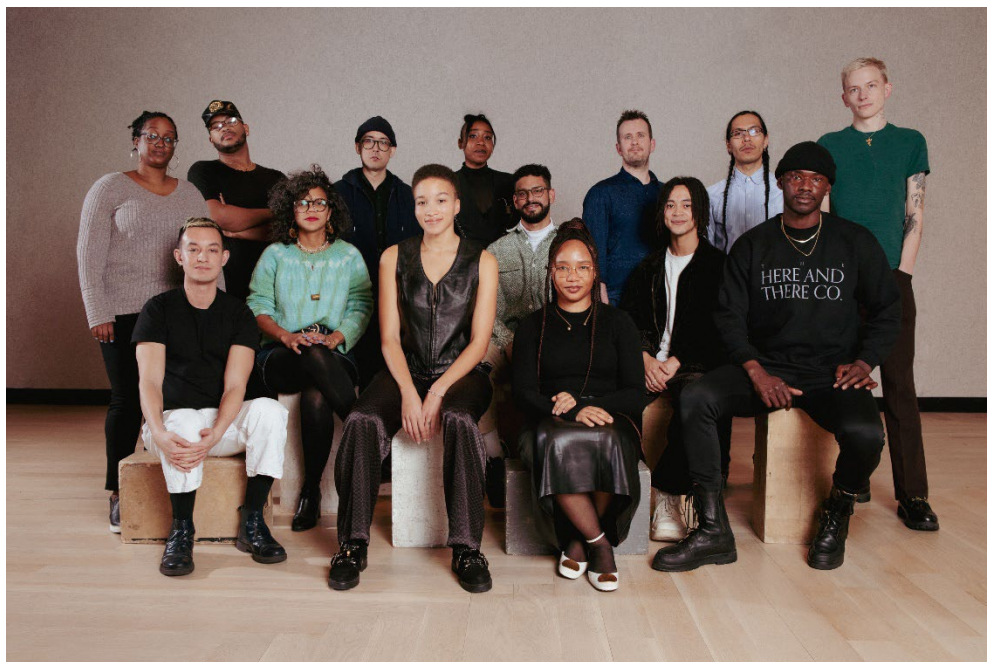
THE **BLOOMBERG** BUILDING
545 West 30th Street
New York, NY 10001

The Shed's *Open Call* Program Features Eight New Performance Works by Emerging NYC Artists

From June 20 to August 17, the free series features eight interdisciplinary artists and collectives as part of *Open Call*, The Shed's large-scale commissioning program for emerging, NYC-based artists

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The 2023 – 24 *Open Call* artists. 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, Cain Coleman, Nile Harris, NIC Kay, Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre. Photo: Dana Golan.

New York, NY, May 9, 2024 – This summer, The Shed presents a free series of new performance works by eight emerging, NYC-based artists as part of the third edition of the large-scale commissioning program, *Open Call*. The artists commissioned to present new work on select weekends from June 20 through August 17 in The Shed's Griffin Theater and Level 4 Overlook are **Cain Coleman, Kyle Dacuyan, Kayla Hamilton, Nile Harris, NIC Kay, Asia Stewart, Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre, and Garrett Zuercher**. More information is available at theshed.org/opencall.

“We are honored to present these eight artists; each asks urgent questions in inventive ways that leave us all more connected, curious, and engaged. *Open Call*'s decentralized selection and process-centered mission allow us to present bold new interdisciplinary works for and of New York City. We're excited to welcome audiences to these incredible and creative free performances this summer,” said **Darren Biggart**, The Shed's Civic Programs Director.

OPEN CALL SUMMER 2024 SCHEDULE

June 20 – August 17

The Griffin Theater and Level 4 Overlook

All *Open Call* summer 2024 performances are free with advance ticket reservations. Tickets will be available on a rolling basis beginning in June on The Shed's website. Please visit theshed.org/opencall for the latest information on ticket availability.

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

June 20, 21, 22 at 7:30 pm

Gathering: New York City is an invitation, a party, a protest, a celebration of harvest, the championship game. It's a night of storytelling and play that is part staged work, part interactive experience in collaboration with local artists and audiences. Produced and performed by Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre (YSDT, Palestine/NYC) and directed/choreographed by Samar Haddad King with text and additional original music by King, each *Gathering* is a singular event that calls you to join as participant or witness in the collective action. The cast features seven international YSDT performers—from Japan, Palestine, Taiwan, Turkey, the UK, and the US—and six local artists.

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

Kyle Dacuyan: *Dad Rock*

June 27, 28, 29 at 7:30 pm

Across episodic investigations of language and gesture, Kyle Dacuyan considers cultural constructions of masculinity. What protective characters arise from fictions of vulnerability, and how do those figures shape structures of empire? *Dad Rock* is an export, a mood, and a method. *Dad Rock* is a monologue that falls apart because of poetry.

Kyle Dacuyan is a 2021 NEA Fellow in Creative Writing and author of *INCITEMENTS* (Ugly Duckling Presse, forthcoming).

Garrett Zuercher: *Inside/Look*

July 11, 12, 13 at 7:30 pm

Garrett Zuercher's *Inside/Look* opens an empathetic window onto the diversity of Deaf identity and the unique challenges Deaf artists face. The narrative performance compares and contrasts the experiences of individual Deaf theater artists whom Zuercher has interviewed since November 2022, including artists with a range of experiences across nationality, sexuality, religion, other disabilities, and more. From the video recordings of these conversations, Zuercher edited a single video that serves as a visual script for a live stage performance featuring the original interviewees.

Garrett Zuercher 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.

Cain Coleman: *New Information*

July 18, 19, 20 at 7:30 pm

In *New Information*, Cain Coleman (of the Dragon Sisters) takes the audience on a journey of self-exploration and the relentless pursuit of artistic expression. An immersive environment pulls the audience into an unforgettable evening, featuring original music, live instrumentation, performance art, and captivating visual art. Building off Coleman's roots in Brooklyn's queer nightlife scene, *New Information* combines the artistry of a concert or theater performance with the energy and community of a vibrant dance party.

Cain Coleman is an award-winning, multi-hyphenate performer and creator based in Brooklyn. With a career marked by time spent with Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Theatre, The Martha Graham Dance Company, The Metropolitan Opera, and The Dragon Sisters, Coleman continues to explore the many possibilities of life.

Asia Stewart: *Fabric Softener*

July 25, 26, 27 at 7:30 pm

Asia Stewart's *Fabric Softener* is a theatrical response to Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*, offering an imagined ritual with the power to revive young Black women and insist on their survival. Stewart draws on three characters from the many who populate Morrison's 1977 novel: Pilate, her daughter Reba, and granddaughter Hagar. In the original text, Hagar dies of a broken heart after deeming herself unworthy of love, beauty, and acceptance. In her performance, punctuated by musical outbursts of spirituals and passages from the novel, Stewart presents three new characters who are not recreations of these women but are instead archetypes: The Laundress, The Celebrant, and The Witness. The performance begins as The Celebrant and The Witness prepare The Laundress for an intervention: a baptism, a becoming, and a funeral for what used to be and can no longer exist.

Asia Stewart 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.

NIC Kay: *must have character*

August 1, 2, 3

In NIC Kay's *must have character*, two performers—a mascot and a drag performer—engage in a duet, staggering through The Shed's public spaces throughout the day. As they move, the duo engages in a nonverbal dialogue about motivation and desire. The performance is a snapshot of performers facing their anxieties around entertaining, and restless audiences eager to escape the world of the pandemic and other crises. *must have character* includes performances on

August 1 and 2 and a public program on August 3.

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

Nile Harris: *minor b*

August 9 and 10 at 7:30 pm

minor b is a workshop production of a performance for four bodies that inquires about a minor black behavior that refuses capitalization and respectability. Nile Harris and his ensemble use the biography of jazz cornetist Buddy Bolden, who was making music at the turn of the 20th century and spent the majority of his life in a mental asylum, as a theoretical launching point to stage a series of discreet events rejecting and subverting what audiences expect to find in a black box theater. For Harris, the black box theater serves as a metaphor for containment. Playing with theatrical traditions that have sought an imposed neutrality, the work is, in part, a response to institutional constraints that resonate with the asylum where Bolden was confined.

Nile Harris is a performer and director of live works of art. He has done a few things and hopes to do a few more, God willing.

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

August 15, 16, 17 at 7:30 pm

In *How to Bend Down/How to Pick it Up*, Kayla Hamilton explores lineages of Black disabled imagination and alternative world-building through an immersive, community-specific, multidisciplinary dance performance. The performance moves through three historical spaces—the cotton field, the Black church, and the freakshow/circus—where Black disability was hidden, deemed unproductive, reduced to spectacle, or asked to be prayed away. *How to Bend Down/How to Pick it Up* offers an archival exploration of these spaces and a reclaiming of agency, recentering the parts of the self that were discarded or suppressed in those settings while carrying forward the ancestral task of envisioning a future where every-body is free. The production makes use of multiple audio descriptors and a performance structure that can reconfigure every night based on the performers' changing needs.

Kayla Hamilton 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.

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. Since its beginning, 97 artists across disciplines have been commissioned to present new inter- and multidisciplinary visual and performance works. Each artist or collective received commissioning fees, production support, and experience working with a large

cultural institution and navigating the commissioning process. Commissioned artists were selected by The Shed along with an external diverse panel of industry professionals and artists from across disciplines. *Open Call* continues to foster and support the next generation of NYC artists with the fourth edition of the program to be announced in late 2024. *Open Call* was conceived by The Shed’s Artistic Director Alex Poots; Tamara McCaw, former Chief Civic Program Officer; Emma Enderby, former Chief Curator; and Senior Program Advisor Hans Ulrich Obrist.

Support

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About The Shed

Under the leadership of CEO Meredith “Max” Hodges and founding Artistic Director Alex Poots, The Shed is a 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 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.