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INTO THE MYSTIC

July 11 – August 22, 2019

3rd Annual 'Siren Arts' Summer Residency
& Exhibition Program for Emerging Visual Artists

Performance Art Events every Thursday evening at 7pm
on the 2nd Avenue Beach, Asbury Park, NJ

All Audiences Welcome; Presented Free of Charge



Into the Mystic marks the 3rd year of Siren Arts, an innovative summer residency & exhibition program based in Asbury Park, NJ to support emerging visual artists within the northeast corridor of Washington, DC to NYC. Created by Victoria Reis, Executive & Artistic Director of Transformer – a 17 year old non-profit visual arts organization based in Washington, DC – Siren Arts is an expansion of Transformer's mission to connect and promote emerging visual artists, to advance them in their artistic careers, and to build & engage audiences in new and best contemporary arts contexts and practices.

Pursuing different themes each year, Siren Arts' 3rd year, *Into the Mystic*, is a residency program that combines social practice, social engagement, and social justice. The program consists of a series of consecutive micro-residencies for seven emerging visual artists, resulting in Thursday evening performance art events on Asbury Park's 2nd Avenue beach July 11 – August 22, 2019. Informed and inspired by the sea, and how it moves us physically, spiritually, and emotionally, the performance art events in *Into the Mystic* explore ocean myths, migration, unity, collective unconscious, ancestry, and more through music, dance, ritual, sound, and visual art components.

Highlighting a diverse range of artists living within the northeast corridor of DC to NYC, Siren Arts provides urban-based artists an opportunity to get out of their respective cities, enjoy creative time at the beach, and advance work they are currently pursuing. Transformer's goal with Siren Arts is to empower the participating artists and engage audiences in both reflection and positive action around ocean conservation and its implications in all other social activism, while introducing and advancing innovative contemporary art practices.

Transformer is honored to support and present the following artists in this summer's Siren Arts *Into the Mystic* program: Kunj (DC), Jane Carver (Philadelphia), Maps Glover (DC), Ayana Evans (NYC), Tsedaye Makonnen (DC), Jodie Lyn-Kee-Chow (NYC), and Andrew Demirjian (Newark).

All events will take place at approximately 7:15 on the 2nd Avenue Beach in Asbury Park, NJ. Performances will last approximately 40 minutes and are open to all audiences free of charge. Audiences are encouraged to start gathering on the 2nd Ave beach at 7pm, and to bring beach towels or chairs. In the event of rain, performances will take place in the lobby of The Asbury Hotel at 7pm. Rain location will be called at 5pm on the day of performance if raining. Visit Siren Arts on Instagram for details: @sirenartsap

Into the Mystic is generously supported by Salt Hotels with housing assistance provided by The Asbury Hotel. Transformer thanks our Community Partners for their support of this year's Siren Arts programming, including: Monmouth Arts, Transparent Gallery, and the Boys & Girls Club of Monmouth County. Special thanks to the City of Asbury Park for its support of Siren Arts and *Into the Mystic*.

PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE:

Thursday, July 11 - Kunj

Thursday, August 8 - Tsedaye Makonnen

Thursday, July 18 - Jane Carver

Thursday, August 15 - Jodie Lyn-Kee-Chow

Thursday, July 25 - Maps Glover

Thursday, August 22 - Andrew Demirjian

Thursday, August 1 - Ayana Evans

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PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, JULY 11

Kunj | *Wet*

What is emotion? Is it a journey? A voyage along a sea of experience? Through the use of fabric and found ephemera, Kunj will perform a series of rituals based around grief and growth.

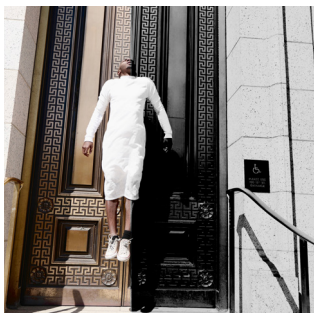
Questioning and rebelling against institutional ideas of race, gender and queerness, Kunj uses ritual performance and structure to explore the notion of no-identity versus new-identity. He received his bachelor's degree in anthropology and studio art from the University of Maryland, and has performed at Grace Exhibition Space in New York, Transformer DC, The Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden, EMP Collective in Maryland, the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery, and Platforms Project in Athens, Greece.

PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, JULY 18

Jane Carver, *We, The Creature*

We, The Creature is an original musical composition Carver created inspired by ancient ritual and sea monster lore. It is a part of Carver's ongoing study of collected depictions of the Dionysian myth, entitled Mending the Broken God. Much in the way that sacrificial victims were forced to wait, exposed for a monster's claim, thus sparing their home villages from total destruction, Carver will wait on the beach and sing to the sea. The song is an anthem for the heroes that long to be brave and fight for those they love, and the beasts themselves, whose qualities are exaggerations of aspects of the human condition- strength, perseverance, appetite, envy, boredom, self-delusion.

Jane Carver is a visual artist, composer and educator and co-founder of Impossible Song, a sound collective in Philadelphia, PA. Carver has an MFA in Combined Media from Hunter College and a BFA in Drawing from the Art Academy of Cincinnati. She has exhibited in group and solo shows throughout the U.S. and Europe, and has recorded two solo albums, *The Drunken Almanac* (2018) and *Point of Grace* (2019). A former Artist-in-Residence at The Association for Cultural Equity: The Alan Lomax Archive, she researches folk music traditions from around the world, and has performed in several Eastern European folk ensembles. In 2018, she sang in Havana, Cuba with the New York Women's Bulgarian Choir at the Oratorio San Felipe Nevi in a concert with The National Choir of Cuba. She is an educational guide at a 300 year-old burial ground. www.janecarver.bandcamp.com/



PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, JULY 25

Maps Glover, *Whispers from the Waves*

Whispers from the Waves is a dance based performance ritual highlighting the connection we all share with our ancestors through water. Dancers will act as a medium between the ancestral world and the physical world, bodies moving as one. Using their voices and bodies to share the Whispers from the Waves.

Maps Glover creates work inspired by human behavior and observation, and pervasive social issues. He visualizes how time affects behavior, and how observation of behavior alters perspective. He constructs portals in which the characters he creates exist and experience the world around them, often in ways that seem unnatural to the viewer. Maps has created and performed work at Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage, Smithsonian Arts & Industries Building, Transformer DC, and more. Photo Credit: Timoteo Murphy.

PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, AUGUST 1

Ayana Evans, *Spectacle and Change*

With *Spectacle and Change*, Evans attempts to present both an extreme spectacle of beauty inspired by the ocean, and a call to action for community involvement and care for each other. Audience participation of all ages will be strongly encouraged. "There is art that exists only as a beautiful image. This art usually helps us escape into a world of beauty and fantasy. And then there is art that draws our attention to the ills of the world. This art forces the viewer to confront what is wrong with the world, to see what is ugly in it and maybe be drawn to fix it. The meaning or activism of this type of art usually places more importance on the meaning and process of the work than on the beauty of the work. Rarely and perhaps most beautifully there is art that lies in the middle of these extremes." - Ayana Evans

Ayana Evans is a NYC based artist originally from Chicago, IL. Evans received her MFA in painting from the Tyler School of Art at Temple University and her BA in Visual Arts from Brown University. In 2015 she received the Jerome Foundation's Theater and Travel & Study Grant for artistic research abroad. During the summer of 2016 Evans completed her installment of the residency, "Back in Five Minutes" at El Museo Del Barrio in NYC. The next year she completed a 10 hour endurance based, citywide performance and 100 person performative dinner party in the Barnes Foundation museum (free and open to the public) during the Spring of 2017 for "A Person of the Crowd" which was a major performance art survey featuring artists such as, Marina Abramovic, Tania Bruguera and William Pope L. in Philadelphia, PA. Her international work includes FIAP, a performance festival in Martinique and Ghana's Chale Vote festival which drew 30,000 people. Evans was a 2018 Fellow in the Studio Immersion Program at EFA's Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop, as well as, a 2018 resident and grant recipient at Artists Alliance Inc (NYC), and a 2017-2018 awardee of the Franklin Furnace Fund for performance art. Recently she completed her first solo exhibition at Medium Tings Gallery in Brooklyn, which featured two solo performances, interactive works and a talk with professor and scholar Uri McMillan. Evans is also a 2018 NYFA Fellow for Interdisciplinary Arts. Photo by Bob Krasner. For full bio details visit: www.ayanaevans.com



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PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, AUGUST 8

Tsedaye Makonnen, *Breaking the Wake*

Breaking the Wake is a new performance based on Makonnen's past work on forced migrations that explores the blurring between and transience of borders and identities, using her body and the water as the conduit and the material. The work will be an abstracted participatory intervention that is both a personal, intimate memorialization for Makonnen, but also a look into our continued collective complacency towards the lives drowning in the Black Mediterranean. Drawing inspiration from Christina Sharpe's *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*, she will use her body to break the waters: "The amount of time it takes for a substance to enter the ocean and then leave the ocean is called residence time. Human blood is salty, and sodium, Gardulski tells me, has a residence time of 260 million years. And what happens to the energy that is produced in the waters? It continues cycling like atoms in residence time. We, Black people, exist in the residence time of the wake, a time in which 'everything is now. It is all now' (Morrison 1987, 198)." (Sharpe 2016, 41).



Tsedaye Makonnen is a multidisciplinary artist who exhibits internationally. Her main focus is on the African Diaspora's response to forced migration. As a mother and former doula: birth, femmehood, patriarchy and the medical industrial complex are other major themes in her practice and interwoven with migration, as well as colorism. She is currently DC Public Library's Maker-in-Residence 2018-2019, recent recipient of the 2019 Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship and DC Oral History Collaborative grant. She is collaborating with Ayana Evans as the Savage-Lewis Artist-in-Residence in Martha's Vineyard this summer. She has performed at the Venice Biennale, Art Basel Miami, Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, El Museo del Barrio, Pratt Film Institute, Queens Museum, Festival International d'Art Performance in Martinique, Chale Wote Street Art Festival in Ghana, Fendika Cultural Center in Ethiopia and more. The summer of 2018 she completed a residency with her mentor El Anatsui at his studio in Nsukka, Nigeria. Tsedaye has a new sculpture titled *Aberash*, a ten foot tall monument dedicated to black women and girls who have died at the hands of state sanctioned violence in the United States or along their journey to Europe that was recently exhibited at the National Gallery of Art and the August Wilson Center. She is currently taking part in speaking engagements across the country connecting migration and intersectional feminism. Image Credit: Emeka Egwuibe and Eze Chineye.



PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, AUGUST 15

Jodie Lyn-Kee-Chow, *Junkanooacome*

Combining storytelling, drawing, painting, sewing, sculpting, and live performance, and borrowing visual styles and traditional techniques from all aspects of her Jamaican, Chinese, and European heritage(s), Jodie Lyn-Kee-Chow's *Junkanooacome* explores cultural and spiritual practices, the topic of migration, and the effects globalization has on the natural landscape to (re)claim, (re)tell, and (re)educate on forgotten stories through art. Combining costuming and readymade objects that reference Junkanoo - a centuries old ritual and art form based on celebrating freedom - Lyn-Kee-Chow forms hybridized utopian environments and scenarios.

Jodie Lyn-Kee-Chow is a 1.5 generation Jamaican-American interdisciplinary artist living and working in Queens, NY. Her work often explores performance and installation art drawing from the nostalgia of her homeland, Caribbean folklore, fantasy, feminism, globalism, spirituality, environmentalism, and migration. She holds a BFA with honors from New World School of the Arts, University of Florida and an MFA from Hunter College, CUNY. Lyn-Kee-Chow's exhibitions of note include "Jamaican Pulse: Art and Politics from Jamaica and the Diaspora", Royal West Academy of England, Bristol, UK (2016), a special project commission at "Jamaica Biennial", The National Gallery of Jamaica, Kingston, JA (2017), and "Live Action 12" in Gothenburg, Sweden (2017). Lyn-Kee-Chow's work has garnered a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship Award in Interdisciplinary Art (2012), Rema Hort Mann Artist in Community Engagement Award (2017), Franklin Furnace Fund (2017-18). Her work, *Junkanooacome* is also supported by Culture Push Fellowship for Utopian Practice (2018), and Queens Art Fund (2019). Photo Credit: Maria Fernanda Hubeaut.

PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, AUGUST 22

Andrew Demirjian, *Sonic Drawing: Lines in the Sand*

Sonic Drawing: Lines in the Sand explores the interaction of airwaves and ocean waves by performers drawing moving lines of sound across the Asbury Park shoreline. Using the beach as a compositional space and radios as instruments, two groups of performers move their bodies to choreographed locations creating call and response patterns across the sand. The piece creates opportunities for audience members to experience resonant aural pathways as the composition envelops the listener's body in sound. The work culminates in the lines forming a sonic circle that surrounds the audience in an immersive 360° listening experience.



Andrew Demirjian's artistic practice fuses conceptual art, experimental poetry and computer science to harvest unexpected juxtapositions of cultural imagery, revealing subversive, deeply human readings of familiar spaces. Andrew's work has been performed and exhibited at The Museum of the Moving Image, The Newark Museum, The Havana Biennial, Eyebeam, Fridman Gallery, Rush Arts, Jazz at Lincoln Center, The Stone and many other galleries, festivals and museums. The MacDowell Colony, Puffin Foundation, Artslink, Harvestworks, Diapason, The Experimental Television Center, The Bemis Center, LMCC Swing Space and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts are among some of the organizations that have supported his work. He is currently a Fellow at the MIT Open Documentary Lab working on a computational text analysis and Audio AR project. For full bio details visit: www.andrewdemirjian.com. Photo Credit: Sher Chew.

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t r a n s f o r m e r is a Washington, DC based 501 (c) 3 artist-centered, non-profit visual arts organization. Founded in June 2002 by artists & arts organizers, Transformer provides a consistent, supportive, and professional platform for emerging artists to explore and present experimental artistic concepts, build audiences for their work, and advance their careers. A catalyst and advocate for contemporary artists and emergent expression in the visual arts, Transformer connects and promotes emerging visual artists within regional, national and international contexts through innovative exhibition and programs partnerships with a broad & diverse range of individual and organizational partners.

t r a n s f o r m e r's 2019/20 Exhibition Series and programs are supported by: Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The CrossCurrents Foundation, The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities/NEA, The Robert Lehman Foundation, and The Visionary Friends of Transformer – a growing group of individual donors & corporate sponsors.