

SIREN ARTS



presented by transformer in Asbury Park, NJ

S A L T

July 11 – August 19, 2022

transformer presents

SALT

July 11, 2022 - August 19, 2022

6th annual Siren Arts Residency Program &
Performance Art Series

ARTIST TALKS

Wednesdays at 6pm, July 13 - August 17
Transparent Clinch Gallery
210 Fifth Ave, Asbury Park, NJ

PERFORMANCE ART EVENTS

Thursdays at 7pm, July 14 - August 18
2nd Avenue Beach, Asbury Park, NJ

COMMUNITY PARTNERS



SPECIAL THANKS to the City of Asbury Park, iStar and Asbury Park Boardwalk for their continued support of this innovative programming.

SALT is generously supported by The Asbury Hotel,
Siren Arts exclusive Hotel Sponsor.

More info at transformerdc.org | [@sirenartsap](https://www.instagram.com/sirenartsap)

transformer's 2022/23 Exhibition Series and programs are supported by: Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, Corcoran Women's Committee, The CrossCurrents Foundation, The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities/NEA, The Robert Lehman Foundation, The Sachiko Kuno Foundation, The National Endowment for the Visual Arts, Truist Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Transformer's Board and Advisory Council, and The Visionary Leaders Circle – a growing group of individual donors & corporate sponsors.

CURATORIAL OVERVIEW

Salt marks the 6th year of Siren Arts, a unique summer residency program & performance art series created to support exceptional emerging visual artists, to engage audiences in thoughtful celebration of the ocean through innovative contemporary arts practices, and to build deeper awareness on the intersectional effects of climate change.

Siren Arts is an expansion of Transformer – an ‘artist-centered’ non-profit visual arts organization based in Washington, DC. Since June 2002, Transformer has been connecting, elevating, and serving a diversity of emerging artists and arts leaders through multi-faceted exhibition and program platforms within national and international contexts. Working independently and through global partnerships, Transformer presents & advances a rigorous and ambitious roster of artists each year, promoting their evolving ideas and work to growing audiences.

Highlighting artists living within the northeast corridor of DC to NYC, Transformer’s Siren Arts program provides urban-based artists an opportunity to enjoy creative time at the beach, and to expand and present their work to new audiences. Asbury Park’s rich cultural history and centralized location within the northeast shoreline provide fertile context for Siren Arts artists to question and create.

Pursuing different themes each year, Siren Arts: Salt is supporting a stellar line up of artists in their creation and presentation of experimental performance art works that address human & environmental interconnectedness.

CURATORIAL OVERVIEW

Siren Arts: Salt artists include: Alina Tenser & Gabo Camnitzer (Kyiv/ NYC), Holly Bass (Washington, DC), Ikwe (Kelsey Van Ert) (NYC), Arien Wilkerson with Nicholas Serrambana & Karim Rome (Philadelphia, PA), Alexander D'Agostino/Glitterwitch (Baltimore, MD), Carolina Mayorga (Washington, DC).

Informed and inspired by the sea, and how it moves us physically, spiritually, and emotionally, this year's Siren Arts artists explore themes of immigration issues, labor, land back, racial and social justice, ecological impact, human connectedness and more through music, dance, ritual, sound, and visual art components. Each artist's 'micro-residency' in Asbury Park includes public artist talks 6pm Wednesdays at Transparent Clinch Gallery, and public performances 7pm Thursdays on Asbury Park's 2nd Avenue Beach July 14 – August 18.

Transformer's goal with Siren Arts is to empower the participating artists and inspire audiences in both reflection and positive action around ocean conservation, and its implications in all other parts of our lives, while introducing new and best practices within contemporary art.

On behalf of Transformer's staff and Board of Directors, we are so honored to support this year's artists, and to present Siren Arts back on the beach in Asbury Park this summer!

- Victoria Reis, Co-Founder / Executive & Artistic Director, Transformer

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

JULY 14:

Alina Tenser & Gabo Camnitzer
(Kyiv/NYC)

JULY 21:

Holly Bass
(Washington, DC)

JULY 28:

Ikwe (Kelsey Van Ert)
(NYC)

AUGUST 4:

Arien Wilkerson
with Nicholas Serrambana & Karim Rome
(Philadelphia, PA)

AUGUST 11:

Alexander D'Agostino/Glitterwitch
(Baltimore, MD)

AUGUST 18:

Carolina Mayorga
(Washington, DC)

PERFORMANCES

Thursdays, 7pm on 2nd Avenue Beach
Asbury Park, NJ

RAIN LOCATION

Asbury Park Boardwalk Casino Breezeway



Alina Tenser & Gabo Camnitzer, *The Rock In The Sweat*

PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, JULY 14

With *The Rock In The Sweat*, Alina Tenser and Gabo Camnitzer explore the discursive and affective registers of salt, tracing its history as a material, a commodity, and an idea. Salt has the ability to preserve and to decay, to suspend animation and to propel bullets. It's a rock circulating our body. Using experimental prompts, and custom props that shift form and function, Tenser and Camnitzer will engage people in consideration of what happens when something that was once understood as precious is suddenly revealed to be permeating everything.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Alina Tenser is a Ukrainian-born artist working across sculpture, video, performance, and interactive engagement. Grounded in a sculptural process, she makes forms that beckon physical activation and transference. These forms can become open invitations for haptic and visual interaction, enabling viewers to decode a form through its particular "affordances", or function defining characteristics. Affordances activate a desire and locus for connection that operates on a somatic and emotional level. Tenser is currently an Assistant Professor at SUNY Purchase College.

Gabo Camnitzer is an artist and educator working across experimental pedagogy, installation, and video. Camnitzer's work revolves around questions of education and knowledge exchange, often using the child as an avatar to examine the societal structures that surround and shape subjectivity. Camnitzer is Assistant Professor of Social Practice and Director of the Foundations Program at UMass Dartmouth. He has previously held teaching positions at Columbia University, Valand Academy, and the Neighborhood School (PS 363), a public elementary school in NYC.



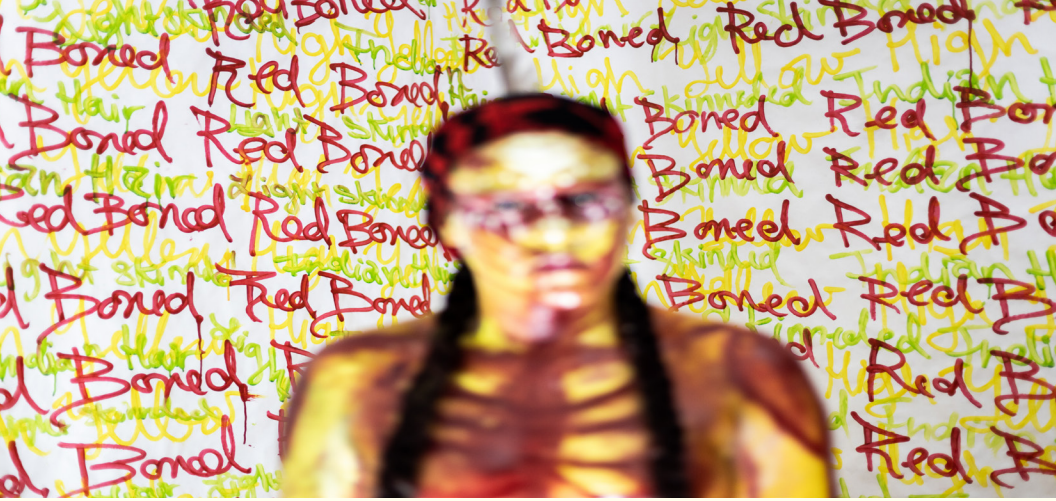
Holly Bass, *Tether*

PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, JULY 21

"The salty waters of the Atlantic have always been a space of both dreaming and grief for me, a place of beauty and terror. Being Black American and choosing to remain in America also carries its own kind of twoness, to borrow from DuBois. Why do I feel so bound to a place where I have never felt fully safe or fully seen by a majority of my fellow compatriots? In *Tether*, I will explore the physical and psychological distances between land and salt water, between being bound to a place and being free to choose where to go, how to be. While in residence, I will explore early memories of going to the beach with my family and friends, and my attraction to and fear of the ocean. I will also continue my explorations of tobacco cloth, cyanotypes, and African-American mythologies about water and salt. This research, conducted alone and with local community, will culminate in a performance ritual that literally explores the idea of 'the tie that binds'."

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Holly Bass is a multidisciplinary performance and visual artist, writer and director. Her work is often community-engaged and explores issues of race, gentrification, cultural bonds and labor including her family history of sharecropping. She has received numerous grants from the DC Arts Commission and was a 2019 Red Bull Detroit artist-in-residence and a 2019 Dance/USA Artist Fellow. She is a 2020-2022 Live Feed resident artist at New York Live Arts and a 2021-22 Smithsonian Artist Research Fellow. She is currently the national director for Turnaround Arts at the Kennedy Center, a program which uses the arts strategically to transform schools facing severe inequities.



Ikwe (Kelsey Van Ert)

PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, JULY 28

“As an individual of mixed heritage, my work is often connected to my African American and Ojibwe experience. I use music, songwriting, sound art, poetry, performance art as well as still and moving images to amplify the mixed African American and Native American. At times my work focuses on my Black identity, other times it focuses on my Indigenous story. In efforts to highlight my Afro Indigenous experience, my ever-evolving artistic process incorporates the creation of indigenous hand drums, storytelling, transcribing thoughts on paper, and melding Black and Indigenous music.”

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Ikwe (Kelsey Van Ert) is a Black and Ojibwe multidisciplinary artist and musician from St. Paul & Minneapolis, based in Brooklyn. Ikwe is a two-time recipient of the Brooklyn Arts Council Community Arts Grant (2018 & 2019) and a 2022 AudioFemme Agenda Grant. Her recent work is largely inspired by the Ojibwe word, “Makadewiiaasikwe,” which translates to “a Black woman; a woman of African descent.” Ikwe is honored that her Makadewiiaasikwe pieces have been presented by The Shed NY, The Wyckoff House Museum, Lincoln Center Out of Doors, the Brooklyn Prelude Festival, SECCA in Winston-Salem, NC, Beckham Gallery in Flint, MI, and SoundSet Music Festival in Minneapolis, MN.



Arien Wilkerson with Nicholas Serrambana and Karim Rome, *brack'ish*

PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, AUGUST 4

"During this public performance we will embody specific movement vocabularies such as tracing, flying, darting, digging, trotting, gliding, hurling, slinking, connecting movement phrases, live sound experimentation and long choreographic structured improvisations to find shared roots of black, radical, poz, trans, non-binary, traditions and mindsets; which go beyond just voguing as a placeholder for queer radicalization; adding new categories of human experience stripped bare of historical frames embedded within our culture. For us salt is about the unraveling of frames or frame works that suggest we all relate to land and sea as it relates to blackness and cityscapes, as it relates to the shores of land we have come to wash up on. The interpersonal questions of how free does the skin feel removed from its constant political and personal dialogue and how shared mindsets aren't always in shared spaces."

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Arien Wilkerson/TNMOT AZTRO is a queer, non-binary, black, choreographer, dancer, director, producer, film maker, arts administer and installation artist. Based in Philadelphia, Wilkerson is the Founder/Artistic Director of the award-winning Philadelphia/Connecticut based production company TNMOT AZTRO PERFORMANCE ART AND DANCE INSTALLATION LLC. Tnmot Aztro considers that the complexities within art derive from the alienation of objects, identities, the body, sounds, and humans and is rooted in repurposing and redefining meanings of "fine art" and it's attachment to colonialism, white supremacy, and institutionalized racism.

Nicholas Serrambana is a queer untethered by the syntactical disclosures of pronouns and the other failures of the liberal arts industrial complex. Rather, as a spectral composer and contrabassist, Nicholas sees it fitting to approach gender in a spectral, hauntological manner as well, an ontology that mirrors the composer's emphasis on asemic ephemera and Derridean différance. In their current practice, Nicholas is concerned with acoustic trespassing as a therapeutic offering, performing outdoors whenever possible as a disavowal of both technology and ticketed exclusivity. The terrain that they map is, ultimately, one of acoustic monoliths and blessings. Most of all, they aren't a jazz musician...

Image Credit: Joe Condren



Alexander D'Agostino/*Glitterwitch*, *Calm Before the Storm/Prospero's Final Spell*

PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, AUGUST 11

Calm Before the Storm/Prospero's Final Spell is a durational performance that meditates on the idea of having magical powers and how to give them back. The artist becomes Prospero, lamenting his banishment and the futility and corruption of magic when used to gain power over others. D'Agostino will be extracting salt from the ocean to mix into a pile lavender with his pointe shoes on top of an altar/gogodancer box. During the performance, people will be able to gather and throw lavender on the artist's altar. When the salt is ready, D'Agostino will summon a storm with his body until he has exhausted the thunder.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Alexander D'Agostino is an interdisciplinary artist and teacher based in Baltimore, Maryland. He graduated from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2009 with a BFA in painting. He investigates the queer and otherworldly through dance, ritual, teaching, and visual art. His work has been presented at Vox Populi in Philadelphia, VisArts in Rockville, the Center for Contemporary Art of Afghanistan in Kabul, the Baltimore Museum of Art, Chashama's summer performance series in Manhattan, Itinerant Performance Art Festival at the Queens Museum, the Walters Art Museum, Transformer DC, and Arlington Art Center's Spring 2022 Solo Exhibitions. Later this year he will begin his work as Artist Research Fellow at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington DC.



Carolina Mayorga, *Ceremonial Business*

PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, AUGUST 18

In this interactive performance, a PINK goddess will perform a salt ceremonial walk along the beach that will slowly transition into an unexpected trade that involves audience participation. The contrasting actions will juxtapose the historical and spiritual values of salt with its industrial and commercial values.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Carolina Mayorga is a Washington DC-based interdisciplinary artist who has exhibited her work nationally and internationally for the last 20 years. Her work addresses issues of social and political content through performance art, site-specific installations, and 2-dimensional media.

Image Credit: Craig Garrett

t r a n s f o r m e r



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 connects, elevates, and serves a diversity of emerging artists and arts leaders through innovative and multi-faceted exhibition and program platforms. Working both independently and through global partnerships, Transformer provides extensive support to emerging artists in their exploration and presentation of experimental artistic concepts. A catalyst and advocate for artists and artistic experimentation, Transformer's work within regional, national and international contexts to build understanding and audiences for new and best visual arts practices.

 @transformerdc +  @sirenartsap

1404 P Street NW, Washington, DC 20005 | transformerdc.org | info@transformerdc.org

transformer 20

*CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF TRANSFORMER'S WORK AS
A CATALYST AND ADVOCATE FOR EMERGING ARTISTS &
EMERGENT EXPRESSION IN THE VISUAL ARTS!*



Image Credit: Transformer's 15th Annual Auction at the GWU/Corcoran School of Art & Design, 2018. Image by Nick Klein.

TRANSFORMER20 RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION & BENEFIT AUCTION

NOVEMBER 10 – DECEMBER 10, 2022

A large-scale exhibition at The GWU/Corcoran School of Art & Design's historic Flagg Building showcasing more than 100 Transformer alumni artists and documentation from twenty years of Transformer's history.

TRANSFORMER20 - THE BOOK WINTER 2022

Transformer's first retrospective book featuring documentation showcasing twenty years of artist-driven exhibitions and programs, alongside the writing of artists and colleagues integral to Transformer's legacy.



Image Credit: Exile Books exhibition view at Transformer, 2015.



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Members of Transformer's Visionary Leaders Circle propel our work supporting exceptional emerging artists, celebrating our growing legacy, and advancing our mission. Join today to receive exclusive/first access to Transformer20 programs & events.



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