

t r a n s f o r m e r

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Siren Arts: *Salt* July 11 – August 19, 2022

Transformer's 6th Annual Summer Artist Residency
& Performance Art Series

Performance Art Events:
7pm Thursdays on the 2nd Avenue Beach, Asbury Park, NJ

Artist Talks: 6pm Wednesdays at Transparent Clinch Gallery

All Audiences Welcome; All Programming Presented Free of Charge

Transformer presents the 6th year of our Siren Arts program at the beach in Asbury Park, NJ, supporting 9 east coast-based artists pursuing innovative performance art works that celebrate the ocean through explorations of the theme salt as material, commodity, idea, sensation, identity and emotion.

Each artists' five-day beach residency includes public artist talks at 6pm Wednesdays at Transparent Clinch Gallery, and performances at 7pm Thursdays on the 2nd Avenue Beach. This year's artist line up includes:

July 11 – 15: **Alina Tenser (Kyiv/NYC) & Gabo Camnitzer (NYC)**

July 18 – 22: **Holly Bass (DC)**

July 25 – 29: **Ikwe (Kelsey Van Er) (NYC)**

August 1 – 5: **Arien Wilkerson with Nicholas Serrambana and Karim Rome (Philadelphia, PA)**

August 8 – 12: **Alexander D'Agostino/Glitterwitch (Baltimore, MD)**

August 15 – 19: **Carolina Mayorga (DC)**

Launched in 2017, Siren Arts is a summertime micro-residency program taking place in Asbury Park, NJ that supports emerging visual artists working within evolving performance art disciplines. Created and curated by Victoria Reis, Transformer's Executive & Artistic Director, 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 with new & best contemporary arts practices: <http://www.transformerdc.org/>

Siren Arts seeks to both celebrate the ocean and bring awareness to the intersectional effects of climate change, including: immigration issues, labor, land back, racial and social justice, ecological impact, human connectedness and more. Each Siren Arts artist participates in a micro-residency in Asbury Park that culminates in Thursday evening public performance art events on the iconic Asbury Park beach.



t r a n s f o r m e r

All performances will take place at approximately 7pm on the 2nd Avenue Beach in Asbury Park, NJ. Performances will last approximately 30-40 minutes and are open to all audiences free of charge. Audiences are encouraged to gather on the 2nd Ave beach at 6:45pm, bringing beach towels or chairs for seating. In case of rain, performances will take place in the Casino Breezeway of the Asbury Park Boardwalk. For details: @sirenartsap on Instagram.

SIREN ARTS: *SALT* – ARTISTS & PERFORMANCE DETAILS:



PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, JULY 14

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

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 a consideration of what happens when something that was once understood as precious is suddenly revealed to be permeating everything.

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.

PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, JULY 21

Holly Bass, *Tether*

"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'."



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. A gifted and dedicated teaching artist, she directed a year-round creative writing and performance program for adjudicated youth in DC's Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services for four years as well as facilitating workshops nationally and internationally. 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.



PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, JULY 28

Ikwe (Kelsey Van Ert), *They Be Leavin' Stuff Out Ta Make 'Em Look Gud.*

A free verse flow of consciousness poem written on at least 50 feet of brown paper about the history of Asbury Park. Calling to honor the Nanticoke Lenne Lenape, the Ramapough Lenape and Powhatan Renape as well as the Black Service Workers of Asbury Park and their descents who still reside in the surrounding community. Participants are invited to read the piece out loud, illustrate on the paper, write questions, list

t r a n s f o r m e r

historically accurate facts that amplify the Indigenous and Black people of Asbury Park, as well as write any response they see fit. The work will culminate with a 50+ foot communal poem.

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.

PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, AUGUST 4

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

"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."



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. Their sold out performances, online lectures and events have taken place at many art galleries, institutions and incubator spaces such as University of Pennsylvania Philadelphia PA, Yale School of Art, New Haven CT, University of Connecticut, Judson Memorial Church NYC, Rhode Island School of Design, Trinity College, Real Art Ways, Slought Foundation, Vox Populi Gallery, Icebox Project Space, AS22O Providence RI, SPACE Gallery Portland Maine, just to name a few.

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*. Art jargon aside, Nicholas writes music for the notes of the bent keyboard, and has performed these limber lyricisms in universities and DIY basements alike. 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 ...



PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, AUGUST 11

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

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/gogo-dancer 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.

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.

t r a n s f o r m e r

PERFORMANCE | THURSDAY, AUGUST 18

Carolina Mayorga, *Ceremonial Business*

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.

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 Credits: Alina Tenser & Gabo Camnitzer; Holly Bass; Kino Galbraith; Joe Condren; Mariah Miranda; Craig Garrett

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.

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