


Resources



centering

 Ecology

and 

Disability

a gratitude offering by Culture Push, 2023

This guide was created from Culture Push's queer-disability-ecology centered public programming conducted in 2023, facilitated by our Access Doula and Disability Culture Activist moira williams.

We created this document as a token of our appreciation for our donors and supporters in our 2023 Annual Fundraising Campaign. If you're in a position to contribute, we warmly invite you to make a donation and continue supporting our mission of empowering civic action through socially-engaged art!

HERE, you'll find detailed information about our 2024 funding goals and initiatives.



Speculative Crip Ecologies + Rituals in the Age of Multispecies Disability

was a disability centered reading and discussion series held in November and December 2023 organized by disabled Indigenous artist moira williams with Culture Push and supported by a Humanities New York grant. Our series was for and with disabled communities across race, gender and class as we consider Disability Justice and Environmental Justice, words that are rarely in a conversation or the same sentence. Yet, Disability Justice and Environmental Justice are in constant conversation and closely woven together throughout the world and in our Crip lived experiences.





Speculative Crip Ecologies + Rituals in the Age of Multispecies Disability

*Join our eco-disability reading + discussion
group with guest Naomi Ortiz!*

Sunday November 19th 4:30 to 6:00 pm Pacific Time /
5:30 to 7:00 pm Mountain Time / 7:30 to 9:00 pm
Eastern Time

Access Magic

ASL

Access Doula

Reading selections provided in PDF format

Visual interpretation via Zoom whiteboard

** 24 person limit with waiting list thanks! **


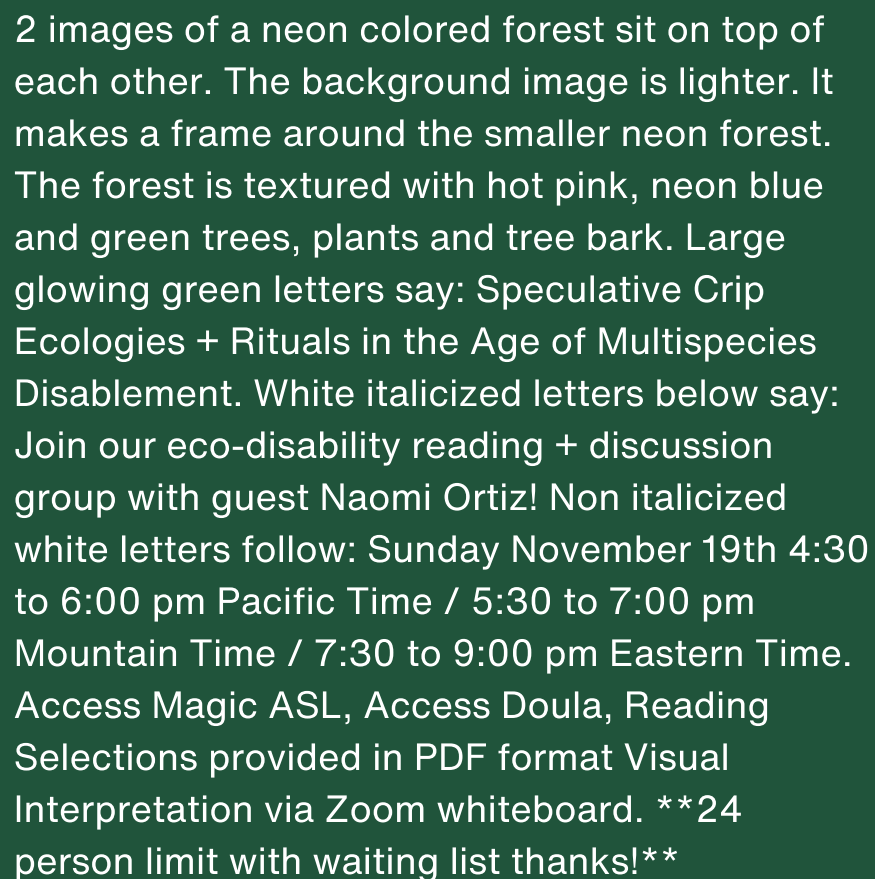






Image Description for the 'Speculative Crip
Ecologies + Rituals in the Age of Multispecies
Disability' Event Poster



2 images of a neon colored forest sit on top of each other. The background image is lighter. It makes a frame around the smaller neon forest. The forest is textured with hot pink, neon blue and green trees, plants and tree bark. Large glowing green letters say: Speculative Crip Ecologies + Rituals in the Age of Multispecies Disablement. White italicized letters below say: Join our eco-disability reading + discussion group with guest Naomi Ortiz! Non italicized white letters follow: Sunday November 19th 4:30 to 6:00 pm Pacific Time / 5:30 to 7:00 pm Mountain Time / 7:30 to 9:00 pm Eastern Time. Access Magic ASL, Access Doula, Reading Selections provided in PDF format Visual Interpretation via Zoom whiteboard. **24 person limit with waiting list thanks!**



Throughout our discussions and grounding rituals, we invoked or remembered and wove together, Naomi Ortiz's definition of Nature and ritual, with Joshua Whitehead's rememberings, biostories, and queering of nature, with Jeannette Armstrong's water relationships weaving together all bodies ecological and human, and Stacy Alaimo's thoughts and ours, about jellyfishes' resistance to form, categorization, and its celebration of flexibility and secrecy. We celebrated Audre Lorde's *Uses of Erotics* with Tiffany Lethabo King and Julie Dash's work's that center deep sharing with one another, ancestors and nature as erotics and as resistance through breath, softness, slowness and more.

What we read and discussed:

We were honored that **Naomi Ortiz** joined us for our discussion of 5 works from their new collection; ***Rituals for Climate Change: A Crip Struggle for Ecojustice***. Naomi is a writer, poet and visual artist cracking apart common beliefs to reveal beauty. Through facilitated discussion, art, poetry and reflection, they support individuals to connecting themselves to their own truths around self-care and living in multiple worlds.




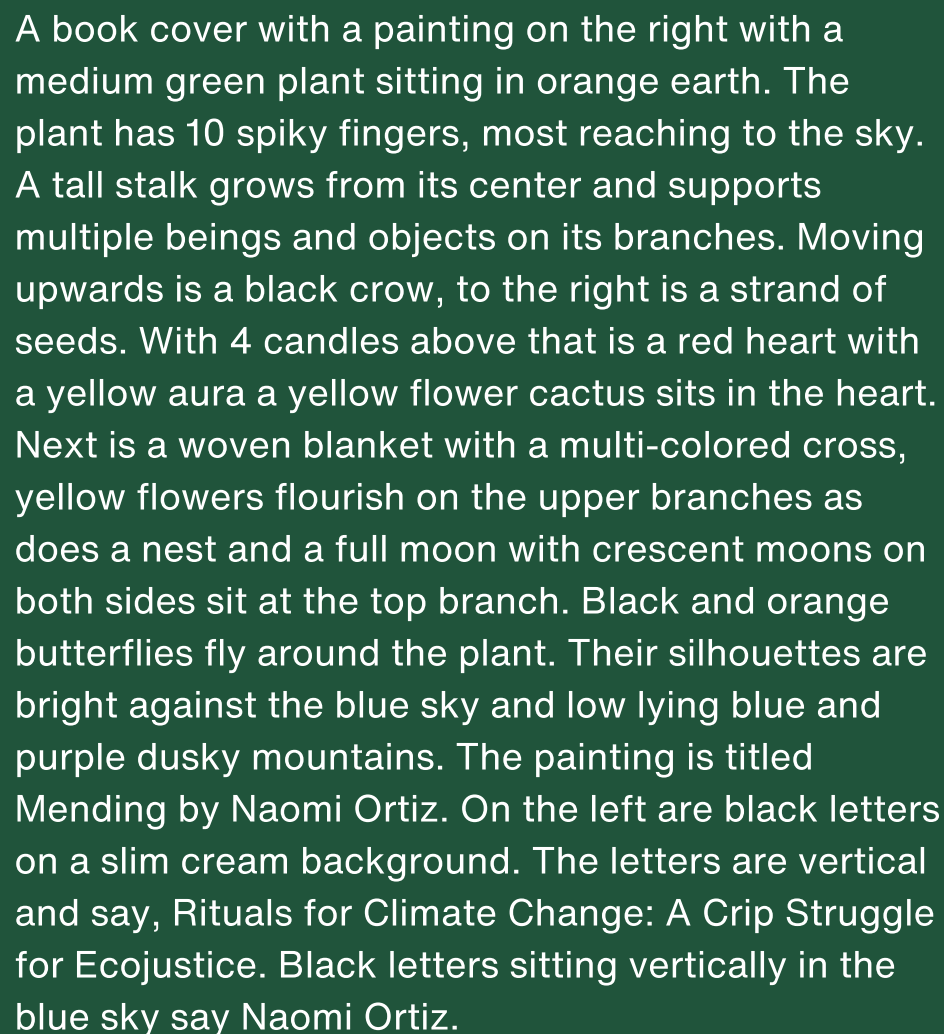



Image Description for 'Rituals for Climate Change:
A Crip Struggle for Ecojustice'



A book cover with a painting on the right with a medium green plant sitting in orange earth. The plant has 10 spiky fingers, most reaching to the sky. A tall stalk grows from its center and supports multiple beings and objects on its branches. Moving upwards is a black crow, to the right is a strand of seeds. With 4 candles above that is a red heart with a yellow aura a yellow flower cactus sits in the heart. Next is a woven blanket with a multi-colored cross, yellow flowers flourish on the upper branches as does a nest and a full moon with crescent moons on both sides sit at the top branch. Black and orange butterflies fly around the plant. Their silhouettes are bright against the blue sky and low lying blue and purple dusky mountains. The painting is titled Mending by Naomi Ortiz. On the left are black letters on a slim cream background. The letters are vertical and say, Rituals for Climate Change: A Crip Struggle for Ecojustice. Black letters sitting vertically in the blue sky say Naomi Ortiz.

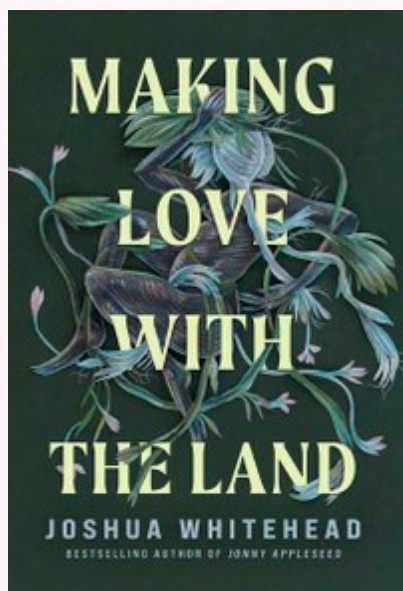


They generously read several poems out loud including Nature Defined, Epicenter, and Heart Remedy for Mountain Scars (Dedicated to the Mountain Range).

We discussed moving at the edges of nature as disabled people, nature as everywhere and as everything, how we are an integral part of Nature and shared some of our lived experiences of learning with Nature, including climate grief, joy and the colonial disabling of nature.

***My Aunties Are Wolverines* from Joshua Whitehead's *Making Love with The Land Essays*.**

Joshua Whitehead is an Oji-Cree, Two-Spirit storyteller and academic from Peguis First Nation on Treaty 1 territory in Manitoba.




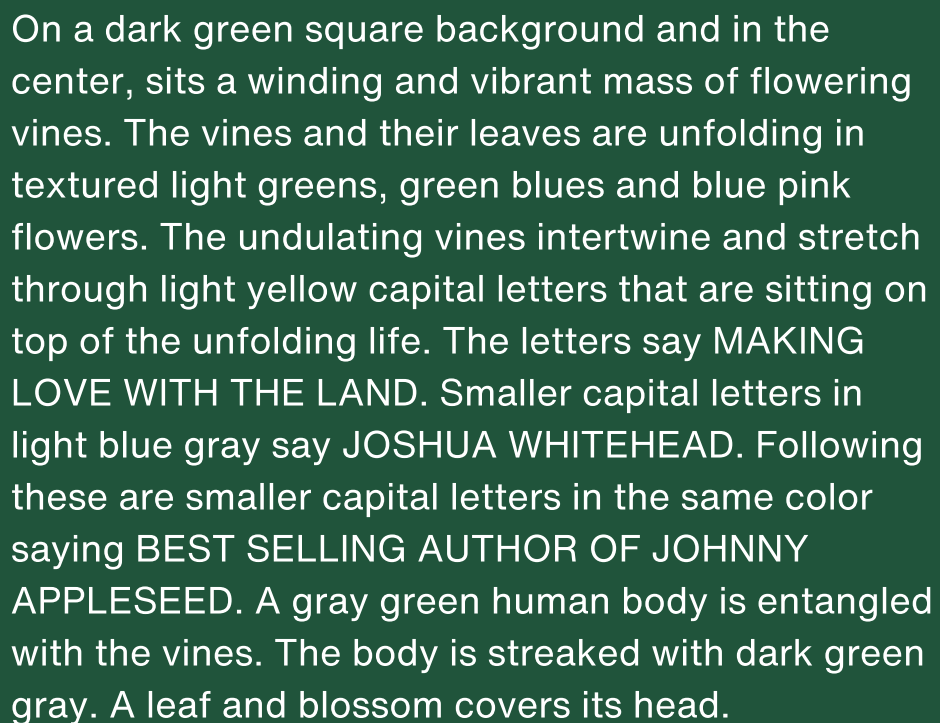



Image Description for 'Making Love with The Land
Essays'



On a dark green square background and in the center, sits a winding and vibrant mass of flowering vines. The vines and their leaves are unfolding in textured light greens, green blues and blue pink flowers. The undulating vines intertwine and stretch through light yellow capital letters that are sitting on top of the unfolding life. The letters say MAKING LOVE WITH THE LAND. Smaller capital letters in light blue gray say JOSHUA WHITEHEAD. Following these are smaller capital letters in the same color saying BEST SELLING AUTHOR OF JOHNNY APPLESEED. A gray green human body is entangled with the vines. The body is streaked with dark green gray. A leaf and blossom covers its head.



Jeannette Armstrong's *Water Is Siwkw.*

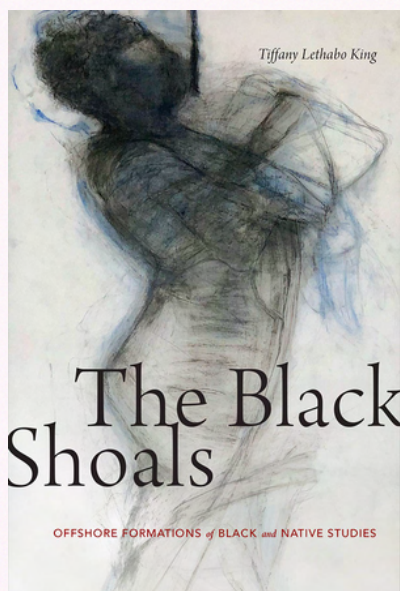
She belongs to the Okanagan Nation and is Okanagan Knowledge Keeper and Syilx Language saver, a poet, writer, artist, educator, and political activist.

***Jellyfish Science, Jellyfish Aesthetics: Post Human Reconfigurations of the Sensible* by Stacy Alaimo.**

She is an academic, a teacher, and conceived the concept of transcorporeality.

***Our Cherokee Uncles Black and
Native Erotics and Epilouge Of
Water and Land***

from **Tiffany Lethabo King's *The
Black Shoals Offshore Formations
of Black and Native Studies.***






Image Description for 'The Black Shoals: Offshore Formations of Black and Native Studies'

An oblong white book cover. In the center of the cover is a large black drawing of a naked Black woman without anatomical details. The drawing grows upward from the bottom of the cover with light black mark making and movement. As the drawing of the woman moves up the cover, it becomes more figurative and dense. Her back, shoulders, and head arch slightly backwards and turn towards us. Her face is deep, but not solid black without features and is delicately framed with short curly hair. Around her head are watery blurs and 1 splash of blue. Like her legs, her arms are active line drawings that are a blur of movement. Her arms make streaks of blue. Above the drawing to the right are italicized dark red letters saying: Tiffany Lethabo King. Large black letters in front of the drawing say: The Black Shoals. Smaller dark red letters follow saying: OFFSHORE FORMATIONS of BLACK and NATIVE STUDIES.

***Daughters of the Dust* Movie**

1991 independent film written, directed and produced by **Julie Dash**.

It is the first feature film directed by an African-American woman distributed theatrically in the United States.


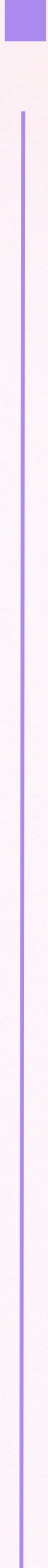


2.

Eco Somatic readings, conversations and movement centering disability and LGBTIQ+ ecologies of pain and joy with the environment.

Featuring Stephanie Heit, Petra Koppers, Krishna Washburn, Taja Will, and moira williams.

On April 26, 2023, the "Eco Somatic Reading, Conversation, and Movement" event offered a unique exploration into the integration of ecological awareness and somatic practices. This gathering highlighted the interconnection between our environment and bodily experiences, featuring a blend of theoretical discussions, engaging conversations, and practical movement activities.



**Eco Somatic readings, conversations
movement centering disability and LGBTIQ+
ecologies of pain and joy with the environment**

Stephanie Heit
Petra Kuppers
Krishna Wasburn
Taja Will
moira williams

Online
April 26th 6-8pm EST/5-7pm CT/3-5pm PST

Access Menu:
Access Doula
Participation Guide
AI Captioning
ASL

Hosted by CULTURE PUSH
www.culturepush.org


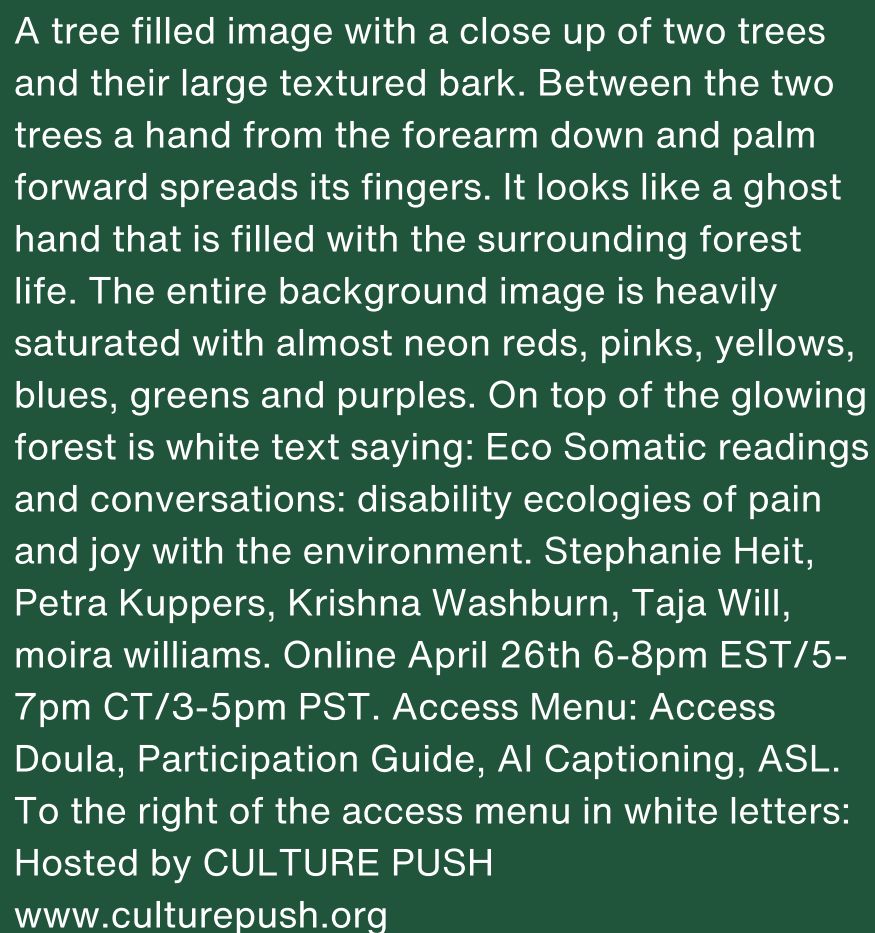



Image Description for the 'Eco Somatic readings, conversations and movement' Event Poster



A tree filled image with a close up of two trees and their large textured bark. Between the two trees a hand from the forearm down and palm forward spreads its fingers. It looks like a ghost hand that is filled with the surrounding forest life. The entire background image is heavily saturated with almost neon reds, pinks, yellows, blues, greens and purples. On top of the glowing forest is white text saying: Eco Somatic readings and conversations: disability ecologies of pain and joy with the environment. Stephanie Heit, Petra Kupperts, Krishna Washburn, Taja Will, moira williams. Online April 26th 6-8pm EST/5-7pm CT/3-5pm PST. Access Menu: Access Doula, Participation Guide, AI Captioning, ASL. To the right of the access menu in white letters: Hosted by CULTURE PUSH
www.culturepush.org



Culture Push has made this event available for public access as a video recording.

The following video recording offers an immersive experience, combining theoretical dialogues, engaging conversations, and hands-on movement exercises.

It guides viewers through the principles of eco-somatics, emphasizing the interconnectedness of our physical presence and the natural environment. Accessible online, this event provides valuable insights and practical approaches for those seeking to harmonize their lives with the rhythms of nature.



**ECO SOMATIC READINGS,
CONVERSATIONS, AND MOVEMENT**

hosted by **CULTURE PUSH** on April 26, 2023
with invitations and offerings by
Stephanie Heit, Petra Kupperts, Krishna Washburn,
Talia V... and moira williams.

1:38:38

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vimeo.com/839761567



About the Artists:



moira williams (they/them)

is a disabled Indigenous artist, cross-disability cultural activist and access doula; co-creating and weaving disability justice together with crip celebratory resistance and environmental justice. moira believes in access as art and “access intimacy” as an attitude needed to push beyond the limitations of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Their often co-creative work leads with disability, stemming from the understanding that deep-rooted cultural changes must be made in arts and environmental spaces and practices to become accessible.



moira williams

One part of affecting change is by placing disabled artists and activists in positions of influence to shape culture from within. Another part is acknowledging that entering positions of power is not the end goal. Instead, the end goal is to co-create an active culture where power positions no longer exist.

They are currently an Access Doula and Cross Disability Culture activist at Culture Push, NYC. moira's on-going work with water focuses on access intimacy and water intimacy as ways forward to accessible waterfronts.



moira williams

In 2021, as part of Works On Water's Tending the Edge, moira engaged NYC's disability communities along with NYC's Department of City Planning and the Comprehensive Waterfront Plan. As part of this, moira created an online and in-person Disability Cabaret on an accessible boat and a new practice of extended comment deadlines to support comments from NYC's disability communities. We celebrated the new practice, an accessible bathroom, and ourselves on an accessible boat! A link to moira's website is [HERE](#).





Stephanie Heit

is a queer disabled poet, dancer, teacher, and co director of Turtle Disco, a somatic writing space on Anishinaabe land in Ypsilanti, Michigan. She is a Zoeglassia Fellow, and the author of PSYCH MURDERS (Wayne State University Press, 2022) and The Color She Gave Gravity (Operating System, 2017).

Stephanie is an active member of the Olimpias; an international disability performance collective. She co-directed the Asylum Project (2015-2019); an experimental and community practice investigation into the many meanings of asylum. Stephanie is bipolar, a mad activist, and a shock/psych system survivor.

Link to Stephanie's website is [HERE](#).



Petra Kuppers (she/her)

is a disability culture activist, a wheelchair dancer, and a community performance artist. Petra grounds herself in disability culture methods. She uses eco somatics, performance, and speculative writing to engage audiences toward more socially just and enjoyable futures. She teaches at the University of Michigan as the Anita Gonzalez Collegiate Professor of Performance Studies and Disability Culture, with her tenure homes in the English and Women's and Gender Studies Departments. She is also an adviser on the MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts at Goddard College.



Petra Koppers

has been engaged in community dance and disability culture production since the late 80s (first in her native Germany, then in Wales, UK; Aotearoa/New Zealand; and then in the US). She continues to lead workshops internationally, in these forms as well as in disability-culture adapted social somatics. When her chronic pain does not allow outer movement, she writes. Her third performance poetry collection, Gut Botany, was named one of the top ten US poetry books of 2020 by the New York Public Library, and it won the 2022 Creative Book Award by the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment.



Petra Koppers



also writes speculative fiction (short story collection Ice Bar 2018), and academic books (latest, 2022, open access: Eco Soma: Joy and Pain in Speculative Performance Encounters).

She is the Artistic Director of The Olimpias, an international disability culture collective, and co-creates Turtle Disco, a somatic writing studio, with her wife, poet and dancer Stephanie Heit, from their home in Ypsilanti, Michigan, on Three Fires Confederacy Territory, colonially known as Ypsilanti, Michigan. A link to Petra's website is HERE.



Krishna Christine Washburn

is an artistic director and instructor for Dark Room Ballet, and co-directed the Telephone Film. She has an M.Ed. from Hunter College, a BA from Barnard College, and is certified by the ACSM in biomechanics. She speaks regularly on self-audio description and educating blind/visually impaired dance students.

Taja Will (they/them)

is a non-binary, chronically ill, queer, Latinx (Chilean) adoptee. They are a performer, choreographer, somatic therapist, consultant and Healing Justice practitioner based in Mni Sota Makoce, on the ancestral lands of the Dakota and Anishinaabe. Taja's approach integrates improvisation, somatic modalities, text and vocals in contemporary performance. Their aesthetic is one of spontaneity, bold choice making, sonic and kinetic partnership and the ability to move in relationship to risk and intimacy.



Taja Will

Will's artistic work explores visceral connections to current socio-cultural realities through a blend of ritual, dense multi-layered worldbuilding and everyday magic.

Taja is a recent recipient of the Jerome Hill Artist Fellowship, in the dance field. Their work has been presented throughout the Twin Cities and across the United States. Including local performances at the Walker Art Center Choreographer's Evening, the Red Eye Theater's New Works 4 Weeks, the Radical Recess series, Right Here Showcase and the Candy Box Dance Festival.



Taja Will

They are a recipient of the 2018 -19 McKnight Choreography Fellowship, administered by the Cowles Center and funded by The McKnight Foundation. Will has recently received support from the National Association of Latinx Arts & Culture, the Minnesota State Arts Board, and Metropolitan Regional Arts Council. Taja ground their work in indigenous solidarity and decolonization as a means to undo white and able body supremacy and its pervasive relationship to capitalism. They are committed to working for healing and liberation of Black, Indigenous and people of color and radical care work for folks with chronic illness and disabilities. A link to Taja Will's website is [HERE](#)

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