

The Ceremony Must be Found:



**The Ceremony Must be Found:
Ritual as Artistic Practice**

January 18 – March 2, 2024

manuel arturo abreu

Marielys Burgos Meléndez

Dana Davenport

Caroline Garcia

Catalina Ouyang

Vivek Shraya

Qualeasha Wood

Curator: Anna Cahn

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The program is based on Open Calls as well as invitational exhibitions and projects. It is a home for emerging, mid-career, as well as established curators and artists. We focus our attention on community engagement and public programming.

The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts is a 501(c)(3) public charity, dedicated to providing artists across all disciplines with space, tools and a cooperative forum for the

development of individual practice. We are a catalyst for cultural growth, stimulating new interactions between artists, art professionals, creative communities, and the public.

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Writing as Ritual: Invoking Art and Ceremony

by Anna Cahn

“When I write it feels like I am carving bone [...]. It is always a path/state to something else.”

—Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands La Frontera: The New Mestiza*

As a writer, I find myself constantly searching for time to “do the work,” as if writing happens in pure isolation or in a neat linear progression. No, writing is the act of interruption—rupturing the continuums of past and present, time and space, self and other. Writing is a ritual that evokes the senses. In ceremonial rites, the invocation of prayers, images, gestures, and smells initiate acts of healing, transformation, and altered states of consciousness. Writing also possesses these same poetic powers. Writers become intermediaries, even oracles at times, by communicating with those who are living, as well as those who are no longer here in physical form. Just as in ritual ceremony, the author may access multiple voices: the ancestral, the animal, the real, and the imagined.

There are few writers that have captured the process of writing as a ritual more poignantly than feminist scholar and writer Gloria Anzaldúa. Her radical, experimental, and vulnerable style of writing switches between a personal and political voice, blurring the lines between theory and poetry, and the everyday and the magical. Her most explicit writing on ritual is in her text *Borderlands La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987). *Borderlands* documents Anzaldúa’s experience growing up in the Rio Grande Valley, which spans the border of Texas and Mexico. Invoking memories from her childhood, symbolic ritual imagery from her indigenous heritage, and raw expressions of her queer sexuality, Anzaldúa introduces the (auto)poetic form as a method for anti-colonial, queer, and feminist critical writing.

The (auto)poetic is at the epicenter of the exhibition *The Ceremony Must be Found: Ritual as Artistic Practice*. Although not all of the artists self-identify as writers, the use of poetic language and personal biography are present in all of their practices. United by their interest in ritual, manuel arturo abreu, Marielys Burgos Meléndez, Dana Davenport, Caroline Garcia, Catalina Ouyang, Vivek Shraya, and Qualeasha Wood create their own forms of personal ceremony. They work across a variety of media including sculpture, textile, photography, video, performance, dance, poetry, and installation. Each artist explores the transformative powers of ritual and considers the ways in which it enables the crossing of physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, sexual, and political borders.

In the tradition of Anzaldúa, as well as other feminist writers like Sylvia Wynter, the study of ceremony and ritual are exercises in understanding origin. By tracing stories of origin, one may uncover the ways in which ideological and historical discourse has become entrenched in hegemonic knowledge structures. The exhibition positions ritual as a site for anti-colonial, feminist, and queer resistance. Interweaving poetry, ethnography, subjecthood, politics, theory, and practice, the artworks in the exhibition take viewers on a journey of personal and collective discovery. Through their various praxes, the artists demonstrate how ritual can be a means of disruption, resistance, protection, and survival.

manuel arturo abreu's site-specific installation, *Untitled (Herramienta de concha)* (2024), creates a protective border that envelops the entirety of the exhibition. The gallery floor is lined with organic crushed oyster shell powder and placed along the peripheral border of the exhibition space. abreu's use of decomposed

organic materials is a recurring motif within their work as they explore various cultural references to ceremony, altar-making, and ritual. The installation alters traditional boundaries of the exhibition space. It deconstructs notions of singular authorship and meaning—colliding, disrupting, and ultimately connecting every work in the show. The powder is penetrative, porous, and wayward, like the stanzas of an experimental poem. It spills over a straight diagonal

line, cuts through corners and edges of the gallery walls, and disappears and reappears through cracks and dips in the gallery floor. The work anchors the exhibition by tracing ritual as kind of stream of consciousness, documenting states of disruption, continuity, and flow.

abreu's work demonstrates the ways in which artists may

produce alternative forms of knowing that are not tied to formal language or Western aesthetics. The writing of the poet and scholar Alexis Pauline Gumbs echoes the ways artists build new worlds through the discovery of ritual. She discusses how one can create poetry without words, using earthy materials instead.

In her book *Dub: Finding Ceremony*, she writes: "knowing is not given; it is made. You can make it out of cornmeal or flour, preferably.



↑ **manuel arturo abreu**
Detail of *Untitled (Herramienta de concha)*, 2024
Site-specific installation with crushed oyster shell powder
Dimensions variable

Out of dirt or fertilizer if you have to. Let your fingers shape it until they remember the making of the world.”¹

Catalina Ouyang similarly builds their own ceremony by conjuring symbolic and archetypal images from mythology and history. In their sculpture *doubt I (the wreck and not the story of the wreck / at the floor of the flood / primordial lovers / groaning dreadfully / What have we done so wrong.)* (2020), the allegorically rife images of a snake, a shipwreck, a flood, and two lovers intertwine in a single composition. A green snake coils around an abstract figure that resembles a classical sculptural bust, but one that is stripped down and pieced back together. It fuses various body parts together, such as a breast, a shoulder, and toes. Below the bust are fabric and organic materials that appear wet, stained, and tethered, evoking the wreckage of a ship washed up on shore. Appropriately, oyster shells and drag net cling to the sculpture’s seams. The work explores the ways in which language has been inscribed upon the flesh, articulating how modern formations of gender, race, and empire may be traced to mythological and religious stories from Genesis to Gilgamesh. Ouyang assembles these visual symbols of collective memory in their compositions as an archeologist unearths ancient relics and brings them to the surface. Using materials like bone, fossil, hair, clay, and fabric, Ouyang excavates the relics and ceremonies of

1 Alexis Pauline Gumbs’s text, *Dub: Finding Ceremony*, is inspired by Sylvia Wynter’s writings and theories on ceremony. She reflects on the ways in which Wynter theorizes ceremony as a political act. By tracing stories of origin from history, mythology, and folklore, scholars may deconstruct the ways in which the body, race, and gender have been captured and constructed within the colonial imagination. Alexis Pauline Gumbs, *Dub: Finding Ceremony* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2020), 68.

the past and links them to the present.

Dana Davenport and Vivek Shraya unearth their own “relics” by indexing and recreating their family archives, grappling with intimate notions of home and personal ritual. Davenport’s collage-based work *Window #1* (2023) is a photomontage of personal family photos and photographic advertisements from Korean-owned African American beauty supply magazines. Interspersed between



the magazine advertisements are smaller cropped family photos of Davenport as a child with her sister, mother, and father. The collage sits within a wooden frame that emulates traditional Korean architectural motifs. The frame breaks up the collage into a geometrical pattern, giving the work a sense of symmetry and tension. Like the intricate braids worn by the model in the advertisement, the frame interweaves both images into unified and divided parts. Davenport meditates on the experience of growing up as an African American–Korean woman.

Often feeling split between these two communities, she explores the potential cultural, historical, architectural, and poetic sites where these two identities collide.

Shraya’s photographic essay *Trisha* (2016) similarly explores the transformative powers of intergenerational

relationships through her personal family history.

The artist juxtaposes vintage photographs of her mother from the 1970s with

↑ **Dana Davenport**
Window #1, 2023
Plywood, resin, transparency
film, family photos, metal
18 × 47 inches

self-portraits. Restaging and reimagining these photographs of her mother, she amasses an archive that is built upon the personal rituals one repeats daily such as cooking, eating, talking on the phone, or waiting for the train. Through these photographs, Shraya reckons with her relationship to her mother as well as her own trans-femininity. The photographs are accompanied by a speculative essay she addresses to her mother in which she imagines her mother's life before her children's births. She begins the essay with the line: "my story has always been bound to your prayer to have

two boys." Here she notes the importance of origin and the ways in which storytelling has the power to shape the person we ultimately become. Like many of the artworks in the show, *Trisha*

forges a path to self-origin by invoking the use of language, art, and ceremony. Shraya uncovers new and transformative understandings of herself, her family, and her femininity.

Shraya's practice demonstrates the ways in which ritualistic forms of writing and image making can link past to

present and transform the mundane into the profound. Qualeasha Wood's work with digital collage and tapestry similarly engages



↑ **Vivek Shraya**
Detail of *Trisha*, 2016
Photographs and text
Image courtesy of the artist

with ritualistic acts of self-documentation. In her work, *BSoD* (2023), Wood creates a digital collage of selfies that capture her posing sensuously for the internet. Variations of the selfies repeat and proliferate in continuous web windows, simulating a computer virus. A computer error message appears at the center of the tapestry reading: "YOUNGHOTEBONY_EXE_DETECTED_MEMORY_CORRUPTION." The work's title, *BSoD* (Blue Screen of Death), refers to a computer system crash indicating a bug or a virus. Here, Wood playfully adopts the coded language of new media as an (auto)poetic device. Using her own body, encoded digital text, and art historical references, the work examines the virality and sexualization of Black femmes on the internet and their representations in media at large. Wood disrupts the singularity of these narratives with the computational language of glitch and error, rupturing conventional modes of "writing" the body with her own system of representation.

The fusion of computer coding and (auto)poetic form is further explored in Caroline Garcia's augmented reality piece, *Force Field* (2023–24). In the work, visitors may access a virtual Orasyon—a mantra/prayer recited before battle and training in Filipino Martial Arts. The Orasyon is activated through a QR code hand-drawn by the artist on the gallery's windows. In collaboration with the Chrysalis Kali Collective (a group of Filipina/x women practicing Kali or Filipino Martial Arts), Garcia authors a digital prayer that transforms the virtual space of the gallery. She encrypts messages of ancient ritual wisdom with the contemporary language of digital code as a means of anti-colonial resistance and protection. The text acts as a "force field" blurring the boundaries between virtual and physical, and past and present.

In her work *Invocations Oshún (Puerto Rico)* (2021 & 2023), Marielys Burgos Meléndez invokes another kind of writing: choreography. The word choreography stems from the Greek root words “to dance” and “to write.” Meléndez’s installation fuses movement and language together through performance photography, video, and audio-descriptive language. In 2021, Meléndez traveled to her homeland of Puerto Rico to create a ritual performance in honor of Oshún. Oshún is one of the orishas (deities) originating from the Yoruba religion

and is considered to be the Goddess of water, fertility, creation, and sensuality. In the performance, Meléndez embodies the sensuous powers of Oshún as she bathes in a

rushing river and holds her womb with her hands. The artist reflects upon this performance in a video she created in her current home in California. She repeats the gestures of the ritual performance, but from the confines of her bathtub.



↑ **Marielys Burgos Meléndez,**
Detail of *Invocations Oshún*
(*Río Espíritu Santo, El Yunque,*
Puerto Rico), 2021/2023
Ritual performance/
performance photography
Dimensions variable
Photography by Paula López
Image courtesy of the artist

In the video, Meléndez narrates and orally describes each movement of her body, both in the original performance in Puerto Rico and its “restaging” in the U.S. Here she connects the ways in which choreography

is a language that can trace the memories of physical and cultural displacement. Reflecting upon movement as a physical, spiritual, political, and cultural entity, Meléndez articulates how ritual can connect language and movement together as a form of knowing and remembering.

Writing—whether visual, digital, corporeal, or aural—is present in all of the artworks in *The Ceremony Must be Found*. The artists grapple with writing that evokes the (auto) poetic voice and its potential for transformation. Anzaldúa describes writing as a sensuous, emotional, and anxiety producing act, comparing it to squirming, kicking, and crashing up against walls. Her most poignant metaphor for writing is that of the blood sacrifice. She writes: “This is the sacrifice that the act of creation requires, a blood sacrifice. For only through the body, through the pulling of flesh, can the human soul be transformed.”² This visceral metaphor is present throughout the works of the *The Ceremony Must be Found*. Invoking the poetics of personal ritual, the artists enact their own “blood sacrifice,” creating moments in which we may find our most vulnerable, sensuous, frightening, and joyous selves.

2 Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: aunt lute books, 1987), 97.

Ceremony

The Artwork



↑ **manuel arturo abreu**
Detail of *Untitled (Herramienta de concha)*, 2024
Site-specific installation with crushed oyster shell powder
Dimensions variable





↑ **Catalina Ouyang**

otherwise, spite: 1. whores at the end of the world / 2. from every drop of his blood another demon arose (1829-1840), 2020

Various materials

Dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist and Lyles & King Gallery



↑ **Catalina Ouyang**

doubt I (the wreck and not the story of the wreck / at the floor of the flood / primordial lovers / groaning dreadfully / What have we done so wrong), 2020

Hand-carved alabaster, hydrocal, pigment, resin, carved maple, epoxy clay, found fabric, oyster shells, woven leather, drag net
36 × 16 × 11 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Lyles & King Gallery



↑ **Catalina Ouyang**

it bears the traces if not the stigmata of its ancestry (Oriental Jane Doe), 2020

Horse tibia, lime plaster, gypsum plaster, fabric, pigment, shellac, beeswax, resin, wood, ammonite fossil
30 × 16 × 11 inches

Courtesy of the artist and Lyles & King Gallery



↑ **Dana Davenport**

Box Braid Chandelier #2, 2018

Steel, plastic beads, synthetic hair from Sam's Beauty (Online)

14 × 28 inches

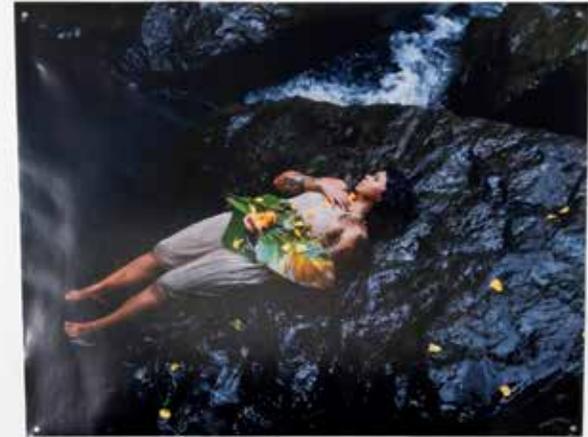


↑ **Dana Davenport**

Window #1, 2023

Plywood, resin, transparency film, family photos, metal

18 × 47 inches



✦ **Marielys Burgos Meléndez**

Invocations Oshún (Río Espíritu Santo, El Yunque, Puerto Rico), 2021/2023

Multimedia Dance / Ritual Installation

Dimensions variable

Concept, Ritual, Text, Videography & Narration:

Marielys Burgos Meléndez

Photography by Paola López





Trisha, 2016
 Photographs and text
 Dimensions variable
 Creative Direction: Vivek Shraya
 Photography: Karen Campos Castillo



↑ **Vivek Shraya**

Trisha, 2016

Photographs and text

Dimensions variable

Creative Direction: Vivek Shraya

Photography: Karen Campos Castillo

Makeup: Alanna Chelmick

Hair: Fabio Persico

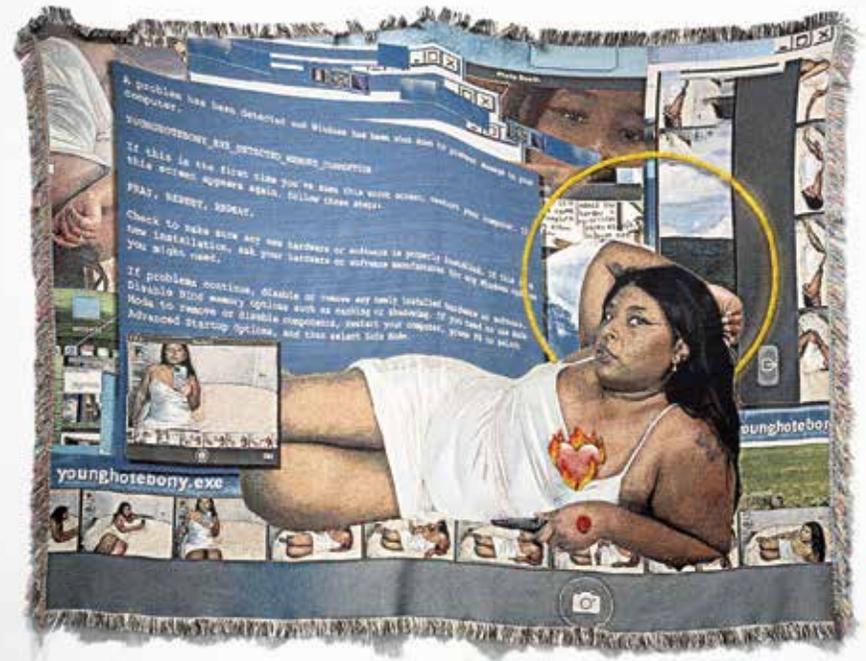
Clothing in 4, 5 & 8: M. Orbe

Set and wardrobe assistants:

Shemeena Shraya and Adam Holman



↑ **Vivek Shraya**
I'm Afraid of Men, 2018
 Single-channel video
 09:39 minutes



↑ **Qualeasha Wood**
BSoD, 2023
 Cotton Jacquard weave, glass beads
 60 × 82 inches
 Courtesy of Kendra Jayne Patrick Gallery



↑ **Caroline Garcia**
Force Field, 2023-2024
 Augmented reality app and site-specific drawing
 Dimensions variable

← Activate *Force Field* app



↑ **Caroline Garcia**
Queen of the Carabao, 2018
 1-channel digital video,
 color, sound
 30:00 minutes

↑ *Tropical Dissent*
(Weapon No. 6), 2023
 3-D printed polylactic acid,
 filament, wood, paracord
 14 × 36 × 4 inches



For Gödel

manuel arturo abreu

Coating
spiral time's
silent music
a din of heartbeats

Heavenly bodies
gouging each other,
exploding and vomiting
new bits to consume

The unheard formal song
natural song
Linking being and non-being
At war with image and
its ritual stalking

Gödel's novel solution to Einstein's equation
involved a rotating disc universe, so
timelines rotate as they move, braiding back
into themselves.

I'm crazy for many reasons but one thing remains:
every day I feel all of history (what happened and
what didn't happen) unfolds again in the affective
present of the day.

The world has a song
the song grew a stomach,
hands, eyes, a mouth, ears,
a heart
Synced to a rotating disc universe

My right eye spasms
Lightning dendrites burn
into the sober acid trails
of objects' paths

Sober acid trail of heartbeat song
Acid of language
How we, not Forms (not
fully), mingle among Forms
Formal acidic sense (heart bomb)

Like a mech knight of figments
Richard Montague, before being slain,
abolished borders between formal
and natural languages

I am a natural being
I am a formal being
I accept the burden spirit offers
I accept the sacred duty of being
naturally, formally

Formerly I had been...

Rituals Public Programs



Baking as Ritual: A Reflection Lead by Gaëlle Aminata Colin

February 1, 6:30-8:30 PM

During this reflection, Gaëlle Aminata Colin explored baking as ritual by connecting her personal baking practice and her work on food as a space for joy and community.

She frames baking as both labor and gift, and considers the many ways in which baking can become a ritual for comfort and connection. This discussion was accompanied by a small tasting and an invitation to collectively reflect on rituals of giving and receiving through food.

Gaëlle Aminata Colin is French and Ivoirian and is currently a PhD student in Stony Brook University's sociology department. Her work focuses on Black women's food practices in France. Engaging with Black feminist work and food justice literature, she is currently developing a project exploring food as a space for survival, joy, and resistance. Outside academia, Gaëlle Aminata Colin also engages with food through baking and culinary photography.



Writing as Ritual: A Curatorial Seminar Lead by Anna Cahn

February 17
1:00-3:00 PM

During this special curatorial seminar, Anna Cahn led a group discussion and writing workshop that reflected upon the idea of writing as a ritual practice. Guided by the liberatory poetic writing practices of Gloria Anzaldúa and her seminal text, *Borderlands La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, the seminar explored writing as a sensuous, spiritual, and politically resistant practice. A selection of texts was provided to participants in preparation for seminar discussion and creative writing exercises.

During this special curatorial seminar, Anna Cahn led a group discussion and writing workshop that reflected upon the idea of writing as a ritual practice. Guided by the

For Aída Cartagena Portalatín manuel arturo abreu

for prisoners of reason
eschaton's punishment is
becoming who they are

for the commoner still in
thrall to thrall heaven is
the possibility of being unmade

the village of what could've been
lets love rot slightly to become chance
the ground is good there

time's cruel lover is not chance but
memory who stares as if to the root
of time's broken lineage

memory's loyalty to the void
nevertheless invokes the hope
of being unmade, making unbeing

Practice The Artists

manuel arturo abreu (born 1991, Santo Domingo) is a non-disciplinary artist who lives and works on unceded lands of Multnomah, Cowlitz, Clackamas, Chinook, Kalapuya, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, and other First People of the Pacific Northwest. abreu works with what is at hand in a process of magical thinking with attention to ritual aspects of aesthetics. Since 2015, they have co-facilitated “home school,” a free pop-up art school and space of sacred duty in the Pacific Northwest that has been in residence at Yale Union (2019) and Oregon Contemporary (2023). abreu has recently included projects in exhibitions at Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler (Berlin), Kunstverein München (Munich), Palazzo San Giuseppe (Polignano a Mare, Italy), Halle Für Kunst Steiermark (Graz, Austria), Kunstraum Niederösterreich (Vienna), Veronica (Seattle), and the Athens Biennial 7. They have recently published articles with The Kitchen (NYC) and the Institute for Studies on Latin American Art (NYC), and catalogue contributions for Star Feliz (Printed Matter), Dozie Kanu (Neuer Essener Kunstverein), and Hervé Télémaque (Serpentine Gallery).

Marielys Burgos Meléndez is an AfroBorikua artistic researcher, advocate, *moverthinker*, and process-based interdisciplinary artist. Her *movingsentient* CUERPA is the primary source of creative investigation which expresses through ritual performance, movement improvisation, performance photography, choreographic scores, creative writing, and video. Her work/ life is framed through Anti-Colonial and Decolonial practices/ epistemologies,

Social Justice, Intersectional Feminism, and Antiracism. Hence, she is interested in the knowledge and relational dynamics that emerge from creative practices and processes.

Since 2014, she has investigated experiences, poetics, and narratives of mobility/ migration/ dislocation which catapulted her into an artistic excavation of her histories, stories, and genealogies of colonial embodiment and education. In 2017, she got stranded in Lenapehoking due to Hurricane María and found a home in NYC. While in Lenapehoking, she worked/ performed with artists such as Pramila Vasudevan, Antonio Ramos, iele paloumpis, Jill Sigman/ThinkDance, zavé martohardjono, Christopher Unpezverde Núñez, and Yanira Castro/a canary torsi, and worked as dance administrator and communicator for several arts organizations like Performance Space New York and Movement Research.

As a doctoral student in Critical Dance Studies, her current academic research focuses on the intersections of embodied spirituality, African and Indigenous ancestral practices, anti-colonialism, liberation, experimental dancemaking, and the migration/ dislocation experiences of Indigenous, Black, and African descent artists.

As an independent and self-funded artist, she has taught and shared work in academic and non-academic institutions in México, Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Scotland, Dominican Republic, Canada, her native Boriké, Lenapehoking (NYC), and other places in Turtle Island. From 2021–2023 she was an Artist-in-Residence at Movement Research, and in 2023 she was nominated for a Bessie's Award for Outstanding Performance (Ensemble) alongside Rafael Cañals and Christopher Unpezverde Núñez for their work in *The Circle*. She is the author of *Errática*, her first self-published artist book (2019) in collaboration with Taller Asiray.

Dana Davenport

(b. 1994) is a Korean and Black-American interdisciplinary artist raised in Seoul, South Korea, and currently based between Los Angeles and

Brooklyn. Her work shifts between installation, sculpture, video, and performance. Within her practice, she addresses the complexities that surround interminority conflict as a foundation for envisioning her own and the collective futurity of Black and Asian peoples. Davenport's work has been shown throughout the United States and internationally including Gibney Dance, New York, NY; Watermill Center, Water Mill, NY; NYU Skirball, New York, NY; Brown University, Providence, RI; Recess Art, Brooklyn, NY; and Seventh Gallery, Melbourne, AUS, to name a few. Davenport was selected for the 2023 Bandung Residency with MoCADA and Asian American Arts Alliance and the 2021 Recess Session Residency. Davenport was awarded the 2023 Craft Research Fund Artist Fellowship from the Center for Craft.

Caroline Garcia

(b. 1988, Sydney, Australia) is an interdisciplinary artist based in Brooklyn, NY. She works across performance, video, and installation

through a hybridized aesthetic of cross-cultural movement, embodied research, and new media. Caroline's current body of work resists assimilation tactics across the transpacific through a critical engagement with violence. Citing a lineage of Guerrilleras from the Philippine Islands, she proposes unique renderings of survival strategies informed by elements of Indigenous Filipino culture and traditions rooted in ritual headhunting and martial arts. By initiating her own

recuperation of violence, Caroline creates gateways for both self and collective actualization and preservation to engage with larger systemic themes of grief, immigration, and safety. Caroline is a 2023 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellow: Digital/Electronic Arts, a 2021 New York Artadia Awardee, and has presented work at The Shed, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Creative Time Summit X, Lincoln Center, Smack Mellon, and The Sydney Opera House, among others.

Catalina Ouyang

(b. Chicago, USA; lives and works in Brooklyn) has had work exhibited at Lyles & King, New York; Night Gallery, Los Angeles; Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus; Institute of Contemporary Art at MECA&D, Portland; Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield; Jeffrey Deitch, New York, NY and Los Angeles; Make Room, Los Angeles; No Place Gallery, Columbus; Real Art Ways, Hartford; Galerie Kandlhofer, Vienna; Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas; Kimball Art Center, Park City; Simon Lee Gallery, London and Hong Kong; Micki Meng, San Francisco; and Murmurs, Los Angeles; among many others. Ouyang is the recipient of numerous awards and grants including Fountainhead Artists Residency, 2024 and Smack Mellon Artist in Residence, 2020-21. Their work has been written about in the *New York Times*, *Artforum*, *Frieze*, *FlashArt*, *The Cut*, *Flaunt Magazine*, and *Art & Object*, among others. Their work is held in the public collections of Cantor Arts Center, Stanford; Kadist Foundation, Paris and San Francisco; Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas; Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus; Pérez Art Museum Miami, Miami; and Faurshou Foundation, New York; among others.

Vivek Shraya

is an artist whose body of work crosses the boundaries of music, literature, visual art, theatre, TV, film, and fashion. She is the creator and writer of the new CBC Gem Original Series *How to Fail as a Popstar*, a Canadian Screen Award winner, and a Polaris Music Prize nominee. Her best-selling book *I'm Afraid of Men* was heralded by *Vanity Fair* as “cultural rocket fuel,” and she is the founder of the award-winning publishing imprint VS. Books, which supports emerging BIPOC writers. Vivek has been a brand ambassador for MAC Cosmetics and Pantene, and she is a director on the board of the Tegan and Sara Foundation.

Qualeasha Wood

is a textile artist whose work contemplates realities around Black female embodiment that do and might exist. Inspired by a familial relationship to textiles, queer craft, Microsoft Paint, and internet avatars, Wood's tufted and tapestry pieces mesh traditional craft and contemporary technological materials. Together, Qualeasha navigates both an Internet environment saturated in Black Femme figures and culture, and a political and economic environment holding that embodiment at the margins.

Qualeasha has exhibited at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, NY); Hauser and Wirth (New York, NY); Art Basel Miami Beach with Kendra Jayne Patrick (New York, NY); Pippy Houldsworth Gallery, (London, UK); CANADA Gallery (New York, NY); the Trout Museum of Art (Appleton, WI); NADA Miami Beach 2020 with Kendra Jayne

Patrick (Miami, FL); Kendra Jayne Patrick for Metro Pictures (New York, NY); Cooper Cole (Toronto, ON); New Image Art (Los Angeles, CA); Gaa Gallery (Provincetown, MA).

Anna Cahn (Curator)

is a curator and writer based in New York City with a particular interest in movement and experimental dance in contemporary art. Her

research focuses on the politics of desire and sexuality, and emphasizes feminist and queer artists with performance and movement-based practices. She recently curated the exhibition *In Longing* at the CUE Art Foundation, which explored the emotionally and politically charged power of longing. From 2016–2020 she worked as a Curatorial Associate at the Rubin Museum of Art where she assisted with exhibitions and curated performances and artist talks such as the “Refiguring the Future” series. She has held previous positions as guest curator and visiting critic for Residency Unlimited, adjunct lecturer at the City College of New York, and research fellow at Stanford University. Her writing has appeared in *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Hyperallergic*, and *The Public Review*. She received her BA from Clark University and an MA in Art History from the City College of New York. She is currently a PhD Candidate in Art History & Criticism at Stony Brook University.

cosmic play manuel arturo abreu

cosmic
play
where
dead
souls
must
play
the
roles
of
figments
in
the
living's
thoughts

On the front and back cover:

Caroline Garcia

Image still from *Queen of the Carabao*, 2018

1-channel digital video, color, sound

30:00 mins

Image courtesy of the artist

On the front and back inner cover:

manuel arturo abreu

Detail of *Untitled (Herramienta de concha)*, 2024

Site-specific installation with crushed oyster shell powder

Dimensions variable