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**CIRCO ZERO PRESENTS**  
**“BLANK MAP”**

**June 3-12, 2016**

*World Premiere performance to focus on blackness as critical and expansive,  
a performance involving Black abstractions influenced by punk, queer, and feminism.*

SAN FRANCISCO (May 23, 2016) **The National Queer Arts Festival** and **Circo Zero** present **BLANK MAP**, a collective of artist-performer-musicians **Adee Roberson, Brontez Purnell, keyon gaskin, Tasha Ceyan, and Wizard Apprentice**, along with **Stephanie Anne Johnson, Sampada Aranke, and Keith Hennessy**. **BLANK MAP** plays **June 3 through 12 (press opening: June 3)** at Dance Mission Theater (3316 24th St.) in San Francisco. For tickets (\$15-25) and more information, the public may visit **circozero.org**.

Featuring an all Black cast, **BLANK MAP** is a performance experiment created by a collective of Black artist-performer-musicians. This internally focused work activates sound and movement, creating a space where individual and shared narratives emerge. Psychedelic and expansive, involving Black abstractions influenced by punk, queerness, and feminism, **BLANK MAP** is a ritual that focuses on feeling good despite who may be watching. The performance is a study in bodies as they metaphysically and spiritually examine shape, space, and time. Each moment supports and ruptures the next, translating sounds into gestures and vibrations. **BLANK MAP** fucks with, and unsettles, perceptions of time, aiming to provide more questions than answers, creating a world that is inescapable and expansive-- allowing the collective to be taken, and to take others, elsewhere.

Circo Zero has assembled a gifted ensemble for **BLANK MAP**:

**Adee Roberson** is a black feminist, visual artist, educator, musician, and healer. Her work weaves rich celestial landscapes with drum patterns, found photos, synthesizers and various percussion instruments. She believes in art as a commemoration of the natural world and our ancestors. She creates through magic, dreams, and intuition, and has exhibited and performed her work in numerous galleries and independent venues including Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, African American Cultural Center, and Art Gallery of Windsor, Ontario. She is based in Oakland, CA where she co-founded Black Salt Collective.

**Brontez Purnell** is the author of the cult zine *Fag School*, is the front man for the band The Younger Lovers, and is the founder of the Brontez Purnell Dance Company (BPDC). Formerly a dancer with

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Gravy Train!!!, his other collaborations include an ensemble role in the queer independent feature film, *I Want Your Love* (Dir. Travis Mathews, 2012), and dancing for local artist-choreographers Amara Tabor-Smith, Keith Hennessy, Eric Kupers, and Nina Haft, and South African artist-choreographer Athi-Patra Rugra. Since founding BPDC in 2010, Purnell has presented his original dance and movement theater works at the Berkeley Art Museum, CounterPULSE, the Garage, Kunst-Stoff Arts, the Lab, and SOMArts. He was a guest curator for the Berkeley Art Museum's L@TE program in 2012, awarded an invitation to the 2012 Radar Lab queer arts summer residency, honored by Out Magazine's 2012 Hot 100 List and 2013 Most Eligible Bachelors List, and won the 2014 SF Bay Guardian's Goldie for Performance/Music.

**keyon gaskin** prefers not to contextualize their art with their credentials.

**Tasha Ceyan** is an interdisciplinary artist-scholar whose work is immersed in creating an embodied language for intersectional metaphysics, investigating the dynamics between religion and faith through a framework comprised of blackness, queerness, gender, and poverty.

**Wizard Apprentice** is an independent singer-songwriter, electronic music producer, and motion graphics artist. Her multimedia project is an attempt to do energetic battle with an overwhelming world. Her video work uses green screen graphics, digital puppetry, and minimalistic compositing to create imagery that's cerebral, psychedelic, campy, and hypnotic. She combines song and video to create multimedia live performances that explore deeply intimate emotional themes ranging from the challenges/triumphs of being a Black empathy to overstimulation in the Internet age.

The **BLANK MAP** collective is supported by **Stephanie Anne Johnson** (lighting), **Sampada Aranke** (dramaturg), and **Keith Hennessy** (instigator/producer).

**Stephanie Anne Johnson** uses her installations and mixed media sculptures as a way to preserve and honor the history of Africans, using large-scale slide projections in settings such as railroad stations, churches, cemeteries and galleries. As an artist, Johnson's work has been exhibited at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (San Francisco), The Jewish Museum (San Francisco), The African American Museum (Dallas), Spelman College Museum of Art (Atlanta), and The Museum of Fine Arts (Houston), among many other national venues. She has had one-person shows at The Center For African American Life and Culture (San Francisco) and The African American Historical Society (San Francisco), and is the recipient of grants from The Gerbode Foundation, New Langton Arts, and The National Endowment for the Arts. Her work has been commissioned by The Atlanta Arts Festival, The City of Oakland, The DeYoung Museum, Intersection for The Arts (San Francisco), and Saint Lawrence University (Canton) among others. In a lighting design career that spans more than three decades, Johnson has designed shows for Cultural Odyssey (San Francisco), Dimensions Dance Theater (Oakland), Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Arizona Repertory Theater, La Mama Theatre (New York), and Black Moon Theatre (New York and Paris); her lighting design work has been seen in India, The Netherlands, Italy, France, and Belgium. She is a Professor in The Visual and Public Art Department at California State University, Monterey Bay.

**Sampada Aranke** is an Assistant Professor in the History and Theory of Contemporary Art at the San Francisco Art Institute. Prior to coming to SFAI, she was a Visiting Assistant Professor in Art History at the University of Illinois, Chicago. Her research interests include performance theories of embodiment, visual culture, and black cultural and aesthetic theory. Her work has been published in *Art Journal*, *Equid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, and *Trans-Scripts: An Interdisciplinary Online Journal*. She is currently working on a book manuscript entitled *Death's Futurity: The Visual Culture of Death in Black Radical Politics*.

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**Keith Hennessy** is an award-winning performer, choreographer, teacher, writer and activist. Born in Sudbury Canada, he lives in San Francisco and tours internationally. His interdisciplinary research engages improvisation, ritual and public action as tools for investigating political realities. Ideas and practices inspired by anarchism, critical whiteness, punk, and queer-feminism motivate and mobilize Hennessy's creative and activist projects. Hennessy directs Circo Zero, and was a member of Contraband with Sara Shelton Mann. Additionally, his work is featured in several books and documentaries. Hennessy is a co-founder of 848 Community Space/CounterPULSE, a thriving performance and culture space in San Francisco. Awards include a NY Bessie, the United States Artist award, several Isadora Duncan Awards, a Goldie, and the Alpert/MacDowell Fellowship in Dance, and residencies at The MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, and Djerassi, as well as a commission from the National Dance Project, among others. Hennessy performs and teaches internationally at festivals, universities, and independent studios, including ImpulsTanz (Vienna), Ponderosa (Germany), TBA Festival (Portland), HAU & HZT (Berlin), Black Box (Oslo), American Realness (NY), Velocity (Seattle), Velocity Festival (Varna Bulgaria), AEx-Corps (Dakar), Mophradat (Cairo/Brussels), Omni Commons (Oakland).

**Circo Zero** produces award winning solo performances and choreographies by Keith Hennessy. It is a queer led, dance/performance organization that is increasingly engaged in the decolonizing practices and social justice movements responding to anti-Black racism, the prison industrial complex, economic injustice and the war on terror. The **BLANK MAP** temporary collective of artists, all of whom identify as Black and queer, are deeply involved in African American and POC queer grassroots artist, activist, and music communities.

**Queer Cultural Center** (QCC) is a multiracial multidisciplinary arts presenter that actively promotes the artistic and economic evolution of queer art and culture. QCC was founded in 1993 by 10 LGBT Rights activists in the wake of the Robert Mapplethorpe controversy and the National Endowment for the Arts' censorship of LGBT artists. QCC's presenting, commissioning, art services, website and interpretive programs build community through the arts: they nurture the creativity of our community's outstanding artists, strengthen the capacities of culturally diverse LGBT arts organizations and broaden and deepen our community's participation in San Francisco's cultural life. The programs we conduct and the artists we present have collectively developed a multicultural perspective on the LGBT experience that reflects our community's racial, sexual, gender and age diversity. QCC currently conducts five ongoing programs, and in June, presents an annual month-long National Queer Arts Festival.

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**FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

**WHAT:** The National Queer Arts Festival and Circo Zero present **BLANK MAP**, a collective of Black artist-performer-musicians **Adee Roberson**, **Brontez Purnell**, **keyon gaskin**, **Tasha Ceyan**, and **Wizard Apprentice**, along with **Stephanie Anne Johnson**, **Sampada Aranke**, and **Keith Hennessy**. **BLANK MAP** is a performance experiment involving Black abstractions influenced by punk, queerness, and feminism in an expansive space where both individual and shared narratives emerge.

**DATES:** **June 3-5; June 10-12, 8pm**

**WHERE:** Dance Mission Theater  
3316 24th St., San Francisco

**TICKETS:** For more information and tickets (\$15-25) the public can visit [circozero.org](http://circozero.org)

**PHOTOS:** High-resolution photos for **BLANK MAP** can be found at <http://bit.ly/BlankMapPRPhotos> or can be received as jpegs upon request by emailing [brightbutterfly\[at\]hotmail.com](mailto:brightbutterfly[at]hotmail.com)

*Blank Map* is presented by Circo Zero and Queer Cultural Center as part of the National Queer Arts Festival

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