

WHALE FALL
Zine
“Synovial Sea”



August 12, 2023

Performed at BOFFO Performance Festival Fire Island

*Performers
mayfield brooks & Dori Midnight*

****dedicated>>>to>>>>the>>>whales & O’Shae Sibley
1995-2023>>>Dance in Peace****

Photo: Buffy

mayfield brooks improvises while black and is based in Lenapehoking, the unceded land of the Lenape people, also known as Brooklyn, New York. brooks is a movement-based performance artist, vocalist, urban farmer, writer, and wanderer. brooks teaches and performs practices that arise from Improvising While Black (IWB), their interdisciplinary dance methodology which explores the decomposed matter of Black life and engages in dance improvisation, disorientation, dissent, and ancestral healing. brooks is the 2021 recipient of the biennial Merce Cunningham Award from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, a 2021 Bessie/New York Dance and Performance Award nominee for their dance film, Whale Fall, a 2022 Danspace Project Platform artist, and 2022-23 Hodder Fellow at Princeton University. To learn more about their work go to www.improvingwhileblack.com.

Dori Midnight is a healer, theologian, liturgist, and dreamworker. For over two decades, Dori has woven rituals and practiced intuitive community based healing in one-on-one sessions, movement spaces, and in the wild, in collaboration with plants, stones, ancestors, the seen, and unseen. Dori facilitates workshops on ritual and remedies for unraveling times, re-enchanting traditions of Jewish ancestral wisdom as a liberatory practice, and queer magic and healing. Dori’s work is rooted in her Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jewish ancestral traditions, feminist, decolonial and abolitionist scholarship, queer liberation, and disability and healing justice work. Dori apprenticed under queer psychic witch elders in the Bay Area beginning in 1997, was ordained as an interfaith minister from the New Seminary in NYC in 2005. Dori lives on unceded Pocumtuc/Nipmuc land, also known as Northampton, MA. www.dorimidnight.com

Synovial Sea takes a deep dive into the realm of interspecies relation and its correlation with queering kinship, dissolving boundaries between body and earth, and non-binary matriarchal lineages. We take inspiration from the whale fall--a scientific phenomenon that chronicles the body of a decomposing whale as it falls to the ocean floor and feeds other marine life with its remains. We take inspiration from the friendship of queer matriarchs such as Marsha P. Johnson and Silvia Rivera and other queer icons who have nurtured queer extended families. We channel ritual technologies for reenchantment and intimacy with the more-than-human. Like synovial fluid, how can we lubricate our connections to other life forms and ecologies to create kinship with marine life and the ocean itself? mayfield brooks and Dori Midnight have been friends for over fifteen years and have come together at BOFFO to invite festival participants into interspecies kinships that open up divine streams for collective grief, healing, joy, and release. The body is an ocean and the ocean is a body.

INVITATION:

Who are your chosen ancestors? Who are your queer matriarchs? Do you have a human or non human ancestor who you would like to honor? We invite you to write a love note to your ancestor here today at Trailblazer's Park

Trailblazer's Park honors the following queer ancestors:

Marsha P. Johnson & Sylvia Rivera, We'wha, Frank Kameny, James Baldwin, Bayard Rustin, Harvey Milk, Jerry Herman, Audre Lorde, Carmen Vazquez, Edie Windsor, Invasion Drag Queens, Larry Kramer, Pauli Murray, Glenn Burke, Barbara Gittings & Kay Lahusen, Kiyoshi Kuromiya



RIP Rockaway RIP Rockaway “Baby” Sperm Whale

This photo is of the rockaway beach whale who passed away on 12/12/22 after several attempts to save it. The shadow is me. After it died, the “experts” performed a necropsy on the whale, they buried it, and pieces of its body resurfaced on Rockaway beach. I kept visiting the site of its death and found whale flesh stuck behind a man-made dune from the construction site. I decided to return it to the sea but there were other pieces of the whale that magically made their way back to me. I gave my body to the whale, my flesh became its flesh. I carry the whale. We heal together, and dance a small dance.

*Special Thanks to the BOFFO Performance Festival Fire Island 2023, Faris Saad Al-Shathir, Tavia Nyongo, Buffy, BOFFO staff & Artists! xo mayfield