

LinksHall

Chicago's Center for Independent Dance
and Performing Arts

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Hi-res digital images available on request

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Links Hall presents *To Art and Profit: What is it Good for? Defining Art's Purpose Now*, March 18-20, 2011.

Chicago, IL – Spread over three weekends from March through May 2011, *To Art & Profit* is an interdisciplinary performance series augmented with arts-focused dialogues and Carnival-inspired street theatre spectacle throughout the city of Chicago. Curated by Links Hall Artistic Associates, **Abra Johnson** and **Meida McNeal**, *To Art & Profit* envisions what collective social action looks like through a diverse and democratic approach to artistic programming, and tackles difficult questions bringing art-centered conversations and explorations to different kinds of local public spaces. *To Art & Profit* artists are funded in part by 3ARTS.* *To Art and Profit* is a three weekend festival that runs **March 18 - 20**, **April 15-17**, and **May 20- 22**. The first weekend, *What is it Good For? Defining Arts Purpose Now* runs **Friday & Saturday at 8pm**. (Tickets are \$15/\$12 Students & Seniors) and a free **Sunday** spectacle **2pm – 3pm** spectacle located at **Voice of the City, 3429 W. Diversey Ave, Suite 208**. Panel Discussion **3:30pm – 5pm** located at **Elastic Arts, 2830 N. Milwaukee Ave, 2nd Fl**. Friday and Saturday performances are located at 3435 N. Sheffield Avenue, on the second floor in Chicago, IL 60657. For more information call 773.281.0824, or purchase tickets online at www.LinkshHall.org.

MARCH

What is it Good for? Defining Art's Purpose Now, the opening weekend of the series, acknowledges art's potential for addressing complicated questions of cultural meaning and value. Art makers navigate a fine line between addressing their own interests and making their work accessible to a public who will find these economically valuable. How can we use our creative labor to catalyze collective action? Is that art's purpose?

~In the first act, "*dancing the balancing act of survival: a complicated chorus of schedules, writing, & stuff...*" join award-winning writers and performers C.C. Carter, Keli Stewart, and Sage Morgan-Hubbard as they explore the themes of class, motherhood, daily life schedules, artistic desires and future possibilities in this interactive, engaging, multimedia piece.

~To follow will be a polydesirious bricolage of text-movement exploring 21st century cultural work, *Utopic Monster Theory*, performed by J'Sun Howard and Jennifer Karmin with insight from Coya Paz.

~The show will culminate with Cristal Sabbagh & Roger Noel performing *Spark*, an interdisciplinary performance that engages and activates the body, and incorporates afro-atlantic rhythms. The original soundscore will undergo a live transformation and cultivation through human interaction. Energy and movement will be offered through a collaboration of Butoh inspired ritual and Afro-Cuban movement.

~MORE~

3435 North Sheffield, Ste. 207, Chicago, IL 60657

P 773.281.0824

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www.LinkshHall.org

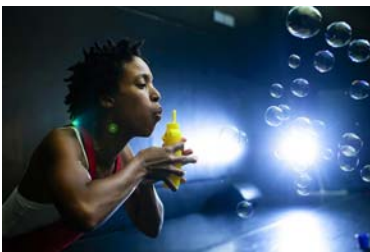
CURATOR BIOS:

ABRA M. JOHNSON, holding an M.A. in Sociology and having held numerous educational activist posts over the past decade, now teaches with the City Colleges of Chicago and its Bridge Program with DePaul University. Having scholarly interests in representations of race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class in popular music, she will be traveling to Savannah, Georgia to study Gullah and Ogeechee African-American subcultures as a National Endowment for the Humanities Community College Faculty Fellow.



MEIDA TERESA MCNEAL (PhD Performance Studies, Northwestern University) crosses three overlapping axes with her current scope of work: mapping local/global formations and circulations of cultural performance; developing collaborative scholarship models and content; and integrating digital scholarship methodologies alongside writing and performance. Across these threads, she seeks to enrich possibilities for conceiving performance as a way of knowing and to broaden the continuum of formats through which we develop, disseminate and digest scholarship. Her most recent appointment was as a post-doctoral fellow and faculty in the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies at Brown University (2007-2009). She is an Independent Artist and Scholar, a 2010 Chicago Dancemakers Forum Lab Artist, Dance Researcher for the Chicago Artists Resource Web Project and a Teaching Artist with Changing Worlds, a nonprofit educational arts organization. In addition to developing a number of performance projects, Meida is currently completing her first book-length manuscript "Compromised Subjectivities: Constructing Trinidadian Nationhood and Navigating Postcolonial Caribbean Performance" based on over ten years of ethnographic research in Trinidad.

~Artist Bios~ *To Art & Profit Artists are supported by 



CRISTAL SABBAGH is an art educator at Adlai E. Stevenson High School, a fine artist and an interdisciplinary performance artist. She received a B.F.A. in Art Education from the University of Illinois, at Urbana-Champaign, and an M.A. in Interdisciplinary Arts from Columbia College, Chicago. Her work is motivated by a multitude of areas such as: film, culture, history, death/rebirth, music, hip-hop and butoh. Her current butoh inspired performances investigate the volatility of toddler emotions, the activation of the body through improvised voice, and the spirit. Sound and music is an essential component in Cristal's movement pieces. She's been collaborating with her husband, Elias Sabbagh, for the last five years to create compelling and evocative soundscapes. Her work has most recently been seen at the Betty Rhymer Gallery, Ruth Page Center for the Arts, the Chicago Cultural Center, and NOCCA/Riverfront, New Orleans. She has been studying butoh with Katsura Kan, Daisuke Yoshimoto, Diego Pinon, Kayo Mikami, Natsu Nakajima, Koh Morobushi, Akadama, Joan Laage and others.



Coya Paz is a poet, director, and lip gloss connoisseur who was raised in Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Brazil before moving permanently to the United States in 1987. Coya is a proud co-founder of Proyecto Latina and the director in residence for the Poetry Performance Incubator at the Guild Complex. She cofounded Teatro Luna in 2000, and served as co-Artistic Director until 2009. Recent projects include: Nation of Cowards, a multi-sited performance piece about interracial dialogue; Tour Guides; and Machos, which won the 2008 Non-Equity Jeff Awards for Best New Work and Outstanding Ensemble. She is at work on a new play called The Americans, based on interviews with people in 10 states across the USA. Coya teaches in The Theater Department at Columbia College, and holds a PhD in Performance Studies at Northwestern University. She is a regular commentator on race, media and pop culture for Vocalo.org (89.5) and has published several articles on Latina performance, Latina/o identities, and public violence. Coya's artistic work has been profiled in The New York Times, American Theater Magazine, Theater Journal, and the Chicago Tribune, among others. For a full manifesto, visit Coya's website at www.coyapaz.com.



J'Sun Howard is a 2010 Julius Margolin "Youth In Labor" Scholarship Award recipient and dance artist/writer originally from Chattanooga, Tennessee. His choreography has appeared in multiple venues around Chicago including the Dance Center of Columbia College (during his undergrad), Links Hall, Insight Arts/Center for New Possibilities, Northwestern University, Sonotheque, Lincoln Square Theatre, and was commissioned for Chicago Academy School for the Arts students. In 2009, J'Sun was selected to be a LinkUp Residency artist at Links Hall. J'Sun has performed for the following choreographers: Selene Carter, Asimina Chremos, Margi Cole, Michael Cole, Darrell Jones, Julia Mayer, Margaret Morris, Valerie Tucker, Karen Wall, Amy Wlikerson, and Sara Wookey. JSun's poetry has been published in the following literary web journals: Farmhouse, Lines and Stars, Pike, and Void. His first short story "Mouth Fulla Words" can be read at Storyglossia.com.



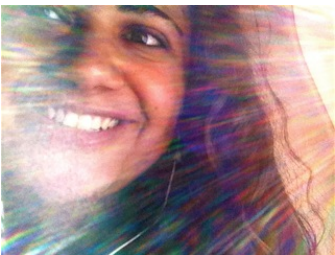
Jennifer Karmin has published, performed, exhibited, taught, and experimented with language across the U.S., Japan, and Kenya. She curates the Red Rover Series and is co-founder of the public art group Anti Gravity Surprise. Her multidisciplinary projects have been presented at festivals, artist-run spaces, community centers, and on city streets including Betalevel (CA), the Chicago Cultural Center (IL), the French Broad Institute of Time & the River (NC), the Poetry Project (NY), the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts (MI), and Woodland Pattern Book Center (WI). Aaaaaaaaalice, a text-sound epic, was published by Flim Forum Press in 2010. A proud member of the international Dusie Kollektiv, she is also the author of the Dusie chapbook Evacuated: Disembodying Katrina. Her collaborative street project Walking Poem is featured online at How2. In Chicago, Karmin teaches creative writing to immigrants at Truman College and works as a Poet in Residence for the public schools.

Visit Jennifer's website at www.aaaaaaaalice.blogspot.com.



Keli Stewart is a Chicago native whose stories, plays and poems have appeared in *Meridians*, *Warpland: A Journal of Black Literature and Ideas*, *Letters to Fathers from Daughters*, *Torch Poetry*, *Hip Mama*, *Muzzle Magazine*, *Calyx and Reverie: Midwest African American Literature*. She is a double recipient of the Archie D. and Bertha H. Walker Foundation Scholarship from the Fine Arts Work Center and also an alum of the Voices of Our Nations Arts Foundation and Callaloo Summer Writing Workshops. Keli has received artist fellowships from the Augusta Savage Gallery's Arts

International Residency Program and Hedgebrook, where she was awarded the 2010 Adrienne Reiner Hochstadt Award. Keli is the first prize recipient of the 2010 Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award from the Illinois Center for the Book, Emerging Writers Prize. She received her BA in Fiction Writing from Columbia College and is currently an MFA Poetry student at Chicago State University. She is the mother of two sons and is currently at work on her debut poetry collection.



Sage Morgan Hubbard earned her MA in Performance Studies at Northwestern University. She is a graduate of Brown University where she double majored in "Performance Studies: Socially Conscious Art of the Everyday" and Ethnic Studies. She is a poet, activist and teacher from Washington, D.C. She is the founder of WORD! spoken word artists and activists, a former DC poetry slam coach and one of the original members of Spoken Resistance and the

performance group Sol y Soul, arts for social change.



C.C. Carter is a Chicagoan with national prominence on the performance poetry scene. Her first book, *Body Language*, a collection of poetry, was nominated for a 2003 Lambda Literary Award. She is the winner of a host of poetry slams including winning the Fifth Annual Gwendolyn Brooks Open Mic Competition and the First Annual Behind Our Masks Poetry Slam. She has created and maintained several traditions in the poetry community, including national and local poetry slams for people of color, and the women of color night at Mountain Moving Coffeehouse. She has participated in hundreds of women's music festivals, including

the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, and has sold out performances on both coasts. Recently she was a guest performer with Nedra Johnson and Mimi Gonzalez on an Olivia Cruise, receiving standing ovations for all three appearances. Her performances have earned her opening credits for Nikki Giovanni, Maya Angelou, Cheryl Clarke and Dorothy Allison and headlining credits on bills with Staceyann Chin, Alix Olson, and Andrea Gibson.

Find out more about C.C.'s work at www.CCCarter.com.

~MORE~

MARCH 18-20, 2011

TO ART AND PROFIT:

WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR? DEFINING ART'S PURPOSE NOW

To Art and Profit series runs three weekends from March to May, 2011

Co-presented by **Abra M. Johnson, Meida Teresa McNeal, and Links Hall**

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Collaborating Artists: **Cristal Sabbagh & Roger Noel; J'Sun Howard & Jennifer Karmin with insight by Coya Paz; C.C. Carter, Sage Morgan Hubbard & Keli Stewart.**

Friday & Saturday at 8pm at Links Hall

Tickets \$15/ \$12 Students & Seniors

Sunday spectacle at 2pm – 3pm at Voice of the City: 3429 W. Diversey Ave, Suite 208,

Panel Discussion **3:30pm – 5pm at Elastic Arts: 2830 N. Milwaukee Ave, 2nd**

Free and Open to the Public

~MORE~

Weekend 2

APRIL 15-17, 2011

TO ART AND PROFIT:

QUIT BULLSHITTIN': RECOGNIZING DIVISION AND BUILDING SOLIDARITY IN THE ARTS

To Art and Profit series runs three weekends from March to May

Co-presented by **Abra M. Johnson, Meida Teresa McNeal, and Links Hall**

Spread over three weekends from March through May 2011, *To Art & Profit* is an interdisciplinary performance series augmented with arts-focused dialogues and Carnival-inspired street theatre spectacle throughout the city of Chicago. The second weekend in the series explores the gaps in diverse arts expression and programming. How can we make more mindful choices about the kinds of art we make and consume? Why is this lack of diversity culturally significant?

Collaborating Artists: **Avery R. Young & BRAT James; In The Spirit & Siete Lunas Nuevas; Boogie McClarin & Fathom DJ.**

Friday & Saturday at 8pm at Links Hall

Tickets \$15/ \$12 Students & Seniors

Sunday spectacle at 2pm

Free and Open to the Public

Located at local arts community centers

~More~

Weekend 3

MAY 20-22, 2011

***TO ART AND PROFIT:
COME AS YOU ARE: RE-IMAGINING ART WITH A CONSCIENCE***

Co-presented by **Abra M. Johnson, Meida Teresa McNeal, and Links Hall**

Spread over three weekends from March through May 2011, *To Art & Profit* is an interdisciplinary performance series augmented with arts-focused dialogues and Carnival-inspired street theatre spectacle throughout the city of Chicago. This final weekend focuses on a triffecta of relationships—art makers, consumers, and sponsors. How can we make commercial art that is socially relevant, appealing, and entertaining? Can we create new systems of value and new models of socially accountable and affordable art production? Can community-centered art pay? How do artists retain their integrity and become/remain commercially viable? How can we build creative markets that don't dumb its consumers down or lock others out?

To Art and Profit series runs three weekends from March to May

Friday & Saturday at 8pm at Links Hall

Tickets \$15/ \$12 Students & Seniors


Sunday spectacle at 2pm

Free and Open to the Public

Located at local arts community centers

Links Hall is located at 3435 N. Sheffield Avenue, Chicago, IL 60657—convenient to the BROWN, PURPLE & RED line stop at Belmont and RED line Addison stop in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood. For more information, call **773.281.0824** or visit **www.LinksHall.org**

Links Hall encourages artistic innovation and public engagement by maintaining a facility and providing flexible programming for the research, development and presentation of new work in the performing arts.

***To Art & Profit Artists are supported by **

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The Artistic Associates Festivals Collective

The following generous individuals have pledged support in 2010 to help underwrite the budgets for each Artistic Associate Festival. Please contact Roell Schmidt if you'd like to join the Collective (rschmidt@linkshall.org): Mark Becker & Doug Widener, Andrea Conklin Bueschel, Greg Cameron & Greg Thompson, Chicago Seminar on Dance and Performance, Elizabeth Liebman, Susan Manning & Doug Doetsch, CJ Mitchell & Karen Christopher, Bette Rosenstein & John Brix, Paul Tuminaro, Ronald Uchida & Laura Ahrens Uchida, Toshi Uchida & Doug Rainey

Links Hall is supported by Alphawood Foundation, Arts Midwest, Arts Work Fund for Organizational Development, The Boeing Company, The Chicago Community Trust, Cliff Dwellers Arts Foundation, The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust, Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, James S. Kemper Foundation, Lisa Dershin Creative Dance Fund, MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, National Performance Network, The Weasel Fund and many individuals.

Links Hall's Performance Series is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and a CityArts Program 2 grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs.

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