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PICA'S "CREATIVE EXCHANGE LAB" RESIDENCY PROGRAM ANNOUNCES 2017 SPRING ARTISTS

ONLINE: pica.org/cel-spring17

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PICA is pleased to announce the seven artists who will be in residence from March 19 – April 6 through the Creative Exchange Lab. Twice a year, the Creative Exchange Lab convenes 7–10 local, national, and international artists who spend three weeks immersed in research, new project development and idea exchange.

Selected by PICA's curatorial team, the spring cohort of artists includes performance artist **Kaneza Schaal** (New York); choreographer/writer/performance artist **Will Rawls** (New York); performance artist **Jennie Liu** (Los Angeles); musician **Andrew Gilbert** (Los Angeles); visual artist **Manuel Solano** (Mexico City); visual artist **Sarah AbuAbdallah** (Saudi Arabia); and transdisciplinary artist **Demian DinéYazhi'** (Portland); and songwriter/music producer/actor **Amenta Abioto** (Portland).

"In today's political climate, there has never been a more imperative time for artists to be in safe spaces to connect and embrace diverse artistic and cultural perspectives outside of their own. This unique residency program enables relationships continue to grow organically, and as evidenced by past Creative Exchange Lab artists, we expect similar bonds to be created with Portland, with PICA, and with each other. We are thrilled to be welcoming a new cohort of artists that reaches locally and globally to Portland, and we can't wait to see what emerges from their artistic research and community building," said Angela Mattox, PICA's Artistic Director.

On March 28th at 6 PM, the Creative Exchange Lab will give a free public presentation at PICA (415 SW 10th Avenue) to give Portland the opportunity to meet the artists and engage with their work.

Launched in the spring of 2015, through funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, PICA's Creative Exchange Lab is a residency program that promotes artistic exchange across disciplines, geographies, and fosters the development of new works. Reflecting a field-wide need for in-depth cross-disciplinary research opportunities for artists, the Lab offers essential generative time for research and experimentation, cross-disciplinary collaboration and dialogue between the participating local, national, and international artists.

The logo for PICA, consisting of the letters "PICA" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters are positioned above a horizontal yellow bar that extends to the left of the text.

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CREATIVE EXCHANGE LAB SPRING 2017 ARTISTS

Kaneza Schaal is a New York City based theater artist. She received a 2016 Creative Capital Award to develop her next work *JACK&JILL*, a multimedia comedy of errors that draws on social codes and trainings: from prison re-entry programs to debutante balls. Schaal's recent piece *GO FORTH* premiered with Performance Space 122 and was presented at the Genocide Memorial Amphitheater in Kigali, Rwanda; Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's River-to River Festival, NY; and Wesleyan University Center for the Arts, CT. Her work has been supported by Baryshnikov Arts Center, Performance Space 122, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Nathan Cummings Foundation, Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Theater Communications Group, Princess Grace George C. Wolfe Award, Bogliasco Fellowship, and Kara Walker's 6–8 Months Space.

Schaal's work with The Wooster Group, Elevator Repair Service, Richard Maxwell/ New York City Players, Claude Wampler, Dean Moss, and New York City Opera has brought her to venues including Centre Pompidou, Royal Lyceum Theater Edinburgh, The Whitney Museum, Brooklyn Academy of Music, and MoMA. She is an Arts-in-Education advocate and just returned from a new project with the International Children's Book Library in Munich, Germany, working with recently arrived young people from Syria and Eritrea to address migration and storytelling.

Will Rawls is a writer, choreographer, and performer. Rawls creates solo and group works that turn around the idea of self and becoming. By placing the body into resonant encounters with other media and with architecture, Rawls cultivates the experiential nature and expanded potential of what choreography can be. Rawls' recent projects focus on authorship, memory, blackness, and subjectivity, and he is currently in collaboration with writers Claudia Rankine and Homi K. Bhabha, and filmmaker John Lucas on *What Remains*, a performance premiering in April 2017 at Bard College. He is recipient of a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grant 2015, the Casinos Austria 2016 Prix Jardin d'Europe, and a Robert Rauschenberg Foundation Residency 2017. As an interpreter and performer, Rawls has worked with Marina Abramovic, Jerome Bel, Alain Buffard, Maria Hassabi, Xavier Le Roy, Tino Sehgal, and Shen Wei Dance Arts. As a teacher, he has been a Mellon Creative Campus Fellow 2015–2016 at Wesleyan University and an Arthur J. Levitt Artist-in-Residence at Williams College. His writing has been published by Art Forum, Triple Canopy, les presses du réel, The Museum of Modern Art, and Danspace Project. (willrawls.com)

Jennie Liu has made performances and videos with a close, evolving group of performers and designers since 2005. *House Music*, an ongoing collaboration with performer/ musician Andrew Gilbert, was created with support from Los Angeles Performance Practice and was in residency at the Mistake Room in Los Angeles as part of an initiative to view performance as a set of processes and interactions rather than solely as a time-based object. Her work has been presented at venues including the former Dance Theater Workshop, Bushwick Starr, Live Arts Exchange, REDCAT's NOW Festival, HERE Arts Center, Incubator Arts Center, and Prelude Festival. She was a resident artist at the Bogliasco Foundation, Yaddo Arts Colony, EMPAC, and Brooklyn Arts Exchange, and has

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received grants from the Jerome Foundation, Center for Cultural Innovation, and MAP Fund. Liu's video work is rooted in an interest in applying choreographic processes to filmmaking. Her first short film *Scout Hut* (2012) screened at the Center for Performance Research and the Frameworks Dance Festival, and *Diamond Linda* (2016) at the LA Dance Film Festival. In collaboration with Karinne Keithley Syers, *Front Door Blue Sky*, a documentary feature about The Wooden Floor, a dance program for underserved young people in Santa Ana, will have a digital release in 2017. As a performer Liu has worked with Big Dance Theater, Faye Driscoll, Witness Relocation Company, Cathy Weis Projects, Poor Dog Group, and Adam Linder. She received her BFA from the Experimental Theater Wing at NYU, and her MFA from Hollins University in Virginia.

Andrew Gilbert is a Los Angeles-based performer, musician, and teacher. In 2007 he co-founded Poor Dog Group, an experimental theater collective with whom he has developed six works as a performer and LA Weekly Theater Award winning composer/sound designer. With PDG he has performed at venues including REDCAT, the Experimental Media and Performance Art Center (EMPAC), The Getty Villa, South Coast Repertory Theater, Live Arts Exchange Festival, Grotowski Institute in Poland, Bitef Theater in Serbia, and the Pula International Theater Festival in Croatia. *House Music*, co-created with choreographer Jennie Liu, is a performance for 16 guests rooted in an ongoing study of Japanese tea ceremony, and has been performed since 2014 at venues including Prelude Festival, Live Arts Exchange, HomeLA, the Mistake Room, and the Printed Matter Art Book Fair in Los Angeles. He has also performed in the work of the Padua Playwrights, 24th Street Theater, and the Elephant Theater. Gilbert is one half of the band Royal Auditorium which will release their sophomore EP in 2017. In July 2017 he will be in residence at PAM Residencies with his solo music project, Al's Beats. Andrew is a teaching artist at a charter school in Inglewood as well as a commercial actor. Andrew is a graduate of the CalArts School of Theater.

Manuel Solano (Mexico City, 1987): Through painting, performance and video, Manuel Solano's work references pop culture and personal memories to inform on Manuel's own queer identity and bittersweet experiences. After becoming blind for life in 2014 as a result of an HIV-related infection, Manuel's rebellious nature drove him to keep making art rather than giving up his past life. He has since shown at Museo Carrillo Gil, Zona MACO and Galería Karen Huber.

Sarah AbuAbdallah lives and works in Qatif, Saudi Arabia and studied art in both Rhode Island School of Design for a Masters in Digital Media, and in the College of Art and Design in University of Sharjah. She is currently an artist and puzzlemaker. Working with video, installation, poetry and images. Shown work in Sharjah Biennial 11, Serpentine Galleries Marathons, Fluidity in Kunstverein in Hamburg, Co-Workers in Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Do it Arabic, Prospectif Cinéma/Filter Bubble in Centre Pompidou and Luma Foundation, Private Settings in Warsaw Museum of Modern Art; Arab Contemporary in Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Rhizoma in the 55th Venice Biennale, amongst others.

She is the recipient of Sharjah Art Foundation's production programme grant (2016) in collaboration with Josh Bitelli for their project *To Gaze at Ten Suns Shining* and is a shortlisted artist for Abraaj Group Art Prize 2017.

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Demian DinéYazhi (born 1983) is a Portland-based Diné transdisciplinary artist born to the clans Naasht'ézhi Tábaqáhá (Zuni Clan Water's Edge) & Tódich'íí'nii (Bitter Water). Whether he is broaching topics adjacent to Decolonization, Survivance, & Queerness in written or visual language, Demian is caught in a narrative that is informed by romanticized notions of belonging & the alienation experienced through centuries of forced assimilation to White Supremacist Capitalist Heteropatriarchal Colonization. His practice is rooted in Radical Indigenous Queer Feminist ideology, landscape representation, memory formation, HIV/AIDS-related art & activism, poetry, and curatorial inquiry. He received his BFA in Intermedia Arts from Pacific Northwest College of Art in 2014. Demian is the founder & director of the artist/activist initiative, R.I.S.E.: Radical Indigenous Survivance & Empowerment, which is dedicated to education, perseverance, & evolution of Indigenous art & culture, as well as co-director for the forthcoming zine, *Locusts: A Post-Queer Nation Zine*. DinéYazhi was an artist-in-residence at Institute of American Indian Arts (2016), and is a recipient of Crow's Shadow 2017 Golden Spot Residency. He has received grants from Evergreen State College (2014, 2016), PICA - Portland Institute of Contemporary Art (2014, 2016), Art Matters Foundation (2015), and Potlatch Fund (2016). (demiandineyazhi.com / Instagram: [@heterogeneushomosexual](https://www.instagram.com/heterogeneushomosexual))

Songwriter, music producer, and actor, **Amenta Abioto** is on the cutting edge of all that is musical, theatrical, and literary. Her music is boldly mystical and soul-fired, and her raw performances invoke elements of both theatrical surprise and magic through ancient African diasporic sounds and stories. Weaved into syncopated rhythms and dichotomies of comedic proportions, Amenta surprises and tantalizes audiences with mind bending ideas. She brings to the music scene funky academia while skipping vocally from soul shaking gospel to smooth jazz and then onto hip hop rhythms wrapped in West African beats.

Amenta was born and raised in Memphis, TN. She became a part of the Portland community in 2010 after graduating from Idyllwild Arts Academy where she trained in musical theatre. Since graduating she has courted the music scene and produced one self-titled EP, *Amenta Abioto*, and one album, *Opening Flower Hymns*. Mythological characterization and cultural stories are reflected in her original works. Boldly striking, Amenta brings beauty, charm, and creativity to any stage as an ode to funk.

ABOUT PORTLAND INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART (PICA):

Portland Institute for Contemporary Art acknowledges and advances new developments in contemporary art, fostering the explorations of artists and audiences. Since 1995, PICA has championed the practice of contemporary artists from around the world, driving vital conversations about the art and issues of today. PICA presents artists from visual and performance backgrounds and embraces those individuals who exist at the borders of genres and ideas. Through artist residencies and exhibitions, lectures and workshops, and the annual Time-Based Art Festival, PICA constructs a broad platform for contemporary art. (pica.org)