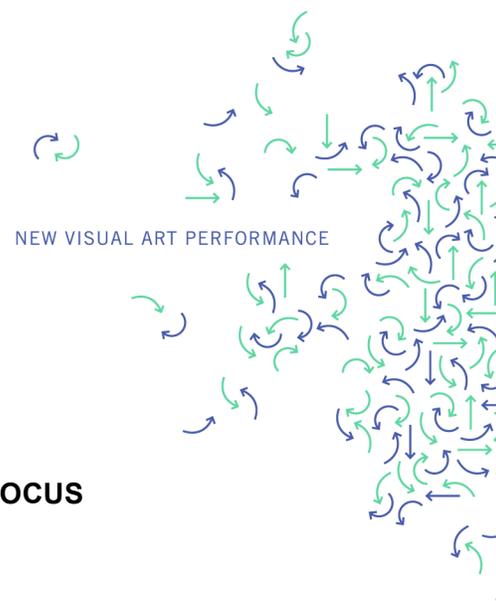


For Immediate Release

October 8, 2015



PERFORMA ANNOUNCES AUSTRALIA AS FOCUS FOR PAVILION WITHOUT WALLS

New York — Performa, the internationally acclaimed organization dedicated to live performance across disciplines, **announces Australia as the country of focus for Performa 15's Pavilion Without Walls.** Investigating critical concerns relating to the nation's colonial history, perceived 'provincialism,' Asian-Pacific geographic identity, and the cultural impact of Aboriginal visual arts activism, this program will feature new performances and installations by artists **Agatha Gothe-Snape, Brian Fuata, Richard Bell, Zheng Mahler, and Justene Williams,** with local and Australian collaborators, as well as a robust public program organized by Art Historian **Terry Smith.**

"In preparation for my first visit to Australia, I read several books on the founding history of the continent, and also, for an entirely different viewpoint, art historian Terry Smith's *The Provincialism Problem* from 1972," says **RoseLee Goldberg,** Founding Director and Curator of Performa. "By the time I got there I was filled with questions **about what it means to be Australian, and what it means to be an Australian artist making art in that setting.** For Performa 15, we're bringing some of those very detailed discussions back to New York with a group of remarkable artists, curators, writers and thinkers. Each presents complex and complicated answers to these questions."

The sixth edition of Performa's biennial brings together more than **30 artists from 12 countries** around the world to participate in three weeks of exciting programming including Performa Commissions, Performa Projects, Performa Premieres, Performa Hub, Pavilion Without Walls, and more—breaking down the boundaries between visual art, music, dance, poetry, film, and architecture. With Performa 15, Performa celebrates its 10th Anniversary and illuminates the extensive influence of the organization and its program. Performa 15 marks a more selective edition, adding extraordinary new work to the genre. The program highlights a strong group of new artists while celebrating returning artists in honor of its first decade.

Since its inception, Performa has been a leader in commissioning artists whose works have shaped a new chapter in the multi-century legacy of visual artists working in live performance. **Performa 15 will take place on November 1 – 22, 2015, at various locations throughout New York City.**

PAVILION WITHOUT WALLS | AUSTRALIA:

Pavilion Without Walls connects international artists with global audiences and the New York City arts community through collaborations between pavilion cultural partners and Performa's team to develop a curatorial program for the biennial.

For Performa 15, we are thrilled to present a program of new commissions, US debuts and world premieres, in partnership with Australia's leading cultural institutions, independent curators, academics and some of the most exciting artists working today. The Australian Pavilion Without Walls will launch *Oberon*, a new periodical and companion to the art world, present a series of Artist Classes led by the participating Australian artists, provide a historical foothold to contemporary performance through talks and screenings and host the artist collective WrongSolo in residence at the Performa Hub.

Performa's relationship with Australia was established through the travelling exhibition 'Performance Now,' curated by RoseLee Goldberg, which was presented at the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane in 2014. This initial introduction to the Australian cultural landscape led to an extensive 18-month research period that saw RoseLee Goldberg and producer Esa Nickle undertake two separate research trips to Australia to meet with artistic and cultural leaders from across the country.

Performa's curatorial investigation raised a number of critical concerns as part of Australia's cultural identity, as well as unique issues facing the arts sector. What has resulted is a desire to connect the Australian projects with New York—through art history, collaborations with other artists, contacts, connections and insertion into iconic New York situations. The Australian Pavilion Without Walls is made possible by funds from the Australia Arts Council.

In partnership with Performance Space, Keir Foundation, Artspace, and the Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane, Pavilion Without Walls will consist of live performances, performance history research, and an analysis of the cultural landscape of Australia through the lens of contemporary art.

- **Agatha Gothe-Snape – *Rhetorical Chorus (LW)***. Piecing together a gestural lexicon of Lawrence Weiner's hand movements, and an expanded verbal vocabulary gathered from his every text work, the piece is a visual and aural collage of images, texts and sounds that engulf the audience. *Rhetorical Chorus (LW)* presents an improvised choral performance in the byzantine tradition of cheironomia, a musical system notated by hand gestures, accompanied by an animated digital PowerPoint presentation, each illuminating the dual lexicons of Lawrence Weiner. Unraveling the interconnected legacies and influences of modernism and conceptual art in their respective practices, Gothe-Snape follows these threads through acts of embodiment, expression and transference in this layered and multi-sensory circulation and consumption of knowledge. This project is co-commissioned by Performance Space, Sydney, and the Keir Foundation.
- **Richard Bell – *Embassy***. The original Aboriginal Tent Embassy was a platform to bring topics of Indigenous health, housing, and land rights to the forefront of Australian politics in the 1970s, and Bell's reactivation of the iconic protest camp brings attention to these and other issues facing First Nation Australians today. Functioning as a hub for film screenings, workshops, and an exhibition space for activists, political leaders, and artists, Bell's reimagined *Embassy* gives a global voice to this cause. In this iteration, *Embassy* presents Vernon Ah Kee's four-channel video installation "Tall Man" (2010), a raw examination of race relations in Australia; a series of participatory Anger Management Workshops staged by artist Stuart Ringholt that address trauma and healing; and a program of talks and conversations that explore the historic and contemporary relationship between performance and protest. Working in collaboration with American artist, activist, and former Minister of Culture for the Black Panthers, Emory Douglas, Bell has produced a series of promotional ephemera to accompany *Embassy*, serving among the material that will live on beyond the event in the spirit of the first. This project is co-produced by the Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane and supported by Milani Gallery.
- **Brian Fuata – *A preparatory/predictive performance for a circuit of email and the living (Live Performances)*, and *All Titles, No Centre Crux: the email performances in PERFORMA 2015***

(Email Performances). Ray Johnson, a seminal Pop Art figure and early conceptualist in the 1950s, has left behind a vast collection of letters, mail art, collages, and other materials that preserve his vital legacy now twenty years after his death. Working in concert with his estate, and within his own practice of correspondence via email performance, Fuata will present a series of live and mediated works that trace long-distance relationships. Expanding on his live performances, Fuata launches a series of 'email performances' that approach electronic correspondence as a theatrical stage, with concerns that parallel and overlap those faced by physical theaters, including positioning, audience, and staging. Existing outside the structures and economies of the art world, like Johnson's mail art, Fuata investigates ideas of re-performance, site, and history in dialogue with Johnson's distinctive lexicon of text and forms. Curated by Susan Gibb, co-presented by the Estate of Ray Johnson.

- **Zheng Mahler – *New York Post-Et Prefiguratif (Before and After New York)*.** Two figures are at the center of this story: Bull, a young Somalian businessman who worked from Chungking Mansions, an informal commercial center and gathering place for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong; and a Beijing Opera singer outfitted in traditional costume. The performance is staged as a conversation between the Bull, played by Kenyan-American actor Irungu Mutu, and the singer, portrayed by Executive Director Kuang-Yu Fong of Chinese Theater Works, who performs excerpts from the company's *Day Job Opera Dreams*, a piece based on the migration stories and work experiences of Beijing Opera singers living in New York. The performance is a visually and sonically lush Afro-Sino encounter between the characters. The work's syncretic narratives and melding of cultural expressions, as well as its traversal of time and space, imbues it with poignant reflections on Western modernity filtered through the prism of Asia and Africa at a time when the world is now experiencing the most intense flows of migration since World War Two. Curated by Adrienne Edwards.
- **Justene Williams – *The Curtain Breathed Deeply*.** This expansive installation combines video performance with multifaceted mise-en-scènes comprised of handmade sets, costumes and sculptural elements that immerse the audience and create a space of complicit spectatorship. First premiered at Artspace, Sydney in 2014, *The Curtain Breathed Deeply* blends ritualistic practices from Shamanism, Voodoo and Modernist primitivism with art historical giants—Picasso, Leger, Klein, Flavin, and Kahlo—and a range of pop cultural influences from hip hop, Milli Vanilli, to musicals, as well as objects and images appropriated from a stereotypical Western Sydney suburban lifestyle. Drawing from her training in dance, fine art, photography and video, as well as her personal history, Williams amasses a collection of visual and aural curiosities that seduce audiences through a wealth of patterns, colors, textures and tonalities. Co-presented by Artspace, Sydney and supported by Arts NSW.
- **WrongSolo — *Cardinals*.** For Performa 2015, artists-in-residence WrongSolo present *Cardinals*, a short three-part performance centered around an imagined dialogue between the cardinal point 'North', and the intercardinal points 'South-East' and 'South-West'. Situated within the Performa 15 Hub and accompanied by clarinetist, Megan Clune, *Cardinals* utilizes text and stylized choreography to develop a self-reflexive and speculative conversation about the contemporary art world. Referencing historical art and theatrical works, *Cardinals* considers the role of the individual artist, and the process of constructing performance art itself. Curated by Amelia Wallin.

AESOP PARTNERSHIP

Performa 15 is delighted to be partnering with Aesop in celebration of Performa 15 and the Australian Pavilion without Walls. Given Aesop's longstanding commitment to the arts, impeccable design and

luxurious self care products, they are the perfect partner to pamper our guests, audiences and artists, alike.

ABOUT PERFORMA:

Founded in 2004 by art historian and curator RoseLee Goldberg, Performa is the leading organization dedicated to exploring the critical role of live performance in the history of twentieth-century art and encouraging new directions in performance for the twenty-first century. Since launching New York's first performance biennial, Performa 05, in 2005, the organization has solidified its identity as a commissioning and producing entity. As a "museum without walls," Performa provides important art historical heft to the field by showing the development of live art in all its forms from many different cultural perspectives reaching back to the Renaissance. The Performa Biennial is celebrated world wide as the first biennial to give specialized attention to this remarkable history, transforming the city of New York into the 'world capital of artists' performance' every other November. Performa attracts a national and international audience of more than 200,000 and receives more than 5,000,000 website hits during its three week run. In the last decade Performa has presented 592 performances, worked with 732 artists, and toured commissioned performances in 17 countries around the world.

The Curatorial Team for Performa 15 is led by RoseLee Goldberg and includes Performa curators Adrienne Edwards, Charles Aubin, and Mark Beasley, as well as curators from a consortium of more than 30 cultural institutions. Performa 15 is produced by Esa Nickle.

For more on Performa and its programs including the Performa Biennial, please visit <http://performa-arts.org/>.

Join the conversation: @PerformaNYC #Performa10Years

CONSORTIUM PARTNERS:

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BIENNIAL SUPPORTERS:

Performa 15 gratefully acknowledges Lead Underwriting Support from Toby Devan Lewis, Leslie Ziff, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The Australian Council for the Arts, The Ford Foundation, Lafayette Anticipation – Fondation d'entreprise Galeries Lafayette, Paris, Lambent Foundation. Major Sponsors includes Aviv, Marian Goodman Gallery and Via Art Fund. Supporting Sponsors include the Danish Arts Foundation, Galeria Luisa Strina and the National Endowment for the Arts. The Commissioning Fund is generously supported by Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, Renée and Robert Drake, Galerie Perrotin, Amy and Ronald Guttman, Barbara Hoffman, ICA Miami, The Keir Foundation, Bernard I., Lumpkin and Carmine D. Boccuzzi, PSM Gallery, Erica and Joseph Samuels, Fern and Leonard Tessler, and Suzanne Vielmetter – Los Angeles Projects. Additional support has been received from the Cultural Services of the French Embassy, FUSED, Institut Français a Paris, Young Kim, the Times Square Alliance and Sutton PR.

Special thanks to Aesop, Triumph Hotels (Exclusive Hotel Partner), Dig Inn, Goose Island Beer Co., HôtelAmericano, Neuehouse, Stella Artois, and SUTTON.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT:

Performa's annual programs and operations are supported by the Lambent Foundation, the David and Elaine Potter Foundation, The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and The New York State Council for the Arts, a State Agency. The Performa Institute and fellowship program is supported by Lambent Foundation, Ford Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and NYU Steinhardt Department of Art and Art Professions. Additional support provided by Artnet, Brooke Blashill, The Boston Foundation, Donor Advised Fund of the Jewish Federation of Cleveland grant recommended by Toby Devan Lewis, The Jedra Charitable Foundation, Lisa K. Lippman (in honor of Emily Glasser and William Sussman), Noam Andrews, Gregory Miller, and Anne Bergeron. Special thanks to the Performa Board of Directors, including Laurie Beckleman, Irving Benson, Todd Bishop, Amy Cappellazzo, Toby Devan Lewis (Honorary Chair), Wendy Fisher, Stephanie French, Emily Glasser, RoseLee Goldberg, Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn (Chair), Ronald Guttman, Barbara Hoffman, Rashid Johnson, Aditya Julka, Edward T. Nahem, and the Performa Producers, Curators and Visionaries Circles.

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****NOTE TO THE EDITORS****

ABOUT THE ARTISTS:

Agatha Gothe-Snape (b. 1980, Sydney, Australia) work activates an unusual range of media, including instructional choreographic scores, digital media, large-scale sculpture and text-based works. Gothe-Snape has exhibited widely in major museums in Australia including Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane (2014); National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (2013); Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne (2013); Art Gallery of New South Wales, New South Wales (2013); Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2012); and the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne (2011) among others.

Brian Fuata (b. 1978, Wellington, New Zealand) drives an improvisational practice grounded in conversation, text and movement, and uses a range of sites for his work including theatres, galleries, mobile phone text messages and the Internet. Fuata has presented work at Carriageworks, Sydney (2015); Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne (2014); Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney (2013); Austrian Association of Women Artists, Vienna (2013); Artspace, Sydney (2011); Barbican Theatre, London (2009); and Performance Space, Sydney (2006), among many others.

Justene Williams (b.1970, Sydney, Australia) uses video as a performative medium, arranging delirious multimedia choreographies that channel art history, tribal belief systems, and pop culture. Justene is currently preparing a new commission for the 20th Biennale of Sydney and has exhibited widely throughout

Australia and internationally, at venues including Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne (2015); Artspace, Sydney (2014); Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, New South Wales (2013); Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane (2013); La Centrale Powerhouse Gallery, Montreal (2012); and the Barbican Center, London (2011) among others.

Richard Bell (b. 1953, Charleville, Queensland) mixes humor and political commentary to create provocative paintings and videos that signal his background as a member of the Aboriginal Kamilaroi, Kooma, Jiman and Gurang Gurang communities. Bell's work has been exhibited widely across Australia and New Zealand, as well as internationally, at venues including Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (2015); Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, Perth (2014); Artspace, Sydney (2013); National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art, Taiwan (2013); and The National Gallery of Canada (2013), among many others. His work was included in The Fifth Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2013); and the 9th and 16th Biennales of Sydney (1992/93 and 2008, respectively).

Zheng Mahler is a Hong Kong-based collective founded by artist Royce Ng and anthropologist Daisy Bisenieks. Together, they work on intensive, community-based and site-specific projects that unite digital media, performance, and installation to explore the complex relationships between art and anthropology. These projects have been exhibited at Johann Jacobs Museum, Zurich (2014); Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne (2013); Artspace Mite Ugro, Gwangju (2012); Kunsthalle Gwangju, Gwangju (2011); and Nena Contemporary Art Space, Chiangmai (2009), among others.

WrongSolo is a collaborative performance art group comprising Brian Fuata, Agatha Gothe-Snape and Shane Haseman. Utilizing stylistic sets, basic architectural structures, choreographed movement, textual and audio-visual components, WrongSolo's work explores reoccurring themes and structures including: desire, displacement and drifting, action images and mobile tableaux, lived poetry, free-speaking and silence, *délire* and language, site-specificity, and the power relationships between spectators and performers. WrongSolo has exhibited in many institutions including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney(2013), Australian Centre of Contemporary Art, Melbourne (2011), The Art Gallery of NSW (2013), Perth Institute of Contemporary Art (2011), and Queensland University of Technology (2014).