

# THE KITCHEN

NEW YORK CITY'S CENTER  
FOR EXPERIMENTAL ART  
AND THE AVANT-GARDE  
SINCE 1971

For Immediate Release  
November 16, 2023

## THE KITCHEN ANNOUNCES WINTER/SPRING 2024 PROGRAMMING

Artists Weave Diverse Mediums and Forms into Hybridized, Immersive Work, Collapsing Boundaries Between Installation and Performance and Proposing New Meeting Points for Art and Spirituality

Programming Includes:

- J Jan Groeneboer's Multi-Channel Video Installation *Selected Views*, the Result of a Daily Observational Practice and Durational Study of the Politics of Viewership, January 10–13, 17–20
- Martha Friedman and Susan Marshall's Performance Installation *Two Person Operating System Type 2*, with Dancers Activating Sculptures and Probing Preconceptions of the Material Boundaries of the Body, February 3 & 4
- Sacha Yanow: *Uncle!*, a ritual portrait of intergenerational loneliness and longing that draws from Jewish and queer performance traditions, February 22–24 & February 29–March 2
- Neal Medlyn: *HOLY SATURDAY*, Co-Presented in Partnership with General Theological Seminary, an Evening-Length Performance and Afternoon Performances and Installations, Reinvigorating a Dialogue about How Art and Faith Can Talk to Each Other, March 30
- Harmony Holiday: *BLACK BACKSTAGE*, an Immersive Exhibition Comprising New Short Films, Live Performances, and Public Programs, March 21–May 25

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The Kitchen today announces programming for Winter/Spring 2024, colliding disciplines, setting ephemeral performance within durational and intricately conceived environments, and embracing the vast possibility of the structure and immediate surroundings of The Kitchen's temporary home at **Westbeth Artists Housing** (163B Bank Street, 4th Floor Loft).

While renovations continue on the bold reimagining of The Kitchen's Chelsea building that will expand its capacities for presenting hybrid and unruly work, the experimental organization continues to explore the possibilities for presenting work within the loft setting at Westbeth Artists Housing. Much of the upcoming programming situated here encapsulates performance in an installation format that allows for prolonged reflections on environments' transformations in the presence and absence of bodies.

The Kitchen **Executive Director and Chief Curator Legacy Russell** says, "This next season winds its way through diasporic models of faith and ritual as a method of healing, The Kitchen a meeting place for somatic spiritualisms. These artists challenge us to consider how care begins with communing."

Winter 2024 begins with **J Jan Groeneboer's *Selected Views*** (January 10–13 and 17–20), a multi-channel video installation featuring footage of the view from his Brooklyn studio. Culminating three years of preparatory research and two-and-a-half years of a daily observational filming practice, *Selected Views* represents a durational study of how features in the city's landscape point toward connections between superstructures such as capitalism, climate change, and the prison-industrial complex. For this site-specific installation, Groeneboer's film overlaps with real-time and physical space in The Kitchen's loft, mirroring elements such as the waterways in the footage and the loft's views of the Hudson River.

**Martha Friedman and Susan Marshall's *Two Person Operating System Type 2*** (February 3 and 4) tangles installation and performance, with dancers activating sculptures in complex patterns, probing preconceptions of the material boundaries of the body. It continues choreographer Friedman and artist and sculptor Marshall's collaborative installation-performance work, which seeks to engage the viewer to think about the sensory experience of inhabiting a body, and touching or navigating inanimate and animate bodies outside their own.

In ***BLACK BACKSTAGE*** (March 21–May 25)—**Harmony Holiday's** new exhibition comprises a short film, prints of new writing, a sculptural, sound installation, occasional live performances, and a series of public conversations—the loft space of The Kitchen at Westbeth is transformed to quote the aesthetic of backstages, creating a layered, liminal, and hybridized space. Here, the artist reflects on the archetypes and sounds that form in and of the ruins after genocide and displacement. Inspired by the ways Black music is often born in these ruins and becomes their archive(s)—brought to the stage, the radio, and the

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album as necessity/commodity. This work emerges from Holiday's epic poem *MAAFA*, described in the *LA Review of Books* as "mantra, manifesto, and primer: an act of reparation that questions what it means to disinherit subjugation, linguistically as much as corporeally" and in *The Paris Review* as "verbally dense and free-flowing, terrifying and moving."

Two works model experimental approaches to merging performance, spiritual space, and ritual. Performance artist **Sacha Yanow's** *Uncle!* (February 22–24 and February 29–March 2) presents an experimental reimagining of the Purimspiel—the cultural tradition of performing a comic dramatization of the Book of Esther to celebrate the Jewish holiday of Purim—that weaves together aspects of Purim, personal history, and the experiences of their actual uncle working as a pulmonologist during the initial decade of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. **Neal Medlyn's** *HOLY SATURDAY*, co-presented in partnership with and at **General Theological Seminary** (440 W 21st Street), seeks to restart a dormant dialogue about how art and faith can talk to each other, and expands a monthly series Medlyn has been conducting at GTS with an evening-length performance preceded by an afternoon of performances and installations (March 30).

## Winter/Spring 2024 Programming Schedule and Descriptions

**J Jan Groeneboer: *Selected Views***

The Kitchen at Westbeth

Gallery hours: January 10–12 and January 17–20, 4:30-8:30pm; January 13, 4:30-6:30pm

Panel Discussion: January 13, 3-4:30pm, Free with RSVP (reservations forthcoming)

J Jan Groeneboer's new multi-channel video installation *Selected Views* takes the singular view from the artist's studio in Brooklyn as a starting point for a durational study of the politics of viewership. To create this work, Groeneboer undertook over three years of preparatory research, photography, and writing about the view, after which he began a daily practice of filming over the subsequent two-and-a-half years. By training his attention on the unfolding repetitions and rhythms of weather and industries, the artist creates space in *Selected Views* to reflect on how elements of the cityscape indicate relationships between democracy, global capitalism, the prison-industrial complex, and environmental crises. Conceived as a site-specific video installation for The Kitchen's loft at Westbeth—a setting defined by a row of windows overlooking the Hudson River—*Selected Views* highlights the interconnections between the waterway visible outside the gallery and the bays that are central to the artist's own view.

In tandem with the installation, on January 13 at 3pm Groeneboer will convene a panel discussion featuring artist and scholar Malik Gaines; artist Zoe Leonard; and cellist, artist, and writer Ethan Philbrick

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exploring themes and processes that are central to *Selected Views*, such as observational practices in contemporary art, the ethics of looking, and the role of public monuments.

J Jan Groeneboer: *Selected Views* is organized by Alison Burstein, Curator.

**J Jan Groeneboer** is a transgender conceptual interdisciplinary artist, writer, and educator. In his visual practice, he investigates how representation and abstraction connect to different forms of visibility, legibility, and comprehension. Groeneboer often works in abstraction to address the politics of representation. He developed this strategy to examine the expectation that transgendered people be readily available for visual scrutiny. Groeneboer's work has shown at David Zwirner Gallery (2018), Boston University Galleries (2017), MoMA (2016), Art in General (2016), the Queens Museum (2016), CCS Bard Hessel Museum of Art (2016), MoMA PS1 (2015), Contemporary Art Museum Houston (2015), Platform Centre for Photographic and Digital Arts in Winnipeg (2015), Andrew Edlin Gallery (2013), Shoshawna Wayne Gallery (2010), and Exile, Berlin (2010), among others. Essays and reviews have appeared in the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, Art21.com, *Mute Magazine*, Artforum.com, *Temporary Art Review*, *Art Journal*, and in the essay in *Pink Labour on Golden Streets*, "Appearing Differently: Abstraction's Transgender and Queer Capacities." David Gettsy's 2016 essay "Seeing Commitments: Jonah Groeneboer's Ethics of Discernment" was included in the "Opacities" section of Gettsy and Che Gosset's "A Syllabus on Transgender and Nonbinary Methods for Art and Art History" (*Art Journal*, Winter 2021). Residencies include Ox-Bow School of Art, the Fire Island Artist Residency, and Recess. He has received travel and/or project grants from Canada Council for the Arts in 2018, 2019, 2021, and 2022. As a writer, Groeneboer has participated in numerous panels and symposiums, and his recent essays on transgender representation were published in *Texte Zur Kunst* (2023) and in the *Journal of Gender and Sexuality* (2023).

**Martha Friedman and Susan Marshall: *Two Person Operating System Type 2***

The Kitchen at Westbeth

Feb 3 and 4, 5pm

Free with RSVP, Reservations forthcoming

*Two Person Operating System Type 2* continues sculptor Martha Friedman and choreographer Susan Marshall's performance-installation series examining the intimate relationships between moving bodies and objects. Working with industrial objects and materials such as rubber and metal, dancers activate sculptures in complex patterns, probing preconceptions of the material boundaries of the body.

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In this iteration, two towers of metal tubes are each capable of supporting metal spikes and rotating in place. Long, fleshy rubber ropes are inserted, spooled and twisted through the sculpture by dancers engaging with the objects and each other in a series of methodical tasks performed with workerly precision. The evolving patterns of action and design explore the tensions between work and product, danger and intimacy, absurdity and purpose, soft and hard, in and out. This serves to complicate expectations of clear, binary contrasts often raised in gendered conversations about physical bodies.

Martha Friedman and Susan Marshall: *Two Person Operating System Type 2* is organized by Matthew Lyons, Curator, with Angelique Rosales Salgado, Curatorial Assistant.

This performance is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

**Martha Friedman** (b. 1977, Detroit, MI), earned a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (1998) and an MFA from the Yale School of Art (2003). Her work has been featured in solo exhibitions at Art@Bainbridge, Princeton University Art Museum, NJ (2022); the Henry Art Gallery, Seattle, WA (2018); the Institute of Fine Arts Great Hall, New York, NY (2016–2017); and Locust Projects, Miami, FL (2015–2016), among others. She frequently collaborates with choreographers Susan Marshall and Silas Riener, reflecting her interest in the intersection of sculpture and dance. Friedman is currently a senior lecturer in visual art at Princeton University, and she lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Martha Friedman is represented by Broadway, New York and Jessica Silverman Gallery, San Francisco.

Choreographer **Susan Marshall** has collaborated with visual artists, scientists and composers on theater productions and gallery installations. Employing modest means to resonant effect, her movement vocabularies often include everyday gestures distilled to near abstraction. Interdependency, freedom within constraints and humor are constants in her work and process. Her collaboration with set designer Mimi Lien—grounded in conversations with members of the neurodiverse community—led to the recent performance-installation, *Rhythm Bath*. She has received MacArthur and Guggenheim Fellowships and three “Bessie” Awards. Her company has performed worldwide and at Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Kitchen, New York Live Arts, Baryshnikov Arts Center, Andrea Rosen Gallery, Kennedy Center, UCLA, Krannert Center, Walker Art Center and Montclair State University among many others. Her work is in the repertoires of Nederlands Dans Theatre, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Pacific Northwest Ballet and others. Marshall is a professor and the Director of Dance at Princeton University.

Sacha Yanow: *Uncle!*  
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February 22–24, February 29–March 2, 7:30pm  
Tickets forthcoming, sliding scale \$5-15

*Uncle!* is an experimental reimagining of the cultural tradition of the Purimspiel—the comic dramatization of the Book of Esther, performed in celebration of the Jewish holiday Purim. Through language, light, sound, and movement, Yanow shapeshifts in and out of a diasporic werewolf ancestor figure Uncle Mordechai, weaving together aspects of Purim, personal history, and the experiences of their actual uncle working as a pulmonologist during the initial decade of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. In a ritual portrait of intergenerational loneliness and longing that draws from Jewish incantation, Yiddish theater, and drag performance, *Uncle!* toggles the thin line between humor and grief, reframing the narrative of Purim and prompting us to consider its significance today in relation to anti-Zionist and queer lineages of care and resilience.

*Uncle!* is Yanow's last work in a trio of solo performances based on familial archetypes, including the father (*Dad Band*, 2015) and the grandmother (*Cherie Dre*, 2018). These embodied renderings mine the artist's family history as an entry point for engagements with broader social issues and as a means of reconnecting to estranged individual and cultural histories.

Sacha Yanow: *Uncle!* is organized by Alison Burstein, Curator.

**Sacha Yanow** (they/them) is a Lenapehoking/NYC based performance artist and actor. Their solo practice is rooted in theater, queer performance, and radical Jewish tradition, using humor and physicality to explore themes of gender, aging, loss, and diaspora. Yanow's work has been presented by venues including MoMA PS1, Danspace Project, Joe's Pub, and the New Museum in NYC; PICA's TBA Festival/Cooley Gallery at Reed College in Portland; and Festival Theaterformen in Hanover, Germany. They have received residency support from Baryshnikov Arts Center, Denniston Hill, LIFT Festival UK, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, MASS MoCA, and Yaddo among others. Yanow served as Director of Art Matters Foundation for twelve years, and previously worked at The Kitchen as Director of Operations. They received a BA from Sarah Lawrence College and are a graduate of the William Esper Studio Actor Training Program.

**Neal Medlyn: *HOLY SATURDAY*** co-presented in partnership with General Theological Seminary  
General Theological Seminary  
March 30, 2-9pm  
Free with RSVP, 7pm performance tickets forthcoming, sliding scale \$5-15

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The Kitchen will partner with the General Theological Seminary to present *HOLY SATURDAY*, a day-long, multi-event performance liturgy created by Neal Medlyn in collaboration with Gillian Walsh and others. Holy Saturday is the day before Easter, the actual day the show will take place, and the concept and organizing theme. As an artist twenty-plus years into a practice wherein he is no longer young and nowhere near done, Medlyn's life, history, and practice merge, as in all his previous work, with themes and subjects of a grand scale, in this case, religion, death, and anticipation.

*HOLY SATURDAY* has its roots in a series of mail art projects Medlyn began in 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic for which he created seven sets of writing, collages, art works, and a performance for no audience. *HOLY SATURDAY* is also part three of Medlyn's Death and Dying series of performance pieces, following *Comeback Comeback* (2022), and *The Comfort in Being Sad* (2023). Now, in 2024, Medlyn brings these various strands of research and work together in an afternoon of free smaller performances and installations culminating in a ticketed, evening-length performance.

*HOLY SATURDAY* seeks to continue a conversation that stretches backward and forward in time at the borders between gatherings of faith and gatherings of artists. From the prophet holding the tambourine 4000 years ago to performance, music, and dance in theaters today; from the holy mountain to the local church, art and ministry have sought to approach those places where the veil is thinnest between this world and the next one. *HOLY SATURDAY*, like its constituent parts and preceding projects, seeks to restart a dormant dialogue about how art and faith can talk to each other: non-dogmatically, open to conversation, open to allowing ourselves to be transformed by one another. As always, the dialogue is unique to the artist and the audience, but there is generally—perhaps due to the pandemic and the gradual ebb of the colonial Enlightenment era—a renewed desire for a thicker universe. One in which experience is not commodified, rationalized, and contained, and where art can grapple again with the spiritual, the internal, the felt, the messy, the glorious.

*HOLY SATURDAY* will include:

*INVITATORY XIII and XIV*: two new iterations of a monthly series of informal performance events that Medlyn conducted at GTS from March 2022 to May 2023 after enrolling at the seminary in 2021 to study theology.

*ADVENTURES IN WORSHIP*: An installation of video and photos documenting a series of research and performance trips that Medlyn and Walsh undertook in 2021 to various sites of religious/spiritual significance in the United States. They shot video, met people, wrote postcards, and took photographs at sites significant to the histories of Mormonism (Hill Cumorah and the Priesthood Restoration Site);

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spiritualism (Lily Dale, New York); American Revivalism (the Cane Ridge revival site in Kentucky; First Presbyterian Church in Rochester, New York; Brushy Creek brush arbor, Texas); American apocalypticism (Cobb Hill, New York, site of the Great Disappointment); evangelicalism, civil rights, and the Black church (Mother Emanuel AME Church in Atlanta, Georgia; the COGIC church in Memphis, Tennessee; the Billy Graham Library, North Carolina); mystical Catholicism (the Vatican pavilion site in Queens, New York); and eccentric incarnations of American religiosity such as the Creation Museum and Holyland, Connecticut.

*GODS NOT FINISHED*: an abstract music project with Gillian Walsh begun in 2022. They have previously performed at General Theological Seminary and at Union Theological Seminary, where Walsh is pursuing a Divinity degree.

*PLAINSONG*: The culminating event of the day in which Medlyn and a full band accompanied by tableaux vivants perform songs from the Cure's 1989 album *Disintegration*.

Neal Medlyn: *HOLY SATURDAY* is organized by Matthew Lyons, Curator.

**Neal Medlyn** (he/him) is an artist whose work straddles the lines between theater, performance art, comedy, faith, and music. His most well-known work is his seven show Pop Star Series and Champagne Jerry, the subsequent iteration of his work with popular music. The Pop Star Series spanned seven shows and eight years, as Medlyn remade himself in the images of Lionel Richie, Phil Collins, Prince, Britney Spears, Miley Cyrus, Insane Clown Posse and Michael Jackson, excavating the deep, generative weirdness of celebrity. The Pop Star Series works have been presented at venues such as Dance Theater Workshop, The Kitchen, PS122, the Chocolate Factory and others, as well as in various festivals and theaters around the U.S. and abroad such as American Realness, New York; the TBA Festival, Portland, OR; the Live Art Festival at Kamnagel, Hamburg, Germany; and others. The Pop Star Series was made into a book published by 53rd State Press featuring photographs by Paula Court. As Champagne Jerry he has appeared at Joe's Pub, BAM, New York Live Arts and on tour in various music venues, art galleries and Walmart parking lots as well as online. His album "For Real, You Guys" debuted in 2014, followed by "The Champagne Room" in 2016 and "I've Grown" in 2018. His albums feature collaborations with Max Tannone, Adam Ad-Rock Horovitz, Bridget Everett, Kathleen Hanna and others. Medlyn is ordained and has a master's in theology from General Theological Seminary.

Harmony Holiday: **BLACK BACKSTAGE**

The Kitchen at Westbeth

March 21–May 25, 2024 (Gallery hours Tuesday–Saturday, 11am-6pm, Free)

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Public program dates and tickets forthcoming, sliding scale \$5-15

Harmony Holiday's project *BLACK BACKSTAGE* builds upon the artist's latest book *MAAFA*, a work that deals with the archetypes and sounds that form in and of the ruins after genocide and displacement. Inspired by the ways Black music is often born in these ruins and becomes their archive(s)—brought to the stage, the radio, and the album as necessity/commodity—the exhibition comprises a short film, prints of new writing, a sculptural, sound installation, occasional live performances, and a series of public conversations. Installed immersively, the various elements of the exhibition are parts of a whole and transform The Kitchen into a hybrid, liminal space that quotes the pared-down aesthetic of backstage spaces. The environment evokes the practical, immaterial aesthetic of a makeshift storefront church, revival meetings, faith healings, and other underground modes of instilling Black sacred and everyday rituals within the spectacle of performance. *BLACK BACKSTAGE* therein draws an intentional contradiction between the barren spaces that are left untended, and those that are cared for because they support the sale of Black spectacle.

Harmony Holiday: *BLACK BACKSTAGE* is organized by Legacy Russell, Executive Director & Chief Curator, and Angelique Rosales Salgado, Curatorial Assistant, with Tsige Tafesse, 2023-24 Curatorial Fellow.

**Harmony Holiday** is a writer, dancer, and experimental filmmaker whose work surveys ancestry, death and rebirth, and celebrity. She is the author of 5 collections of poetry including *Maafa* (2020), and also curates an archive of griot poetics and a related performance series at LA's MOCA. At the core of her practice is a pursuit of visual and literary vocabularies that might best express the melancholic hope endemic to Black American social life. As Holiday navigates the depths of Black remembrance and loss, she sets her sights on the relationship between "the new" and "the archival." She treats both entities as collectively improvising ensembles in which prose and poetry sit by turns comfortable and chaotic, next to images cribbed from Black artistic and private life. She has received the Motherwell Prize from Fence Books, a Ruth Lilly Fellowship, a NYFA fellowship, a Schomburg Fellowship, and a research fellowship from Harvard's Woodberry Poetry Room. She's currently working on a play commissioned for LA's 2020 biennial, and a collection of essays entitled *Love is War for Miles* in addition to other writing, film, and curatorial projects.

## Funding Credits

The Kitchen's programs are made possible in part with support from The Kitchen's Board of Directors, The Kitchen Leadership Fund, and the Director's Council, as well as through generous support from The

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## About The Kitchen

Founded in 1971 as an artist-driven collective, The Kitchen today reaffirms and expands upon its originating vision as a dynamic cultural institution that centers artists, prioritizes people, and puts process first. Programming in a kunsthalle model that brings together live performances, exhibition-making, and public programming under one roof, The Kitchen empowers its audiences and communities to think creatively and radically about what it means to shape a multivalent and sustainable future in art. The Kitchen seeks to cultivate and hold space for wild thought, risky play, and innovative and experimental making, encouraging artists and cultural workers alike to defy boundaries and sending them into the world to remake art history and catalyze creative change.

Among the artists who have presented significant work at The Kitchen are Muhal Richard Abrams, Laurie Anderson, ANOHNI, Robert Ashley, Charles Atlas, Kevin Beasley, Beastie Boys, Gretchen Bender, Dara Birnbaum, Anthony Braxton, John Cage, Lucinda Childs, Julius Eastman, Philip Glass, Leslie Hewitt, Darius James, Joan Jonas, Bill T. Jones, Devin Kenny, Simone Leigh, Ralph Lemon, George Lewis, Robert Longo, Robert Mapplethorpe, Sarah Michelson, Tere O'Connor, Okwui Okpokwasili, Nam June Paik, Charlemagne Palestine, Sondra Perry, Vernon Reid, Arthur Russell, Cindy Sherman, Laurie Spiegel, Talking Heads, Greg Tate, Cecil Taylor, Urban Bush Women, Danh Vō, Lawrence Weiner, Anicka Yi, and many more.

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