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# The Kitchen

Center for video, music, dance, performance, film, and literature



**Julius Eastman:**  
**That Which Is Fundamental**  
January 19–February 10, 2018

Photo © Paula Court

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The Kitchen and Knockdown Center present

## Julius Eastman: Crazy Evil Gay

January 28, 2018

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## Program

### Julius Eastman: *Evil Nigger* (1979)

Adam Tendler, Dynasty Battles, Michelle Cann, and Joseph Kubera, pianos

### Julius Eastman: *Gay Guerrilla* (1979)

Version for electric guitar ensemble scored by Dustin Hurt. Featuring Cristian Amigo, John King, Taylor Levine, Lisa Liu, Ava Mendoza, James Moore, Eleonore Oppenheim, Jade Payne, Brandon Ross, Kenji Shinagawa, and Vorhees (Dana Wachs).

-Intermission-

### Julius Eastman: *Crazy Nigger* (1979)

Adam Tendler, Dynasty Battles, Michelle Cann, and Joseph Kubera, pianos

Assisted by Katy Dammers, Nick Hallett, Matthew Lyons, Kyp Malone, Christopher McIntyre, Jade Payne, Ray Sweeten, and Dana Wachs.

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Howard Gilman Foundation  
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## Upcoming Winter 2018

**The Kitchen L.A.B.: Ellenberg, Hemmings, and Maviel**  
**February 6, 6:30pm. Free.**

The Kitchen L.A.B. (its acronym stands for "language," "art," "bodies") invites artists, authors, and curators to unpack ambiguous vocabularies in contemporary art by responding to them both in conversation and artworks. Each evening creates a kind of hybrid event—and, over time, a hybrid audience—that underlines not only points of commonality among disciplines and generations but also, as important, real differences. This season draws from Édouard Glissant's 1990 book, *Poetics of Relation*, in which he imagined an aesthetically and politically transformative form of relationality.

**Camae Ayewa/Moor Mother**  
**Exhibition: February 21–March 17**  
**Opening February 21, 6–8pm**

Winner of The Kitchen's inaugural Emerging Artist Award, Camae Ayewa/Moor Mother presents an exhibition and performances showcasing the creative process of her second solo album, *Analog Fluids of Sonic Black Holes*, and its instrumental accompaniment, *Sublime Methods of Spiritual Machines*, using soundscape installation, film, collage, and poetry. Investigating the idea that every shadow has a history, the artist speaks about ancestral temporality and the embodiment of what remains and lingers: what takes shape and holds in the shadows of the physical world. Organized by Tim Griffin and Lumi Tan.

**Marianna Ellenberg: Pawel & Ebola**  
**February 22–24, 8pm.**  
**\$20 General / \$15 Members**

Marianna Ellenberg's *Pawel & Ebola* follows a dysfunctional brother and sister duo—the fictional offspring of infamous French neurologist and hysteria clinician Dr. Jean-Martin Charcot—whose world is disrupted by the arrival of a bizarre cult named "The Method." A hybrid language and fragmented narrative convey a world torn between the precarity of global capitalism and the sexual repression and institutionalized misogyny of the 19th century. Organized by Lumi Tan.

**Claire Chase: PAN**  
**March 2–3, \$25 / \$20 Members**  
Composed by Marcos Balter, directed by Douglas Fitch, and produced by Jane M. Saks

and Project&, *PAN* is a 90-minute participatory performance for flutist Claire Chase, electronics, and mass community participation in the form of a large ensemble of non-professional or trained players/collaborators. The latest iteration of Chase's 23-year *Density 2036* project, the piece uses seven tableaux exploring the life of the god Pan, one of only two Greek deities said to have been put to death. It marshals myth to articulate and explore the tensions of our contemporary lives and world. The experience and creative participation attempt to demonstrate, rather than speculate, how music-making allows for societies and communities to create together, shape space, question, reflect, re-visit, re-order and arrive in new and re-imagined locations again and again.

**Constance DeJong & Tony Oursler:**  
***Relatives***

**March 23–24, 8pm**  
**\$20 General / \$15 Members**

Artists and long-time collaborators Constance DeJong and Tony Oursler return to The Kitchen to restage their performance *Relatives* after a hiatus of more than twenty years. Originally commissioned by the ICA Boston in 1988 and performed at The Kitchen in 1989, *Relatives* combines spoken text and video in a duet between a television and a performer. Two worlds of storytelling (electronic and oral) deliver a genealogy of family members who belong to a visible yet overlooked group: history's bit players; their collective story is traced through a succession of appearances in painting, photography, the movies, television, and video games. Organized by Matthew Lyons.

**Synth Nights: Composers Inside Electronics**

**March 29–31, 8pm**  
**Tickets \$20 General / \$15 Members.**

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of Composers Inside Electronics at The Kitchen, these three evenings include early works first performed here in 1977–78 along with newer works composed by Paul DeMarinis, John Driscoll, Phil Edelstein, Tom Hamilton, Ralph Jones, Michael Johnsen, Ron Kuivila, Cecilia López, Paula Matthusen, and Margaret Anne Schedel, representing a wide variety of works and instruments from self-built analog instruments to the most recent digital technologies.

## Program Notes by Kyle Gann

On January 16, 1980, renegade composer/singer/pianist Julius Eastman gave a concert of his works at Northwestern University, in Evanston, Illinois. He had been invited by faculty composer Peter Gena, who, like Eastman, had been a member of the Creative Associates at SUNY Buffalo (a performance group run by composers Lukas Foss and Morton Feldman). Using Northwestern student pianists, Eastman premiered three works for four pianos, with incendiary titles: *Crazy Nigger*, *Evil Nigger*, and *Gay Guerrilla*. In response to a protest by the campus African-American student organization, the titles were left off the program, and in a pre-concert talk Eastman explained, in his eloquent deep bass, that he used the offensive word to honor the African-American's role in American history: "What I mean by niggers is, that thing which is fundamental; that person or thing that attains [sic] to a basicness or a fundamentalness, and eschews that which is superficial, or, could we say, elegant.... There are 99 names of Allah, and there are 52 niggers."

Eastman went on to explain that the three pieces were written using a concept he called "organic form," related to the additive process of minimalist music, which was still fairly new: "That is to say, the third part of any part has to contain all of the information of the first two parts, and then go on from there.... They're not exactly perfect yet. There's an attempt to make every section contain all the information of the previous sections, or else, taking out information at a gradual and logical rate." By "not exactly perfect yet" Eastman seemed to mean that the process was not strict, but intuitively shaped. Most often, new material is added one pitch or motive at a time, though subtractions of material are more abrupt.

The scores to these three works are rather sketchily notated, and considerable interpretation is required on the performers' part. *Crazy Nigger*, at 54 minutes the longest of the three pieces by far, is also the most abstract; for much of the piece it is also the most clearly notated, though toward the end it devolves into mere pitch names as Eastman pursues a sound process that resists clear definition. The piece is largely a long continuum of repeated notes, starting on a Bb, then with an Ab-A-Bb motive thrown in, then an alternating C-Bb, next a D-Eb, then an E alternating with silences, and so on, the pitch combinations changing in leisurely periods of 90 seconds each. Twelve minutes into the piece the texture thins down to just the notes A and B, and a delicate melody spreads downward through the ensemble: B-A-F#-E-D-A-B. Following a brief silence, the repeating Bb returns, and the melody builds back up a half-step lower. The pitches begin to spread out again until all twelve are being repeated at once; perhaps only Eastman, in that era, could use minimalist processes to accumulate into dense atonality. Here Eastman switches from noteheads to a pitch-name notation with numbers whose intent is particularly difficult to decipher without the recording. The music heads into the bass register with some slow octave C#s, and for the last eight minutes a new continuum is built up as a 16-note overtone series on C# (or the equal-tempered approximation thereof), each note in the series being repeated at a tempo proportional to its pitch. In the premiere performance, a group of extra students quietly walked onstage to play all the notes necessary for this final climax.

## Biographies

**Dynasty Battles** is a visionary concert pianist with a unique approach to his blend of music. His work is inspiring to the audience, as he has had the chance to impress people locally and nationally, winning a variety of accolades on regional and national levels. Battles currently studies under established concert pianist Leon Bates, a protégé of the legendary Natalie Hinderas. He also studies counterpoint and harmony and analysis with Jonathan Coopersmith, Chair of Musical Studies at the Curtis Institute of Music. He began his studies at Settlement Music School and received his Bachelor's degree cum laude in Piano Performance at Temple University, where he was a student of Harvey Wedeen and a recipient of the Esther Boyer College Scholarship. Battles became a favorite performer at the W. Russell Johnson Music Guild and was featured together with soprano Marietta Simpson, in the Philadelphia Inquirer, and on music critic David Patrick Stearns' radio program, "Creatively Speaking", on Philadelphia's WRIT (90.1 FM). Battles was also invited to play George Walker's *Piano Sonata No. 1* in a private engagement at the distinguished composer's home. He was a solo performer at the 2017 Colour of Music Festival in Charleston, South Carolina and was recently added as a soloist to the 2018 roster of the Dame Myra Hess Concert Series in Chicago, hosted by the International Music Foundation. Hailing from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Battles has a personal and compelling approach to the piano, pouring emotion and excellence into every note. His performances are particularly notable for his delicate approach to the keys, adding a layer of complexity and grace to even the most common composition. Battles' performances incorporate works from the traditional classical repertoire as well as rarely performed compositions. His interpretations are faithful to the mastery of the original, with a lush and beautiful tone. He also performs spontaneous improvisations that highlight his unique sensibility with the instrument's dynamics. As part of Battle's concert, he can take suggestions from the audience and arrange themes and melodies on the spot, composing new material right then and there.

**Michelle Cann** hailed as a "colorist...who can sweep the listener off his or her feet," started the piano at age 7 and since then has gone on to receive top prizes in state, national, and international competitions including the International Russian Piano Music Competition, the Blount Young Artists National Competition, and most recently the 2014 Wideman International Piano Competition. Michelle received her BM and MM degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music and went on to receive an Artist Diploma degree from the Curtis Institute of Music. Michelle currently resides in Philadelphia, PA, and maintains an active schedule of teaching and performing.

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## Camae Ayewa/Moor Mother

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Performances: March 6-7, 8pm

\$25 General / \$20 Members

Tickets on sale now

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Pianist **Joseph Kubera**'s affiliation with Julius Eastman goes back to the early 1970s in Buffalo, NY and continued after 1980 in New York City, where he performed with Eastman in his multiple-piano works and in other concert presentations. He has directed performances of Eastman's works in Los Angeles, Philadelphia and in Newcastle, England. Hailed as "one of new music's most valued performers" (Kyle Gann, *Village Voice*), Kubera has been a leading interpreter of contemporary music for the past three decades. Recent activities include the premiere of Michael Byron's *The Ultraviolet of Many Parallel Paths* for two pianos (with Marilyn Nonken), an Eastman performance at L.A.'s Monday Evening Concerts, and a new CD of music by Lejaren Hiller for New World Records. He has been a soloist at major European festivals and has worked closely with such luminaries as Morton Feldman, Roscoe Mitchell, La Monte Young, and Robert Ashley. Among those who have written works for him are Michael Byron, Alvin Lucier, and David First. A longtime Cage advocate, he has made definitive recordings of *Music of Changes* and the *Concert for Piano* and toured widely with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company at Cage's invitation. He is a core member of the S.E.M. Ensemble. Kubera has been awarded grants through the US National Endowment for the Arts and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts. He has recorded for Wergo, O.O. Discs, New Albion, New World, Lovely Music, Mutable Music, Cold Blue, and Opus One.

**Adam Tendler** is a New York based pianist who has been called "...exuberantly expressive.." by the *LA Times* and an "intrepid... outstanding... maverick pianist" by *The New Yorker*. Tendler has performed solo recitals in all fifty United States, including artistic landmarks like New York's Symphony Space, The Maverick Concert Hall, The Fisher Center at Bard College, The Rubin Museum, Rothko Chapel and James Turrell's Skyspace in Sarasota Florida, its first musical performer. Tendler's memoir, *88x50*, was a 2014 Kirkus Indie Book of the Month and Lambda Literary Award Nominee.