

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

Winter/Spring 2024 Season

## Winter/Spring 2024

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The Kitchen's Winter/Spring 2024 programming collides 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. The season features several programs that use installations to allow for prolonged reflections on environments' transformations in the presence and absence of bodies.

### On View:

#### Sacha Yanow: *Uncle!*

February 22–24 & February 29–March 2, 7:30pm. Tickets: sliding scale, \$5-15  
The Kitchen at Westbeth

### Upcoming:

#### Harmony Holiday: *BLACK BACKSTAGE*

March 21–May 25, Tuesday–Saturday, 11–6pm. Free  
The Kitchen at Westbeth

#### In Conversation: Harmony Holiday and Margo Jefferson

##### As part of *BLACK BACKSTAGE*

March 21, 7pm. Tickets: sliding scale, \$5-15  
The Kitchen at Westbeth

#### Online Screening: Performance Recording of Sacha Yanow: *Uncle!*

March 23–24. Free with RSVP. Registration will open in March  
Online

#### Neal Medlyn: *HOLY SATURDAY*

March 30, 2–9pm. Free with RSVP. Tickets forthcoming for 7pm performance  
General Theological Seminary (440 W 21st St, New York, NY 10011)

The Kitchen presents

## Sacha Yanow: *Uncle!*

February 22–24 & February 29–March 2, 2024  
The Kitchen at Westbeth

Sacha Yanow: *Uncle!* 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 and by Good Works Foundation. Thank you to Shandanken Projects, Westbeth Artists Housing, and Participant Inc. for providing in-kind development support.

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 Amphion Foundation, Inc., Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, The Cowles Charitable Trust, Joseph and Joan Cullman Foundation for the Arts, Inc., Ford Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, The Harkness Foundation for Dance, Marta Heflin Foundation, Lambent Foundation Fund, a fund of Tides Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Mertz Gilmore Foundation, Open Society Foundation, The Jerome Robbins Foundation, Ruth Foundation For The Arts, The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, Simons Foundation, Teiger Foundation, and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; and in part by public funds from New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

# ***UNCLE!***

Written and Performed by Sacha Yanow  
Directed by Nemuna Ceesay

## **Creative Team**

Associate Director: samantha estrella  
Lighting Design: Alejandro Fajardo  
Scenic Design: Cate McCrea  
Sound Design: Isaac Silber  
Movement Design: Lluca Huatuco  
Costume Design: Azalea Fairley  
Musician/Composer: Lu Coy  
Production Stage Manager: Ariana Swei  
Lighting Associate: Emily Schmit

## **Music and Sound**

*Emes* by Pepi Litman, arrangement by Lu Coy  
*Right Down the Line* by Gerry Rafferty  
*Oh Yeah* by Roxy Music  
Excerpt from a conversation with Uncle Ira Gould, August 2023  
*Az Meshiakh* by Pepi Litman, arrangement by Lu Coy

## **Dessert**

Al-Aqsa Bakery and Restaurant (<https://www.alaqsa.getsauce.com/>)

## **Print Edition**

On the occasion of *Uncle!*, Yanow invited artist Tuesday Smillie to create a new benefit print edition. Yanow will be independently selling the prints after each performance, with all proceeds benefiting two organizations: Medical Aid for Palestinians (<https://www.map.org.uk>) and Lenni Lenapexkweyok (<https://lennilenapexkweyok.wixsite.com/landback>).

## **Online Screening**

To coincide with the holiday of Purim, a performance recording of *Uncle!* will be available to view online from March 23 through March 24, 2024. The screening will be free with RSVP; registration will open in March via [thekitchen.org](http://thekitchen.org).

# **ARTIST'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

*Uncle!* is dedicated to Ira, Joel, Philip, Gregg, Julie, Cecilia, and all Uncles past present and future.

Thank you to generous and genius collaborators Nemuna, sammie, Ale, Cate, Lluca, Lu, Isaac, and Azalea for creating this show with me, and to the other brilliant creative advisors along the way, including: Lilleth, Rad Pereira, Dori Midnight, Rabbi Miriam Grossman, Katie Brewer Ball, Chloe Alexandra Thomson, SJ Norman, Una Aya Osato, Jess Barbagallo, Gregg Bordowitz, Sophie Edelhart, and Tanya Marquardt.

Thank you to Alison Burstein for your deep care and commitment in stewarding this project and to Legacy Russell, Tassja Walker, David Riley, and the entire staff of The Kitchen;

Thank you to Ira Gould and Philip Yenawine for sharing your stories;

Thank you to Laura Donnelley, Mimi Wheeler, Claire Morton, Cat Gund, Lia Gangitano, Nicholas Weist, Rachel Valinsky, Jacob Halpern Weitzman, Erin Mullin, Cassandra Baim, and the Pepi Litman Project;

And to Emi Kane, Jibz Cameron, Svetlana Kitto, Linda Earle, Laura Poitras, Kyle Decoy, Caitlin Sullivan, Ethan Philbrick, Sasha Wortzel, Morgan Bassichis, Jared Buckheister, Amos Poe, JVP-NY, and Maris, Elaine, and Richard Yanow.

## DER EMES

By Pepi Litman\*

That King Solomon was a fool,  
And Lot could never look at liquor,  
And in Egypt, people loved the Jews  
And Esau and Jacob lived happily together  
Yes, it's true, true, true, true what I'm saying  
And just as in Sodom, there were many righteous people  
And Ahashverosh hated to have a drink,  
and people should sing Haman's praises,  
and as his son Vaizatha was a learned man,  
It's true, true, true, true what I'm saying, true as day  
It's true, true, true, true what I'm saying, true as day

That Rothschild is as poor as night,  
And in front of the shul, it smells magnificent,  
And a stepmother loves her stepdaughter  
And everyone thought Dreyfus would go free,  
Yes, it's true, true, true, true what I'm saying  
And in the coffee house, men learn Mishnah  
And women haven't heard of powder,  
And on Purim, you eat kneydlekh,  
And young people hate pretty girls,  
It's true, true, true, true what I'm saying, true as day  
It's true, true, true, true what I'm saying, true as day

And on Pesach, you need branches (the kind used to build the Sukkah on Sukkot)  
And as wives hate to talk a lot,  
Everything in the newspapers is true  
And the New York rabbi's wife prays in a tallis,  
Yes, it's true, true, true, true what I'm saying  
And a matchmaker would never tell a lie,  
And as neighbors would never gossip  
The theater is always full  
And nobody walks in without paying  
It's true, true, true, true what I'm saying, true as day  
It's true, true, true, true what I'm saying, true as day

\*English translation by Sophie Edelhart from *Libretto* (1909). Litman's original version has slight variations.

## ARTIST BIOS

**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 currently act as a creative consultant for fellow artists and organizations, and are a member of Jewish Voice for Peace. They received a BA from Sarah Lawrence College and are a graduate of the William Esper Studio Actor Training Program.

**Nemuna Ceesay** (Director) (she/her) is a director, actor, and educator based in New York. She is thrilled to be making her debut at The Kitchen with *Uncle!*. Select directing credits: Playwrights Horizons (*Amusements*); Clubbed Thumb (22/23 New Play Directing Fellow; *Reply All*); Atlantic Theatre School (*Metamorphoses*; *Twelve Ophelias*); Associate Director of the Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winning musical *A Strange Loop* on Broadway. Select acting credits: Shakespeare Theatre Company (*Here There Are Blueberries*); The Shed (*Straight Line Crazy*); Two River Theater (*Three Sisters*); CalShakes (*A Raisin in the Sun*; *The Comedy of Errors*); Joe's Pub (*The Unfortunates*); PlayMakers Rep (*Tartuffe*; *The Christians*); The Public Theatre (*What to Send Up When It Goes Down*); Oregon Shakespeare Festival (2015/16 seasons). Select TV credits: *Bull*, *Broad City*, *Instinct*, *Younger*, *FBI*, and *Prodigal Son*. Ceesay is the founder and Creative Director of an all BIPOC training program called The Blueprint. She holds an MFA in Acting from American Conservatory Theater. Follow her on Instagram @nemuna.ceesay, visit her website at [www.nemunarceesay.com](http://www.nemunarceesay.com), and learn more about The Blueprint at [www.theblueprintartist.com](http://www.theblueprintartist.com).

**Lu Coy** (Musician/Composer) (they/them) is a queer mixed media artist and musician of Mexican and Ashkenazi Jewish heritage based in Los Angeles, California. Known for their mastery of woodwinds, elegant use of electronics, and agile vocals, Coy embraces modern technologies and compositional techniques, while mining inspiration from ancient texts, stories, and musical traditions. Notably, Coy is an avid performer of Ashkenazi, Sephardi, and various Latin American musical traditions, singing regularly in Spanish, Yiddish, and Ladino. They have been featured prominently in contemporary theatrical and operatic works by Anna Luisa Petrisko, Egg & Spoon Theatre Company, and Four Larks Opera company. As a recording artist, Coy's winds and vocals can be found on records by artists such as Eyvind Kang, San Cha,

Avey Tare, and Blonde Redhead. They hold degrees in music performance and composition from the Boston Conservatory of Music and California Institute of the Arts and have taught for various institutions such as The Hammer Museum, California Institute of the Arts, and Plaza de la Raza. In November 2023 their newest composition, "Song of the Two Moons," was commissioned and premiered by the Getty Research Institute in celebration of the launch of the Getty's Digital Florentine Codex project.

**samantha estrella** (Associate Director) (she/her) is a director seeking the transformative abundance that love ethic within storytelling brings. Practicing critical consciousness and reminders of relationality, she hopes to supply and/or be surrounded by artistry that awakens us to love's position as an all-possible, tangible, eternal, force of nature. Past and present environments of collaboration include Atlantic Theatre Company, NAMT, National Black Theatre, KGM Productions, Watermark Productions, and more. estrella is a recent alum of Wingspace Theatrical Design's Mentorship as well as of the Mercury Store's first Directing Technique Intensive. She is currently assisting two beloved centers of art, CLASSIX and playwright/dramaturg/cultural worker Nissy Aya. She holds a BFA from University of Michigan in Theater Direction.

**Azalea Fairley** (Costume Design) (she/her) is a New Orleans-born, NYC-based costume designer. Selected Off Broadway and regional credits include *After Midnight* (Paper Mill Playhouse); *Shadow/Land* (Public Theater); *Eternal Life Pt1* (Wilma Theater, PA); *Clyde's* (George St Playhouse, NJ); *Detroit 67* (TheatreSquared, AR); *Blood Knot* (Flat Rock Playhouse, NC); *By the Way Meet Vera Stark* (Colorado Fine Arts Ctr); 10x10 Play Fest (Barrington Stage, MA); *Schoolgirls* (TheatreSquared, AR); *What Lies Beneath* (On Site Opera, NY); *TJ Loves Sally Forever* (Jack Theater, NY, NYT Critics Pick). Broadway assistant credits include *Hamilton* and *A Strange Loop* (2022 Tony Award Winner for Best Musical). Film credits include *The Rainbow Experiment* and *Paris in Harlem*. Nominations include the Audelco Awards, the Barrymore Awards, and the Henry Awards for outstanding costume design. Member of USA 829. Azalea-Fairley.com.

**Alejandro Fajardo** (Lighting Design) (he/him) is a Colombian lighting designer based in Lenapehoking/Brooklyn. Fajardo strongly believes that art, creativity, and imagination should be used to inspire our communities through the current crises we face and to build a new future that centers community care and growth. He really wants to know what you personally are doing to further this goal in your life. Really, let him know through his website. Fajardo works as a lighting and production designer for theater, opera, and dance. He has also designed escape rooms, a series of theatrical immersive games, site lighting for music festivals, and various New York Fashion Week shows. He is a lighting director for the Flamenco Festival and one of the associate lighting directors for Fall for Dance Festival at New York City Center. www.alejofaj.com.

**Luca Huatuco** (Movement Design) (they/them) was born in Miami and began ballet training at Walnut Hill School for the Arts and later in the Professional Division at the Pacific Northwest Ballet in Seattle. At 20, they moved to Paris to work as a freelance dancer across Europe. When the global pandemic brought live performance to a halt, Huatuco began working as a dance and documentary filmmaker. In 2021, they co-founded the production company HUATUCO with their sister and collaborator. Since then, Huatuco has performed in New York, Paris, and Miami in spaces such as Center for Performance Research, Les Grandes Serres de Pantin, and Superblue. Their work is centered around the elevation of gender-variant experiences, shamanic futurism, and the celebration of indigeneity. They continue to collaborate and co-facilitate performances with many other Queer, Indigenous, and Jewish artists, and are releasing their first feature-length art documentary later this year. @ancientbaddi3.

**Cate McCrea** (Scenic Design) (she/her) is a scenographer specializing in collaborative development of new works. Her designs are inspired by and drawn from craft techniques, recycled materials, archival collections, and daydreams. You can find her at the library, or in the littoral zone. McCrea last collaborated with Sacha Yanow as the set designer for *Cheri Dre* at Danspace Project in 2018. Recent live performance design: *The Good John Proctor* (Bedlam); *Corsicana* (Playwrights Horizons, co-design with Lael Jellinek); *The Collision/The Martyrdom* (59E59). Other work at the Brick, New Ohio Theatre, the Tank, and with The Acting Company, Little Opera Theatre of New York, and the Drama League. McCrea is a member of the current cohort of Target Margin Institute fellows. She is a New Jersey native, a graduate of Williams College, and a proud member of USA 829.

**Emily Schmit** (Lighting Associate) is a lighting designer and collaborative artist based in Brooklyn, New York working in theater, dance, music, fashion shows, live events, and immersive experiences. Recent design credits: *Energy Curfew Music Hour* (Co-Design, Minetta Lane Theater); WTF Festival Stage (Williamstown Theater Festival); *La Lucha* (Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego); *Teatro Piñata* (The New Children's Museum); *Optika Piñata, Las Quinceañeras* (La Jolla Playhouse WOW Festival). Select associate credits: *Terce* (HERE); *The Jinx and DeLa Holiday Show* (International Tour); *Evanston Salt Costs Climbing* (The New Group); *Dana H.* (Broadway, The Vineyard); *Is This a Room* (Broadway); *Emma, The Tempest, Noises Off* (Guthrie Theatre). Schmit is an artistic associate of Optika Moderna and resident lighting designer of the Monterey Jazz Festival. Proud member of USA 829. www.emilyschmit.com.

**Isaac Silber** (Sound Design) (he/him) is a multi-instrumentalist sound designer and recording engineer based in Brooklyn, New York. Some of his vibrations have been heard in places like Performance Space New York, The Kitchen, The Academy of Arts and Letters, Center for Performance Research,

Montréal, arts interculturels, Nowadays, many West/Philly basements and bars, The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the ICA at VCU, CA2M, Madrid, New York Live Arts, The Museum of Pop Culture, and on the world wide web. Silber is currently in his fifth year of pursuing a PhD in Performance Studies at NYU.

**Ariana Swei** (Production Stage Manager) (they/them) is a stage manager, artist, and educator based in Brooklyn. With a passion for new work development, experimental theatre, and socially-engaged art, Swei is thrilled to be supporting *Uncle!* at The Kitchen. They have previously stage managed or designed productions with Shakespeare in the Woods, Columbia University, and Thyrus Experimental Theatre. Swei works as the Education and Community Programs Coordinator at Ping Chong and Company, teaches at the Brooklyn Museum and the Museum of Modern Art, and is often reflecting on their desire to feel validated by their affiliation with institutions. They hold a BA in Studio Art and English Literature from Washington University in St. Louis.

## PRODUCTION CREDITS & CREW

Organized by Alison Burstein, *Curator*

Production by David Riley, *Production & Exhibitions Manager*, and Tassja Walker, *Production Supervisor*

Isaac Silber, *Audio*

Erin Bulman, Wendy Scher, *Lights*

Max Ludlow, *Audio Assistant*

Julian Socha, Joe Wakeman, *Crew*

Al Foote III, Howard Silver, *Performance Videography*

Maria Baranova, *Performance Photography*

## SITE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Kitchen acknowledges that its site has shifted over time from Greenwich Village, where it began in Mercer Arts Center, to a loft in SoHo on Wooster Street, to its home on 19th Street in Chelsea that it's held since 1986, and now to the temporary location of Westbeth Artists Housing as our building renovation is underway. Since its founding, The Kitchen has presented programming both within its sites and at partner venues around New York City. These sites traverse Indigenous space, Black space, Latinx space, working-class space, immigrant space, queer space, activist space, rebellion space. These diasporic histories have had deep impacts on avant-garde art production at large and The Kitchen's own experimental institutional work. We strive to bring light to these groundbreaking contributions as we carry this next chapter of our institution forward with care. This is a collaborative, thoughtful process taking place across all facets of our work here, and we look forward to continuing to create experimentation-forward space for all with these values as a guiding force.

# The Kitchen

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