
Danspace Project

Winter 2021

Conversations Without Walls Jaamil Olawale Kosoko & Larissa Velez-Jackson with Benjamin Akio Kimitch

Friday, March 26, 2021

Jaamil Olawale Kosoko is a Nigerian American performance artist, poet, and curator originally from Detroit, MI. He is a 2020 Artist Residency Award Recipient from the Wexner Center for the Arts, 2019 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellow in Choreography, 2019 NPN Development Fund Awardee, a 2017-19 Princeton Arts Fellow, 2019 Red Bull Writing Fellow, 2018 NEFA NDP Production Grant recipient, and a 2017 Cave Canem Poetry Fellow. His creative practice draws from Black study, queer theories of the body, weaving together visual performance, lecture, ritual, and spiritual practice. His most recent works *American Chameleon: The Living Installments* (2020), *Séancers* (2017) and the Bessie nominated *#negrophobia* (2015), have toured internationally appearing in major festivals including: Tanz im August (Berlin), Moving in November (Finland), Within Practice (Sweden), TakeMeSomewhere (UK), Brighton Festival (UK), Oslo Teaterfestival (Norway), and Zürich MOVES! (Switzerland) among others. He is the author of two chapbooks and his poems and essays have been included in *The American Poetry Review*, *The Dunes Review*, *The Broad Street Review*, among others. Visit jaamil.com for more information. IG: [jaamil_means_beauty](https://www.instagram.com/jaamil_means_beauty)

Larissa Velez-Jackson (LVJ) is a NYC-based choreographer, movement educator and multi-platform artist who uses improvisation as a tool for research and creation; blending dance, healing modalities, sound, internet art, humor and strategies of self-compassion in her original performance practice called Star Pû Method (a.k.a. Star Crap Method). She has presented work at numerous NYC venues such as: American Realness Festival '11 and '15 at Abrons Arts Center, Chocolate Factory Theater '14 and in 2017 at New York Live Arts with Yackez, a collaboration with her husband, Jon Velez-Jackson. Called "an adroit physical comedian" who "seems to be questioning entrenched conventions of contemporary performance" in *The NYTimes*, LVJ was nominated for a New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" award for Outstanding Emerging Choreographer and was awarded the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Grant to Artists, in 2016. www.larissavelez.com

About Danspace Project

Danspace Project presents new work in dance, supports a diverse range of choreographers in developing their work, encourages experimentation, and connects artists to audiences.

For over 45 years, Danspace Project has supported a vital community of contemporary dance artists in an environment unlike any other in the United States. Located in the historic St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery, Danspace shares its facility with the Church, The Poetry Project, and New York Theatre Ballet. Danspace Project's Commissioning Initiative has commissioned over 570 new works since its inception in 1994.

Land Acknowledgment

Danspace Project pays respect to Lenape peoples. We acknowledge that this work is situated on the Lenape island of Manhahtaan (Mannahatta) in Lenapehoking, the Lenape homeland. We pay respect to Lenape land, water, and ancestors past, present and future.

Site Acknowledgment

"Before we begin, let's take a moment to acknowledge that the construction of this building, Saint Mark's Church-in-the-Bowery, was completed in 1799. That same year, New York State enacted the Gradual Emancipation Act, so it is reasonable to assume that this building where we are when we stand, sit, dance, and some still worship, was built by en-slaved individuals on what was the homeland of the Lenape people." – Ishmael Houston-Jones (Read more at danspaceproject.org/about)

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