


Soundwave NEXT and Working Name Studios Present

RE-EDUCATION — An Evening of Togetherness

October 26, 2024–7PM | Gray Area/Grand Theater–2665 Mission St. San Francisco, CA

Soundwave NEXT, Working Name Studios, & The Togetherness Ensemble Present

RE-EDUCATION



an EVENING of TOGETHERNESS featuring

Salimatu Amabebe	Joel St. Julien	Martin Perna
Matt Brownell	Cat Lavigan	Zekarias Musele Thompson
Gabriele Christian	Phillip Laurent	Justin (Hongry) Robinson
Roco Córdova	Amina Malika	Benjamin Rodgers
B Dukes	Micah Morris	David Wilson
Christopher Robin Duncan	Maya Nixon	Josh Wismans
Mary Graham	Jasmine Nyende	Gaia WXYZ

PERFORMING *an* EMERGENT COMPOSITION *in* THREE MOVEMENTS

10.26.2024 GRAY AREA 7 PM

Join us for the 5th and largest gathering of Togetherness as we explore our individual and collective capacity to create new possibilities through an emergent composition in three movements. Presented by Soundwave NEXT and Working Name Studios.

RE-EDUCATION — An Evening of Togetherness
Presented by Soundwave NEXT and Working
Name Studios

Saturday, October 26, 2024

Doors: 7PM

All Ages

Seated

View our [FAQ page](#) for more info, or contact us
at info@grayarea.org with any accommodation
requests.

About the Show

The Togetherness Ensemble is convened on occasion by **Zekarias Musele Thompson** to hold space for communal resonance through collective improvisation. Prompted by the historical and contemporary creative sensibilities of African and African diasporic peoples, and the possibilities of emergent composition as the scaffolding for recognizing ourselves as free.

The Togetherness Ensemble made its debut interpreting James Weldon Johnson's *Lift Every Voice and Sing*, during closing performance of *Possible Dialogues: Vol 1* in July 2023 at the BAMPFA.

For this fifth iteration we will explore Togetherness in three parts with a new composition titled **RE-EDUCATION**. Inspired by the current moment, the ecstatic motions of Alice Coltrane's 1972 epic *Lord of Lords*, as well as Floating Points' and Pharoah Sanders' 2021 collaboration, *Promises*.

RE-EDUCATION

Movement 1: *A Curiosity*

Movement 2: *A Recognition*

Movement 3: *A Promise*

with:

Salimatu Amabebe, Matt Brownell, Gabriele Christian, Roco Córdova, B Dukes, Christopher Robin Duncan, Mary Graham, Cat Lauigan, Phillip Laurent, Amina Malika, Micah Morris, Maya Nixon, Jasmine Nyende, Martin Perna, Justin (Hongry) Robinson, Benjamin Rodgers, Joel St. Julien, Zekarias Musele Thompson, David Wilson, Josh Wismans, and Gaia WXYZ.

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"In the year that so many of us know as 2024 we find ourselves witnessing, from various degrees of intimacy and distance, the last gasp of the dominant hegemonic paradigm of the past few thousand years (give or take a few) playing out the extent of its necropolitical underpinnings in real time. To borrow from Achille Mbembe in thinking about the extent of bodily control, and technocratic pilfering that we encounter on a quotidian foundation. That is to say, the contemporary manifestation of a long-standing and cross cultural practice of conquest and its inherent violences are being played on, in and through the devices that we carry around in our pockets, now quite literally exploding in our faces.

So what are we to do? And what is the capacity for one evening of people emphasizing sound as motion to interact with the thousands of years of complexity that bring us to the aforementioned predicament, one may ask?

Two important questions; to which I respond that first, I do not 'know' the answer.

What I do know is that what we call music is one of the earliest technologies that humans have in fostering conditions of communing, relating, and influencing the individual and collective nervous system in real time. I also know that the creation and the perception of music is constantly being built by all the bodies receiving and responding to its motions. Both the primary makers of the sounds, and those that might perceive themselves as only listening. And I know that what we now call music is first a practice of ritual, "a stereotyped sequence of activities involving gestures, words, and objects, performed in a sequestered place, and designed to influence preternatural entities or forces on behalf of the actors' goals and interests," as defined by the late British cultural anthropologist Victor W Turner. Let's replace the word preternatural with the phrase, 'beyond our everyday perception' and move forward.

As humans, our bodies are very used to responding to the unknown by creating predictive patterns to place meaning upon. Leading us to our current predicament, and back to your second question about what can one evening of musical performance do. Emergent composition, often times thought of as improvisation, utilizes our capacity to exist within and without the need to adhere to what came before. Creating embodied possibility to accept all that is, and to shape it towards our individual and collective desires. All this is done through the impulse to just, play.

I believe we are being asked to utilize all the complexity of the world that has been created to find new ways of being, and to create a world where all humans have the possibility and conditions to thrive. In order to do so we take the opportunity to reeducate our minds and bodies toward new possibilities.

Togetherness is a return to practice, to work out the kinks, and to find our way through."

~Zekarias Musele Thompson

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About the Artist



Zekarias Musele Thompson

Zekarias Musele Thompson (b. 1983, they/them/their) is an artist based in Oakland, CA, and Reykjavik, IS often working in sonic composition, mark-making, photography, collaborative group practice & performance, and writing. Their practice is concerned with humanity's conceptual and emotional organizational structures—and how we bring them into material form. Zekarias' work has been presented at the Museum of the African Diaspora, the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, The Wattis Institute, The Lab, and the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies. They have performed at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Gray Area in the Bay area — as well as Associate Gallery, Ásmundasalur, and Open in Reykjavík, Iceland. They have collaborated with artists such as Oysterknife, Salimatu Amabebe, Zack Parrinella, Pétur Eggertson, Phillip Laurent, Lonnie Holley, Zachary James Watkins, Claire Fleming Staples, Laraaji, Miles Lassi, Jessica Ackerley, and more.

Zekarias is an instigator of the Musele Project, a sound, image, performance, and facilitation practice that encourages deep, empathic listening, and a co-founder of Working Name Studios, a collectively owned and organized arts institution with the mission of building institutional stability and equity for underrepresented creative practices, ideas, and people. They are part of the Emerging Artist Program at the MoAD for 2024, and are currently an MFA candidate in the Department of Art Practice at UC Berkeley.

The Togetherness Ensemble



Salimatu Amabebe (he/they), is a trans, Nigerian-American chef and interdisciplinary artist, working in food, film, photography, sculpture and installation. His work centers community activism, African diasporic performance traditions and Black queer/ trans liberation. Amabebe is the founder/ director of Black Feast - a culinary event celebrating Black artists and writers through food.

Matt Brownell is an Oakland-based artist, DJ, and co-founder of Cone Shape Top, a record shop / project space / label. They also perform experimental electronics as 1/3rd of S'hells Gate.

Gabriele Christian (b. 1991) is a San Francisco-based conceptual artist and descendent of stolen folk experimenting within somatic practices, language, performance composition, video production and community arts facilitation to locate and center BlaQ (Black and Queer) experience, vernaculars and aesthetics as wellsprings for radical futurity. They are a founding member of Bay Area performance collectives and land projects: RUPTURE; OYSTERKNIFE; and BlaQyard and current Executive and Co-Artistic Director of Jess Curtis/Gravity.

Roco Córdova

Born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Roco Córdova is a vocalist, composer, producer, and improviser based in the San Francisco Bay Area. With degrees in Composition from the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music and Mills College, Roco has toured globally with The Art Ensemble of Chicago, performing at iconic venues like The Kennedy Center and SESC Pompéia. In 2023-2024, they toured with Dorian Wood's *Canto de Todes*, a 12-hour chamber composition. Roco's work fuses diverse influences with electronic media, noise, and improvisation, featuring extended vocal techniques like throat singing, overtone singing, and falsetto. Their performances, blending voice and technology, create a timeless experience that transcends conventional boundaries, merging ritual and performance.

Christopher Robin Duncan (born 1974-Perth Amboy, New Jersey) is a multidisciplinary artist based in Oakland, California. Duncan utilizes the Sun and the Moon, as well as Time and Tide, as conceptual and compositional prompts for experiments in sonic and visual endeavors. In his sonic compositions and performances, Duncan utilizes Field recordings made in a Northern California ocean cave as a foundation for looped and layered Harmonicas, tuning forks, percussion and handbuilt ceramic instruments to create lush, meditative tapestral landscapes. Music to close your eyes to. Music to ponder time. In addition to his studio practice, Duncan runs LAND AND SEA- a small press in Oakland California (now in its 12th year), with his wife- Maria Otero.

Mary Winona Dora Graham is a Philadelphia born, San Francisco based interdisciplinary artist. Her work in painting, sculpture and vocal performance studies the notion of "the ancestors" as a conceptual medium through which we might gain historical, interpersonal, and introspective insight. Her performance practice is rooted in her classical training as a vocalist and is fundamentally an exploration into the medium of song as a tool for "calling" both inward and outward.

Cat Lauigan is a Filipina Oakland based multi-disciplinary artist, DJ, and co-founder of CONE SHAPE TOP, a record shop / project space / label. She is also 1 / 3 of the experimental electronic band, S'hells Gate. Her work explores the decay and

degradation of physical realities and properties in search of the metaphysical through textiles, sound and poetics.

Phillip Laurent is an Haitian American artist living and working in San Francisco. He works in multiple disciplines including music, visual art, and storytelling. Laurent approaches his practice as an inquiry into ethnogenesis and the mediation of identity as asserted by oneself and that which is observed by others. Laurent's work has been featured at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA), The Lab SF, and alongside contemporary dance performances at Mills College, SAFEhouse Arts, Dance Mission SF, and Performance Space New York.

Amina Malika is a sculptor and potter who works with clay to explore the profound connection between movement, nature, and identity. Her artistic practice is deeply influenced by her background in dance, particularly rooted in diasporic African rhythms. This connection to movement informs her approach to ceramics, where each piece reflects themes of freedom and liberation—both personal and collective.

Micah Morris (ZERO CHARISMA) was formed from the lava of volcanoes, silk of a spiders web, glisten of rainbows behind waterfalls, and snail trails after the rain. She has sung her song all over turtle island and aims to sing with whales from outer space in the future.

Maya Nixon is a black non-binary performance artist, yoga instructor, and healer originating from New York and creating in San Francisco for the past 10 years. Maya is not only a harpist, dancer, and actor, they also are a dynamic healer that strives to inspire from live art making. They started playing the harp six years ago for therapeutic reasons. The harp symbolizes divinity and angelic realms, helping them to heal themselves and their community. Their improvisational looping approach encompasses the non linear nature of the spiritual world. Impromptu collaborations are what allows people to heal and co-create realities of a better future. Their expression emphasizes healing, spirituality, black empowerment and prosperity through the embodiment of storytelling.

Jasmine Nyende is an artist and musician from Los Angeles, CA. Her work explores how patterning in punk, astrology, poetry and craft can become healing collaborative modalities in our communities. She is an astrologer rooted in the planet Saturn's legacy told through African American culture, lead vocalist for the Black queer punk band FUCK U PAY US! and has a textile practice creating assemblage art from repurposed and recycled materials.

Martin Perna

Music has been making Martin Perna for thirty years. He began his musical journey in New York in the early 1990s, where he founded the groups Antibalas and Ocote Soul Sounds and was a founding member of The Dap Kings and frequent contributor to TV

on the Radio. His flutes, saxophones, percussion and production are featured on over 100 albums. He has served as musical director at Carnegie Hall for three all-star tribute concerts: Paul Simon (2014), David Byrne/Talking Heads (2015), Aretha Franklin (2017) and the Music of Billie Holiday (2017) at the Apollo Theater. Since moving to the Bay Area in 2019, he has birthed a solo flute and woodwind guided psychedelic jazz project MARTEZ and composed/performed the soundtrack to the 2022 PBS American Masters: “Roberta Flack” documentary. He collaborates frequently with his partner, visual/performance artist Courtney Desiree Morris and other Bay Area-based artists including Toro y Moi, Sulah Jordan, Lateef the Truthspeaker, Tommy Guerrero, Orchestra Gold and Platur. He is a co-founder of Keys to the City, an Oakland-based library of vintage keyboards and keyboard-activated musical experiences.

Benjamin Rodgers is a musician and graphic designer based in Oakland, CA. He turns most frequently to the electric guitar and synthesizers, and occasionally to cello, his first instrument, in restless pursuit of new sound marking possibilities. Currently he organizes kosmische planetarium soundtrack ensemble Agnes Martian, live-paints sonic moiré patterns with psych explorers Tessellations, and writes melancholic pop songs as Strawberry Hat.

Joel St. Julien (he/him), a Haitian-American composer and sound alchemist based in San Francisco, channels a fragmented world of sound, where the acoustic and the electronic collide, distort, and dissolve. His compositions drift between the real and the surreal, an evocation of the present moment steeped in both mysticism and escape. Every note is a vibration, every space between a meditation—a spiritual practice disguised as art.

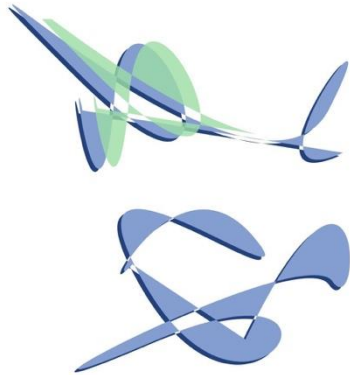
David Wilson is an artist based in Oakland, CA. He creates observational drawings based in direct experiences with landscape and orchestrates site-based gatherings that draw together a wide net of artists, performers, filmmakers, chefs, and artisans into collaborative relationships. He organized the experimental exhibition The Possible at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, received the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's SECA Art Award, and serves as Board President at 500 Capp St where he was the inaugural artist in residence.

Joshua Wismans is a sound and visual artist based in Oakland, CA. His work consists of exploration in texture and drone, with occasional excursions into rhythm, often with the Musele Project and various other ensembles. Also there is a lot of community space making that generally involves good eats and drinks.

Gaia WXYZ (pronounced “wise”) is a multimedia artist and musician living in Oakland, CA. A bassist since the age of 10, they utilize live looping and vocals to produce soundscapes that crescendo into chaotic dance-driven, earth shaking lamentations as TERA MOTO. They create autobiographical comics about being Black, Queer and

radical, and teach the first ever comic art classes at UC Berkeley. Their long awaited sci-fi comic series, SupaClusta is slated to be released sometime in the near future.

Partners



Working Name Studios

Working Name Studios is an Oakland based, collectively owned and organized arts institution building equity for underrepresented creative practices, ideas, and people. We publish limited edition artist projects focusing on sound, text, and visual forms – as well as host events that engage, support, enhance, and evolve humanity's ability to connect with ourselves and each other through material and conceptual artistic practice.