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**Yerba Buena Center For The Arts New Performing Arts Festival,  
*Transform*,  
Convenes Artists And Community Around The Urgent Question: Why  
Citizenship?**



*Photo: Jesse Hewit. Photo courtesy Robbie Sweeny.*

***Inaugural Fall Fest Features Transformative Performances,  
FREE Pop-up Exhibits, Events, Workshops, and More!***

**Two weeks: September 14–23, 2017**

**YBCA Forum, 701 Mission Street, San Francisco CA 94103**

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(SAN FRANCISCO) - (August 10, 2017) [Yerba Buena Center for the Arts \(YBCA\)](#) invites the community to be inspired and provoked by [Transform](#), its new signature performance festival—a two-week celebration of the power of ideas. Occurring each fall and spring, *Transform* reorganizes YBCA's performing arts season into two concentrated bursts of programming. The inaugural fall festival is built around the urgent question “Why citizenship?” It features the responses of newly commissioned performances by prolific Bay Area artists, in work that ranges from contemporary dance to experimental performance. A full accompanying schedule of free participatory experiences brings artists and the public together for pop-up installations, community conversations, and even a late-night dance party. *Transform* runs **September 14-23, 2017, in the YBCA Forum**. [Tickets start at \\$25 and festival packages start at \\$45.](#)

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## PERFORMANCES

For the fall premiere of *Transform*, YBCA has commissioned seven Bay Area dance companies and choreographers to create new works. Each day of the festival features two or three 30-minute performances with a total running time of 90 to 120 minutes with a 20-minute intermission. Participating artists include dance artist **Larry Arrington**; Oakland-based musician **Sandra Lawson Ndu**; Iranian-born conceptual artist **Minoosh Zomorodinia**; dance theater company **Embodiment Project**; the drag queen alter ego of **Monique Jenkinson, Fauxnique**; underground dance theater organization **Fogbeast**; dance and visual artist **Jesse Hewit**; contemporary dance company **RAWdance**; and contemporary ballet company **Amy Seiwert Imagery**.

A one-of-a-kind set design by architect **Giacomo Castagnola** also responds to the same question of “Why citizenship?” It will offer the audience a completely immersive environment that dynamically adapts to the program's variety of dance styles.

Festival curators **Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Chief of Program and Pedagogy**, and **Isabel Yrigoyen, Associate Director of Performing Arts**, explain: “The question ‘Why citizenship?’ is a portal for these choreographic teams to engage our current political context and for YBCA to live up to its mission of ‘generating culture.’ Our current presidential administration clearly has a myopic vision of who ultimately has access to the American franchise, but we believe citizenship is more a matter of active participation than one solely of clerical documentation. We chose these teams to create a cross-section of creative responses to this heightened provocation.”

Among the responses, the dance theater company **Embodiment Project** will explore in ***Ancient Children (Preview)*** the school-to-prison pipeline and how children of color are funneled from schools into juvenile incarceration, jails, and prisons. Contemporary dance company **RAWdance** in ***Brilliant Alarm*** responds to recurring cycles in history that swing from revering intellectual rational thought to branding intellectuals as elitists, asking, “What does it mean to be an informed and engaged citizen?” In ***Tides Tides Tides***, dance and visual artist **Jesse Hewit** will collaborate with festival designer Giacomo Castagnola to script and enact a physical conversation about citizenship, where humans are merely a portion of the environment and the concept of citizenship is authored by the spirits of the objects in the room, the ghosts of the location, and the impulse of time and space. And in ***-Opia-***, a triple-bill performance, collaborators, **Larry Arrington, Sandra**

**Lawson-Ndu**, and **Minoosh Zomorodinia** challenge this myopic vision using kaleidoscopic imagination to approach this question of citizenship. They ask; What stories do we call on and how do they shape our sweetest desires for belonging as well as our sharpest strikes of separation. In their retelling, What magic sparks and what fear flourishes?

For the complete festival schedule visit <https://ybca.org/whats-on/transform-fall17>.

Watch the festival teaser [here](#).

Read the official Transform festival announcement [here](#).

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## **COMMUNITY CONVENINGS AND MORE!**

*Transform* will serve as a hub for audiences to engage with the intersection of arts and civic action. Audiences can participate in a number of engaging community convenings to catalyze artistic expression, inspiration, and social justice.

### **Labs: Happy-Hour Workshops Every Evening**

**Thu–Sat, Sept 14–23, 6:30–7:30PM**

**FREE**

Each evening, YBCA turns its Grand Lobby over to artists, activists, and guest experts for a free event designed around audience interaction, complete with no-host bar. From the General Counsel of Humanity United to a former leader of the Black Panther Party, Transform Labs give everyone a chance to discuss and respond to: Why citizenship?

### **Behind the Scenes: Tour and Conversation**

**Thu, Sept 21, 6–7PM**

FREE with performance ticket

Before the show, experience the set installation created by architect and designer Giacomo Castagnola that serves as the visual centerpiece of the festival.

### **Sat, Sept 23, POST-SHOW**

FREE with performance ticket

Join festival curator Marc Bamuthi Joseph and architect and designer Giacomo Castagnola in conversation about the design process behind Transform. What were the challenges and learnings in designing a collaborative space for seven different performing groups working in such a diverse array of genres? And how does one design a set around the question “Why citizenship?”

### **Pop-up Activations**

**Sat, Sept 16 & 23, 5:30–7:30PM**

YBCA Fellows have been investigating questions of equity and citizenship for the past year. Experience their creative responses through dynamic installations and pop-up performances throughout the Grand Lobby. During the festival, YBCA's galleries will stay open until 8PM.

### **50 Cent Tabernacle**

**Sat, Sept 23, 10AM–4PM**

**Cost: 50 cents**

One Nation Under a Groove edition: The 50 Cent Tabernacle is a series of open, mixed-level dance classes led by some of the Bay Area's foremost masters of the craft. Participants can attend as many classes as they wish, and all classes are for beginners and advanced dancers alike. Proceeds from 50 Cent Tabernacles support YBCA's youth arts programs.

## **Film**

**Sun, Sept 17 & 24, 2PM**

**Cost: \$10**

Join us for a screening of the documentary film *Bronx Gothic* (2017), a portrait of the actress and writer Okwui Okpokwasili that looks at her creative process and the social issues raised by her one-woman show of the same name. Okpokwasili's work will be showcased in the 2018 spring *Transform* festival.

## **Citizenship on the Dance Floor**

**Sat, Sept 16, 10PM**

\$15 at the door / free with performance ticket

Celebrate the inaugural *Transform* festival with UPONYAJI, a culture-clash dance party that swirls around the value of citizenship. There's nothing like a soulful night of music and beats to bring everyone together as citizens of the dance floor. Featuring sounds from Emancipation and Lady Ryan of SouLovely, La Pelanga's May-Li, and Vinroc from Triple Threat DJs.

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The next edition of *Transform* in spring 2018 will convene a spectrum of international artists to explore the spectrum of public imagination. Running **May 8–19, 2018**, headliners will include music wiz **DJ Spooky**; the visually stunning dance-cirque company **Capacitor**; the inventive **Campo Santo theater ensemble** with actor **Roger Guenveur Smith**; the stunning West Coast theatrical debut of Bessie Award–winning **Okwui Okpokwasili's Poor People's TV Room**; writer, director, and visual artist **Lars Jan / Early Morning Opera: The Institute of Memory (TIME)**, and more to be announced.

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## **TICKET INFORMATION**

Full festival packages: \$60 / YBCA members \$48

Two-night packages: \$45 / YBCA members \$36

Regular admission: \$25 in advance / \$30 at the door

Senior, teacher, student: \$22–\$27

YBCA members, Individual level and above: single-program tickets \$20–24

YBCA members at the All Access level and above: free single-program tickets and festival passes

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YBCA programs in 17–18 are made possible in part by: The James Irvine Foundation.

Additional funding for YBCA programs 17–18: National Endowment for the Arts, Abundance Foundation, Grosvenor, and members of Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

The 17–18 performance season is made possible in part by: Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and Panta Rhea Foundation.

Additional funding for YBCA performances 17–18: Surdna Foundation, Salesforce.com, New England Foundation for the Arts, and Zellerbach Family Foundation.

YBCA exhibitions 17–18 are made possible in part by: The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and Meridee Moore and Kevin King.

Engagement and education programs in 17–18 are made possible in part by: Institute of Museum and Library Services, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Bernard Osher Foundation, Wells Fargo Foundation, The Kimball Foundation, and The Sato Foundation.

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### **About Yerba Buena Center for the Arts**

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA) is one of the nation's most innovative contemporary arts centers. Founded in 1993, YBCA's mission is to generate culture that moves people. Through powerful art experiences, thoughtful and provocative content, and deep opportunities for participation, YBCA is committed to creating an inclusive culture that awakens personal and societal transformation. YBCA presents a wide variety of programming year-round, including performing arts, visual arts, film/video, and civic engagement. For tickets and information, call 415.978.ARTS (2787). For more information, visit [ybca.org](http://ybca.org).

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