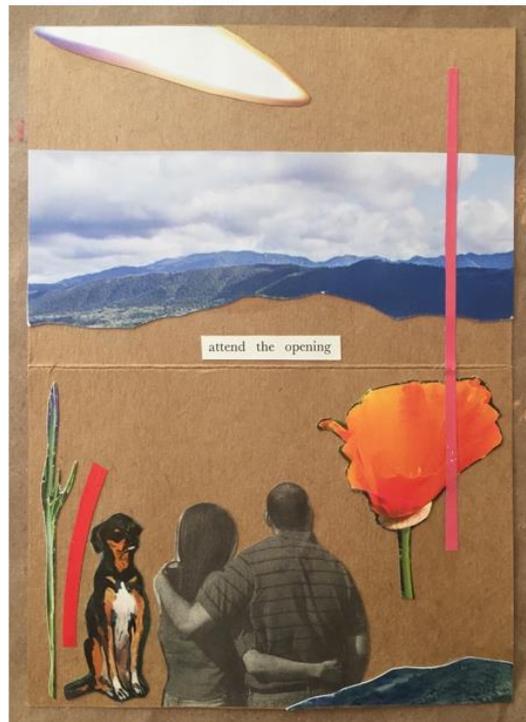




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**ANNOUNCING ON THE BOARDS and THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY THEATER WORLD PREMIERE OF KRISTEN KOSMAS' *attend the opening***

April - November 2021

April 6, 2021 – [On the Boards](#) (Seattle, WA) and [The Chocolate Factory Theater](#) (Queens, NY) announce the world premiere of *attend the opening*, a new mail art project by Seattle-based writer, performer, and interdisciplinary artist **Kristen Kosmas**. This project marks the launch of a multi-year co-commissioning initiative between the two institutions, supported by the [Onassis Foundation USA](#).

**READ ABOUT THE PROJECT HERE:** [ontheboards.org/attend-the-opening-by-kristen-kosmas](https://ontheboards.org/attend-the-opening-by-kristen-kosmas)

**PARTICIPATE IN THE PROJECT HERE:** [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSftG-EXVPoQKo\\_-qzgnnaj-ocLa5Xh\\_Nt3F4Po4UwE05VTZA/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSftG-EXVPoQKo_-qzgnnaj-ocLa5Xh_Nt3F4Po4UwE05VTZA/viewform)

Near the beginning of the lockdown in April 2020, On the Boards Artistic Director **Rachel Cook** and Chocolate Factory Theater Artistic Director **Brian Rogers** initiated a conversation around the shortcomings of the newly ubiquitous, digital, screen-based art experience; and identified a shared

longing for "liveness" and more analogue forms of expression. And then **Kristen Kosmas's** first mail art pieces arrived, unsolicited, in their respective mailboxes.

In 2021, On the Boards and The Chocolate Factory Theater will co-commission **Kristen Kosmas** to expand her ongoing mail art project, *attend the opening*, in which she mails handmade collage works, unprompted, to her extended community. These works form a tactile accumulation of personal connections and a record of the shifting narrative of the global pandemic. From April to October 2021, Kosmas will create 32 small-scale collage works and will mail them to individuals across the U.S., free of charge. Recipients will be chosen by lottery from a pool of individuals who have been nominated by friends or loved ones. The works comprising *attend the opening* will exist as gifts, performances, and intimate one-to-one exchanges. Upon completion, the works will be collectively published in book form in 2022.

In the past ten years, On the Boards and The Chocolate Factory Theater have developed deep ties to **Kosmas** and her work, commissioning and presenting her works *There There* (2012), *The People's Republic of Valerie* (2017) and *The People's Republic of Valerie, Living Room Edition* (2019). [There There](#) is included on OntheBoards.tv.

*attend the opening* marks the launch of a multi-year co-commissioning partnership between On the Boards and The Chocolate Factory Theater. Supported by a Eureka Commission from the Onassis Foundation USA, two additional artists will be commissioned to create postal service-driven works in 2022 and 2023.

#### **ABOUT KRISTEN KOSMAS**

Kristen Kosmas has had new works commissioned by the Chocolate Factory (NYC), On the Boards (Seattle), Performance Space 122 (NYC), The Theatre of a Two-Headed Calf (NYC), Seattle University's SITE Specific, Dixon Place (NYC), and the New City Theater (Seattle). Her work has been presented in Seattle, Austin, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and in New York City at numerous venues including the Chocolate Factory, PS 122, La Mama, Dixon Place, Prelude Festival, Barbès, the Ontological/Hysteric Downstairs Series, and the Poetry Project. Her play *Hello Failure* was published by Ugly Duckling Presse; her multi-voice performance text *This From Cloudland* appears in issue #4 of *PLAY A Journal of Plays*; *The Mayor of Baltimore + Anthem*, *There There*, and *The People's Republic of Valerie, Living Room Edition* were published by 53rd State Press; and her play *APEX* appears in *15 Second Plays Curated by the Debate Society* published by UDP.

#### **ABOUT ON THE BOARDS**

On the Boards is located on the unceded ancestral home of the Duwamish and many other Coast Salish peoples, recorded and unrecorded, who have stewarded this land since time immemorial. As settlers on this land, we extend our gratitude and respect. OtB invests in leading contemporary artists near and far, and connects them to a diverse range of audiences communities interested in forward-thinking art and ideas. We host performances, exhibitions, Artists-In-Residence, technical residencies, and offer affordable rehearsal and experimentation space for artists. Since its inception, in 1978, OtB has featured seminal performances by artists including Laurie Anderson, Bill T. Jones, The Wooster Group, Spalding Gray, Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker, Sankai Juku, Gisèle Vienne, Bruno Beltrão, Romeo Castellucci, John Jasperse, Back to Back Theatre, Faustin Linyekula, Mark Morris, Pat Graney, Dayna Hanson, Amy O'Neal, Reggie Watts, Zoe Scofield & Juniper Shuey, and Crystal Pite. Our building, The Behnke Center for Contemporary Performance, is a hub for the creative community, holding the 300-seat Merrill Wright Theater and a flexible Studio Theater.

<https://www.ontheboards.org/>

#### **ABOUT THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY THEATER**

The Chocolate Factory Theater exists to encourage and support artists in their process of inquiry. We engage specifically with a community of artists who challenge themselves and, in doing so, challenge us. We believe that by supporting the labor of these artists, we contribute to elevating New York City as a thriving and more equitable wellspring of ideas.

The Chocolate Factory embraces artistic practice as an integral part of the artist's whole life, an essential component of the life of our community and a key element of a larger national and international artistic dialogue. As such, we host artists as our equal partners with shared autonomy, trust and appreciation. While we seek to make big ideas and extended relationships possible, we commit to working at a small, intimate and personal scale, with few artistic compromises or boundaries.

We achieve all of this by creating a vessel for artistic experimentation through a residency package serving the whole artist - salary, space, responsive and flexible support for the development of new work from inspiration to presentation.

Works supported by The Chocolate Factory have received numerous Bessie and Obie Awards and have toured nationally and internationally.

An extensive archive of The Chocolate Factory's past performances is freely available at [vimeo.com/chocolatefactory](https://vimeo.com/chocolatefactory).

#### **ABOUT ONASSIS USA**

Founded in 2000, the Onassis USA was the first international affiliate of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation. For over 19 years, it has been dedicated to culture, community, and education, with projects that can effectively inspire social change and justice across borders. By collaborating with Onassis Stegi in Athens and educational and cultural institutions throughout the Americas, Onassis USA presents theatrical and dance productions, art exhibits, conversations, lectures, and other initiatives, triggering discussions about democratic values, human rights, civil rights, and the ever-changing realities facing today's citizens on a global scale. Onassis USA runs through two major initiatives, one cultural for the general public, and the other educational for scholars and students in partnership with educational institutions through the Onassis Humanities Impact Program.

<https://www.onassisusa.org/press/onassis-usa-announces-the-eureka-commissions>