

ON THE BOARDS

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SHAPING THE FUTURE OF CURATION

ANNOUNCING On the Boards Curatorial Fellow Berette S Macaulay

In 2021, during a time of great change in our community and the world, On the Boards is excited to announce **Berette S Macaulay as On the Boards' inaugural Curatorial Fellow**. Berette is a multidisciplinary artist, curator, and writer from Jamaica and Sierra Leone. Her research and visual arts practice engage themes of belonging, identity-performance, illegibility, love, memory, and mythmaking. She earned her BA in Theatre Arts at Marymount Manhattan College and her MA in Cultural Studies at University of Washington-Bothell and has exhibited and published nationally and internationally.

On the Boards Artistic Director, Rachel Cook, had this to say regarding the announcement of Macaulay as the inaugural fellow, *"I've been wanting to launch a curatorial fellowship for a number of years now, and I couldn't be more thrilled with the process, the application pool, and all of the proposals that we received. Berette is an outstanding fellow and I couldn't be more excited to welcome her to On the Boards and begin this fantastic journey!"*

The Curatorial Fellow has the opportunity to conceive, develop, and implement designated performances, commissioned projects, discursive public programs, and publications for On the Boards. Fellows receive mentorship, on-the-job training, and are able to connect with a national and international network of curatorial and producers. The fellow will collaborate with Artistic Director Rachel Cook to develop, research, and realize performances, programs, and events that support and express the artistic vision of On the Boards fulfilling its mission to invest in artists near and far, and to connect them with audiences interested in forward-thinking art and ideas.

A group of curators, artists, and colleagues were invited to participate on the selection panel. This panel included **Anna Gallagher-Ross, Edgar Miramontes, and Eli Steffen, and Tara Aisha Willis**. The participating panelists remarked on their excitement about On the Boards offering this vital career development support to curators in Seattle and around the country. The Curatorial Fellowship is an important opportunity to bring new voices to On the Boards performance scene, while fostering the next generation of innovative performance curators. They also found the range of thought-provoking and original applications through the process a pleasure to consider.

On the Boards received 35 applications from which 5 finalists were selected and awarded a fee to further develop their proposals. Finalists **Angel Alviar-Langley, Brian Dang, Berette S Macaulay, Leigh Marie Marshall, Matt Sherrill** each submitted a curatorial idea they wanted to realize along with possible participating artists, as well as how the audience would engage with their idea.

Proposed Project: Berette S Macaulay's proposal is a site-specific, multi-locational project that leads audiences through a series of visceral engagements with site histories, community meaning, cultural memory, and healing activations. She will be working with an architectural designer, a performing arts company, and community research partners to present this series – which will include an interdisciplinary mapping of sound, movement performances, and visual installations, and a roving podcast—culminating in a performance at On the Boards.

The aspirational scope of this project is to animate, engage, and serve displacement hi/stories of cultural erasures in Seattle - with a particular care for QTBIPOC and immigrant communities. Through a network of collaborating actors, participants, and attending community audiences, Berette's curatorial intention is for the commissioned artists to create both a witnessing and immersive pedestrian experience amplifying at-risk or lost cultural sites, juxtaposed with ceremonial honoring of place and community reclamation. Her project holds the potential of facilitating existing calls for practical and accountable public interventions in reimagining and preserving site legacies around Seattle.

Background on Curatorial Fellowship:

The Curatorial Fellowship at On the Boards has been incubating behind the scenes since Artistic Director Rachel Cook's arrival in 2018. Recently, On the Boards worked with Seattle University Master of Fine Arts in Arts Leadership students Ellen McGivern and Linnea Ingalls as Curatorial Interns. We have also worked with Seattle artists, Eli Steffen and Jordan Macintosh-Hougham, who approached us with interest about project-based internships centered around Northwest New Works Festival and OntheBoards.tv. Dani Tirrell, an artist On the Boards has commissioned, presented, and worked with us in many capacities, first as part of the Ambassador Program, then as a curator of an Open Studio program. Dani was co-curator of *Solo: A Festival of Dance* 2020. Additionally, in 2018, 2019, and 2020 co-curators KT Kusmaul, Matt Aguayo, HATLO, and Dakota Camacho collaborated on Performance Labs

with On the Boards Curatorial Administrator Charles Smith. As part of this work, we launched a Curatorial Reading Group with Minna Lee and Fiore Grey, and a weekly all staff ART Chat where various texts and performances were discussed. All of this work, from these incredible individuals and creative thinkers led to this moment. We are deeply grateful to each of them for their contribution to On the Boards' artistic growth.

On the Boards considers the fellowship initiative as one step toward implementing structures, policies, and practices for inclusive decision-making and other forms of institutional power-sharing. The Curatorial Fellowship will be an active part of shaping On the Boards' next chapter and will contribute to its exciting creative future.

Community response to this new position:

“Working with On the Boards was a really powerful experience for me. The mentorship I received from the whole staff really opened up what I thought curation could be and exposed me a breadth of new artists and ideas. The faith Rachel showed to my vision and her willingness to engage tough questions allowed me to grow as a curator and an artist.” - *Eli Steffen, Artist*

“In a time of unprecedented separation and course correction it is essential to uphold our mission of connecting artists to diverse communities. Introspection, study, discussion and sharing institutional knowledge and resources maintains our commitment to artists in a time when live presentations aren't possible. We're invigorated by the vision of the fellowships and excited to share the multiplicity of perspectives they will bring.” - *Davora Lindner, OtB Board President, Founder Prairie Underground*

“Speaking as a Board member, it's exciting to see this program develop into a paid position that has the potential to make much needed change in arts leadership. I hope the Curatorial Fellowship program can be a model for meaningful ways to nurture new voices in curatorial practice, both at On the Boards and throughout the arts landscape.” - *Ruth Keating Lockwood, former OtB Board President, Director Oxbow*

About Berette S Macaulay:

Berette S Macaulay earned her BA in Theatre Arts at Marymount Manhattan College and her MA in Cultural Studies at University of Washington-Bothell and has exhibited and published nationally and internationally, receiving recent Artist Grants from the Vermont Studio Center Residency, Shunpike Arts, and 4Culture. Art and writing publications include *Feminist Media Histories*, *UNESCO Courier*, *Of Note* and *Musée* magazines, and the *World Policy Journal*. Her curatorial work includes *illusive self* (2013) at Taller Boricua Gallery, NYC, and *Exploring Passages in the Black Diaspora* (2020) at Photographic Center NW. She was the creator and organizer of the *MFON in Seattle* (2019/2020) program in which she facilitated exhibition partnerships with MFON Women, Frye Art Museum, Jacob Lawrence Gallery, and PCNW, following the legacy work of Adama Delphine Fawundu and Laylah Amatullah Barrayn to feature Black women photographers from Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, and North America. Berette's awards include a 2019 Simpson Center Research Cluster Grant as founder of Black Cinema Collective (BCC) where she curates screenings, watch parties, and panel discussions alongside co-programmers Savita Krishnamoorthy and Mateo Ochoa, focusing on African and Afro-Diasporic films. BCC functions as a project of i•ma•gine | e•volve, an interdisciplinary arts incubator she has been tending to since 2010. Berette was named a 2019 Ottenberg-Winans Fellow for African Studies (UW), and is the recipient of the 2020 Champion of Seattle Arts (COSA) Award. Berette also serves as Museum Guide Program Manager at Henry Art Gallery.

Panelists Bios:

Anna Gallagher-Ross is Co-Artistic Director at Fusebox. The organization is most known for its annual Fusebox Festival that features local, national, and international artists exploring the intersection of live performance and other art forms. A graduate of the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Anna has over a decade of experience in the curation and production of the performing, visual, and literary arts. Her writing and interviews have appeared in Art Papers, C Magazine, the Walker Reader, Theater Magazine, as well as numerous exhibition catalogues. Anna is co-editor of Imagined Theatres Journal Issue 5: Curating Performance. She serves on the advisory board of UNESCO Creative Cities Austin, and Sightlines Magazine for Arts and Culture as well as panels for organizations such as the MAP Fund, Creative Capital, Apex Art Foundation, Charlotte Street Arts Foundation, among others.

Edgar Miramontes, Deputy Executive Director & Curator of the Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater (REDCAT), serves on the curatorial and management team for REDCAT's international, national and regional programming with an emphasis in dance, theater and performance. Miramontes was the co-curator and co-producer of the Getty-led Pacific Standard Time Festival: Live Art LA/LA, an international celebration of art and performance, with more than 200 Latin American and Latinx artists supported by a major grant from the Getty Foundation. He served on the curatorial team for the National Performance Network's Performing Americas Program and has participated as a panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, Network of Ensemble Theaters, L.A. Cultural Affairs Department, L.A. County Arts Commission, National Performance Network, and as a reviewer for MAP Fund and Creative Capital. He is currently on the Board of the National Performance Network and is an advisory committee member of The Japan Foundation, New York and New England Foundation for the Arts's National Theater Project.

Eli Steffen (they/them) is a speculative artist working in the fields of theater, visual art, and curation. Their latest line of research is an investigation of queer grieving, ritual, and visibility. Generally, Eli's work focuses on the intersection of communal narratives, cultural norms, and systemic violence.

Tara Aisha Willis is a dancer, PhD candidate in Performance Studies at New York University, and Associate Curator in Performance & Public Practice at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. She recently held a NYPL Jerome Robbins Dance Division Research Fellowship and is an editorial collective member of Women & Performance. Former co-managing editor for TDR/The Drama Review, she co-edited a special issue of The Black Scholar with Thomas F. DeFrantz and the performance writing project, Marking the Occasion (Wendy's Subway, 2020), with Jaime Shearn Coan. Willis performed in a collaboration between Will Rawls and Claudia Rankine (2016-19) and in the 2016 "Bessie" award-winning performance by The Skeleton Architecture. She was the founding administrator of Movement Research's Artists of Color Council and a member of the phase 1 working group for "Creating New Futures," the COVID-19 responsive guidelines for ethical dance presenting.