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**PERFORMA ANNOUNCES NEW COMMISSIONS AND PAVILIONS WITHOUT WALLS FOR
PERFORMA 19 BIENNIAL
NOVEMBER 1–24, 2019
THROUGHOUT NEW YORK CITY**

NEW YORK -- Performa, the internationally acclaimed organization dedicated to live performance by visual artists, is thrilled to announce additional Commissions and the Pavilions Without Walls program for the Performa 19 Biennial. The eighth edition of the biennial presents more than twenty new commissions by artists from over a dozen countries around the world to participate in three weeks of exciting programming, from November 1–24, 2019, at locations throughout New York City.

Also marking the centenary of the Bauhaus, Performa 19's interdisciplinary program comprises architecture, choreography, dance, digital media, fashion design, film, photography, painting, sculpture, virtual reality, and video. The influence of the Bauhaus and the radical concept of its curriculum, which holds performance at its core, appears in several Commissions and is the focus of the Performa Institute programming, daily events, and talks at the Performa 19 Hub.

Inspired by the third act of Oskar Schlemmer's *Triadic Ballet*, photographer and classically-trained dancer **Kia LaBeija** (b. 1990, United States) will present her first live theatrical work, exploring the total work of art, freedom in movement, and mysticism through performance. Co-commissioned with Performance Space New York, LaBeija's performance will combine a spectrum of dance—from contemporary ballet to classic forms of voguing—on a stage design that recalls Schlemmer's investigation of geometry, accompanied by newly composed music by producer Kenn Michael and percussionist Warren Benbow, the artist's brother and father. Performers will wear architectural costumes created by stylist Kyle Luu, alluding to self-fashioning as an emotionally expressive tool.

Choreographer **Cecilia Bengolea** (b. 1979, Argentina, lives in Paris) will create a new performance in collaboration with fashion legend **Michèle Lamy** (b. 1944, Algeria, lives in Paris), working with Lamy's collection of Comme des Garçons catwalk pieces and a group of fifty dancers. Bengolea takes an ethnographic approach to choreography, combining the social behaviors and cultural histories of classical ballet and modern dance, with the contemporary music cultures of Jamaican dancehall and dubstep.

In her first live theatrical work, **Bunny Rogers** (b. 1990, United States), known for her large-scale video installations and curious schoolroom furniture-as-sculpture that capture the haunting side-effects of existence in the Internet ether, will present a high-school talent show in a public school auditorium. This showcase will consider adolescent experience of traumatic school-yard violence as mediated by online websites and social media.

London-based visual artist **Paul Maheke** (b.1985, France) and DJ and electronic music producer **Nkisi** (aka Melika Ngombe Kolongo, b. 1985, Democratic Republic of Congo, lives in the United Kingdom) will debut *Sènsa*, a performance that examines diasporic ideas of "in-betweenness." Modes of visibility and invisibility are at the heart of *Sènsa*, a Bantu word that translates as "to appear from far away," or "to reveal itself." Co-commissioned with Abrons Arts Center, the performance will be accompanied by a lighting score designed by Ariel Efraim Ashbel.

Launched in 2013, Performa's renowned **Pavilions Without Walls** program showcases vibrant artistic practices from Taiwan and Sweden, following extensive research and engagement with curators, historians, artists, and educators in those countries. The Pavilions aim to reflect the social, geographical and political landscapes of each country, and to present the work of emerging and established artists to the New York arts community and public at large.

For the **Swedish Pavilion**, Swedish-Palestinian visual artist **Tarik Kiswanson** (b. 1986, Sweden, lives in France) known for his exquisitely elegant and experiential sculptures, will bring together a group of New York City-based eleven-year-olds to perform Kiswanson's poetic texts composed of childhood reflections on coming-of-age and geographic displacement in a turbulent contemporary world. Blurring artistic practice and everyday life in her highly personal feminist texts, drawings and paintings, **Ylva Snöfrid** (b. 1974, Sweden) will transform a domestic space through performance rituals influenced by her childhood experiences, including references to Hilma af Klint, the Waldorf School, Joseph Beuys, and the Bauhaus. Meanwhile, **Éva Mag** (b. 1979, Romania), who primarily works with fabric and clay, will probe the dynamics of movement between bodies and objects, collaborating with a choreographer to devise a work for twenty performers—dancers, gymnasts, and acrobats—and twenty sculptures in the Judson Church Gym. Finally, video and installation artist **Lap-See Lam** (b. 1990, Sweden, lives in Stockholm) will present a live performance involving virtual reality, informed by the language and hospitality rituals observed at her family's Chinese restaurant in Sweden. The work will consider how myths, popular culture, and fiction construct identity in the Chinese diaspora.

For the **Taiwanese Pavilion**, conceptual and installation artist **Chou Yu-Cheng** (b. 1976, Taiwan, lives in Taipei) will explore systems of labor, exchange and trade in New York's Financial District, by tracking the movements of distributed goods

such as whole wheat. In his first live theatrical work, artist and film director **Su Hui-Yu** (b. 1976, Taiwan, lives in Taipei) will survey the life of Tian Qiyuan, Taiwan's first openly gay and HIV-positive student and co-founder of the experimental 1980's Taiwanese theater group Critical Point Theatre Phenomenon, by re-inventing Tian's influential production *White Snake*, originally inspired by a classic Ming Dynasty legend. Video artist **Yu Cheng-Ta** (b. 1983, Taiwan, lives in Taipei) will examine the phenomenon of social media celebrity via a series of staged

interventions—both online and in real life—working with influencers to consider cultural stereotypes. Illuminating the lived experiences of Asian immigrants in New York, **Huang Po-Chih** (b. 1980, Taiwan, lives in Taipei), whose complex conceptual works challenge industry status quo, will arrange an elegy for Song Yang, a Chinese immigrant sex worker who committed suicide in Flushing, Queens in 2017. Technological pioneer **Shu Lea Cheang** (b. 1954, Taiwan, lives in Paris), who represents Taiwan at the current Venice Biennale, will present *SLEEP1237*, during which participants will be read to sleep, following a screening and public discussion of her early innovative work.

Performa is also excited to reveal further details of previously announced Commissions:

Using sound, projected images, and live video editing, artist **Korakrit Arunanondchai**, will create an interdisciplinary performance that interweaves oral stories and local folklore with Thailand's complex history of Buddhist kingship and nationalist policies, featuring a performance by boychild.

Ed Atkins, whose uncanny video installations play in the space between the corporeal and digital realms, will present his first live theatrical work at Abrons Arts Center.

Sculptor **Nairy Baghramian** and choreographer **Maria Hassabi** will present an installation of new sculptures and live performances, inhabiting two separate floors of a Fifth Avenue townhouse. Collaborating for the first time on a large-scale, in a work co-commissioned with 1014 and co-presented with The Kitchen, Baghramian and Hassabi will explore notions of intimacy and domesticity through the limits and materiality of their respective disciplines.

Yvonne Rainer, in collaboration with choreographer and researcher **Emily Coates**, will stage a new version of her iconic 1965 work *Parts of Some Sextets*, recreated using notation, photographs, and archival records. A dance for ten people and twelve mattresses, this new iteration features artists Nick Mauss and Liz Magic Laser, recalling the participation of Robert Rauschenberg and Robert Morris in the original performance presented at Judson Church.

Paul Pfeiffer, whose groundbreaking video, sculpture, and photography dissect the role of mass media in shaping behavior and identities, will present his first live public performance, featuring The Redcoats—the renowned marching band of the University of Georgia's football team, the Georgia Bulldogs—whom Pfeiffer began working with whilst he was Lamar Dodd Chair of Art at the University of Georgia in 2016–2017.

Visual artist and composer **Samson Young** is writing an experimental musical based on the Chinese folkloric myth of the Eight Immortals—who are revered by Taoists, considered signs of prosperity and longevity, and have appeared in

different guises in Chinese art and popular culture since the Yuan dynasty in the thirteenth century. Young will work with actors and live musicians, including a guitar quartet and an opera singer, to create a contemporary reading of this fable, using mechanical cranes to express the idea of the Immortals as powerful tools.

RoseLee Goldberg, Founding Director and Chief Curator states: “We are thrilled to be working with artists from more than a dozen different parts of the world, and to be introduced to the cultural and political references that make his or her individual work so essential and compelling to our understanding of the times in which we live. This is powerful and important work made even more so being live, for it engages audiences directly, viscerally, with the artists' sensibilities and concerns.”

Notes to Editors

Performa 19 is curated by RoseLee Goldberg, Chief Curator and Founding Director, Kathy Noble, Senior Curator and Manager of Curatorial Affairs, Charles Aubin, Curator, and Job Piston, Special Projects Manager. The production of Performa 19 is led by Esa Nickle, Producing Director.

The Taiwanese Pavilion Without Walls is curated in collaboration with Taipei Fine Arts Museum and C-Lab, with the generous support of the Taiwanese Ministry of Culture. The Swedish Pavilion Without Walls is made possible due to a joint declaration of intent between Iaspis/the Swedish Arts Grants Committee, the Swedish Arts Council, the Consulate General of Sweden in New York, and the Embassy of Sweden in Washington, D.C. It is curated in collaboration with Bonniers Konsthall, Hallands Konstmuseum, ICIA - Institute for Contemporary Ideas and Art, Public Art Agency Sweden, and the Royal Institute of Art, with the generous support of Iaspis/the Swedish Arts Grants Committee, the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation, and the Swedish Arts Council.

ABOUT PERFORMA

Founded in 2004 by art historian and curator RoseLee Goldberg, Performa is the leading organization dedicated to exploring the critical role of live performance in the history of 20th century art and to encouraging new directions in performance for the 21st century. Part of Performa's mission is to present a biennial of visual art performance in New York City that illuminates the critical role of performance in the history of art as well as its enormous significance in the international world of contemporary art.

Since launching New York's first performance biennial in 2005, Performa has solidified its identity as a commissioning and producing entity. As a "museum without walls," Performa contributes important art historical heft to the field by showing the development of live art in all its forms from many different cultural perspectives, reaching back to the Italian Renaissance. Celebrated worldwide

as the first biennial to give special attention to this remarkable history, the Performa Biennial transforms the city of New York into the "world capital of artists' performance" every other November, attracting a national and international audience of more than 50,000 for three weeks of live performances. Performa has presented seven international biennials, commissioned and produced nearly 300 performances, worked with more than 700 artists, and toured commissioned performances and exhibitions in nearly 20 countries around the world.