

THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY THEATER

2025 / 2026
ANNUAL
REPORT



**AUTUNN
KNIGHT**

NOTHING: more
JANUARY 2026

PICTURED Jasmine Hearn

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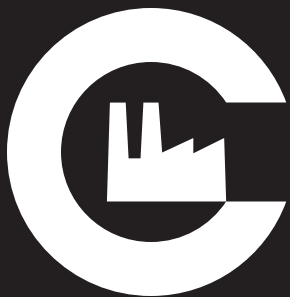
STAFF + BOARD

ABOUT US

Founded in 2004, The Chocolate Factory Theater (CF) supports the creation of new work by interdisciplinary performance artists from its post-industrial facility in Long Island City, Queens. We encourage risk-taking and innovation within the experimental performing arts community by responding to artists' needs with space, time, money and administrative support throughout their careers. As an artist-founded, artist-run institution—and one of the few remaining spaces wholly devoted to experimental performance in New York City—we believe that the ideas generated within our walls have the potential to improve the lives of New Yorkers, shape broader cultural movements, and inspire change.



Ruth Childs



*"by artists,
for artists"*



Netta Yerushalmy

IN FY26, THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY SUPPORTED A ROBUST ARTISTIC PROGRAM COMPRISING:

9 COMMISSIONED PREMIERES by interdisciplinary artists;

10 EARLY STAGE CREATIVE RESIDENCIES selected via peer nomination;

a number of contextually-relevant **INTERDISCIPLINARY EVENTS** organized by **GUEST CURATORS**;

and **ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS** intended to deepen and **EXPAND CONNECTIONS BETWEEN** specific interdisciplinary **ARTIST COMMUNITIES**.

RISK TAKING + INNOVATION

As a team of practicing artists themselves, CF staff engages with its artist community from a place of direct understanding, as **partners in a shared endeavor**—making the process of developing new work within our spaces incredibly unique.

Artists receive **exclusive 24/7 access** to our spaces and technical equipment for a period of 1–6 weeks, culminating in premiere performances for the public.

We **literally hand artists the keys** and—in addition to substantial financial, administrative and technical support—provide a level of **flexibility, trust, autonomy and appreciation** that is rare in New York City.

CF has earned a strong reputation—among its artist community, its peer institutions, and the field at large—as an organization that is truly “by artists, for artists”.



Neal Medlyn

PREMIERES

RUTH CHILDS

Blast! • (co-presented with L'Alliance New York / Crossing The Line Festival)

NOVEMBER 12-14, 2025

NETTA YERUSHALMY • TUÇE YASAK MIEKE ULFIG • KATHERINE PROFETA PAULA MATTHUSEN & ALLA KOVGAN

nothing personal, just everything

OCTOBER 30 - NOVEMBER 2, 2025

AUTUMN KNIGHT

NOTHING: more • (co-presented with Under The Radar)

JANUARY 16-18, 2026

KARINNE KEITHLEY SYERS

Your Ghost Body

MARCH 13-14, 2026

NEAL MEDLYN in collaboration with ULRIKA ANDERSSON

Made In Heaven

MARCH 25, 2026

STEVEN WENDT

Plato Caves: Screens vs Shadows • (work for young audiences)

MARCH 28-29, 2026

AYANO ELSON

Control

APRIL 23-25, 2026

MORIAH EVANS

[.../*^%<>€£¥\$&@!!!!^^^] • (co-commissioned with Walker Art Center)

JUNE 5-13, 2026

JASMINE HEARN

Memory Fleet: Beloved, Let's Cross • (co-presented presented with New York Live Arts)

JUNE 11-13, 2026

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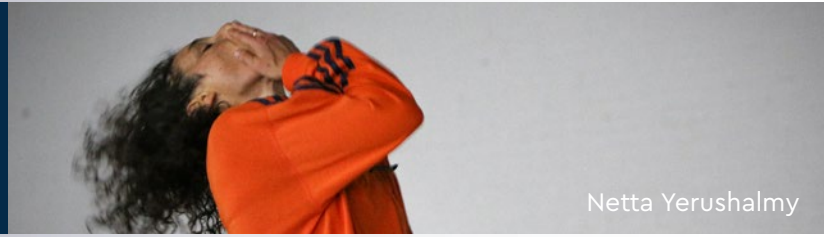


Ruth Childs

Blast!



nothing personal,
just everything



Netta Yerushalmy

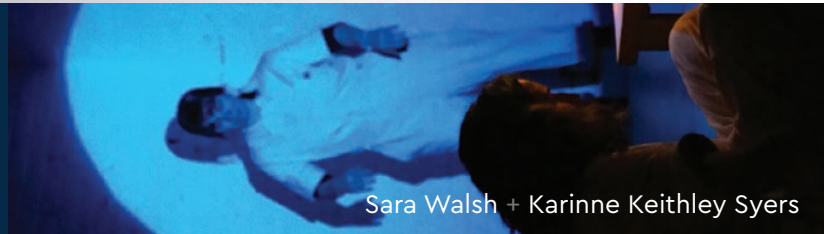


Dominica Greene

NOTHING: more



Your Ghost Body



Sara Walsh + Karinne Keithley Syers



Ulrika Andersson

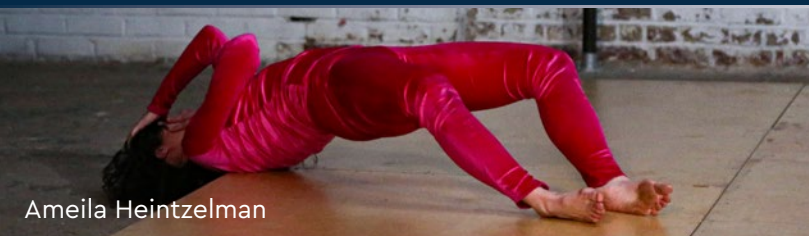
Made in Heaven



Plato Caves

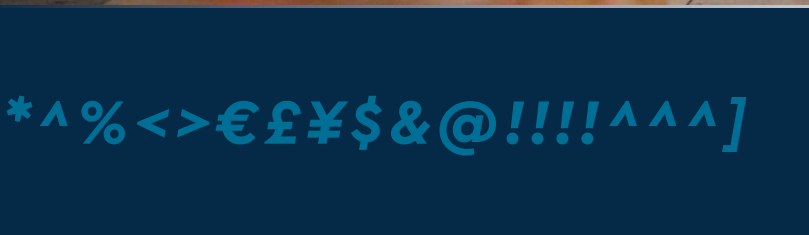


Steve Wendt



Ameila Heintzelman

Control



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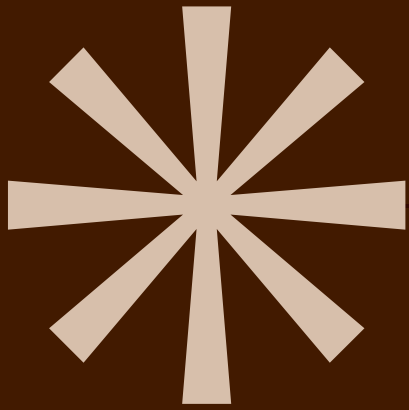
Moriah Evans



Jasmine Hearn

Memory Fleet

BY THE NUMBERS [FY26]



9 COMMISSIONED PREMIERES

10 EARLY STAGE
CREATIVE RESIDENCIES

\$250,000 PAID TO ARTISTS



5,000 AUDIENCE MEMBERS

75+ ARTISTS, PERFORMERS,
DESIGNERS AND TECHNICIANS
PAID A FAIR HOURLY WAGE





The New York Times

A Choreographer Steps Out of a Giant Shadow (Her Aunt's)

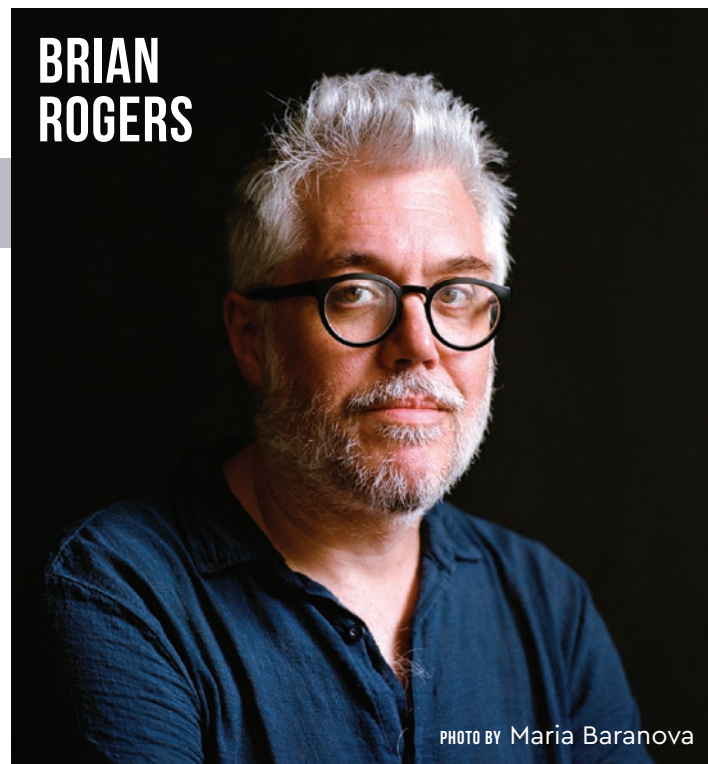
Ruth Childs, the niece of the renowned choreographer Lucinda Childs, got over being intimidated by her aunt's achievements.

Now, she debuts her own work in New York.

Brian Rogers, the artistic director of the Chocolate Factory, said that he was attracted to the extreme way that Childs put her body in service of her work.

"The effort and vulnerability remind me of what I used to see in our New York dance community but have been missing lately," he said.

FROM THE ARTISTIC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As Co-Founder and Artistic Executive Director of The Chocolate Factory Theater, and as a working artist, I am deeply committed to the DIY ethos and true interdisciplinarity in live performance. From its inception, CF has supported the creation of new work by interdisciplinary artists who question and expand the boundaries of "performance" and "liveness" while engaging with related disciplines like visual art, dance, theater, cinema, and music.

*"deeply committed
to the DIY ethos"*

AYANO ELSON

Control

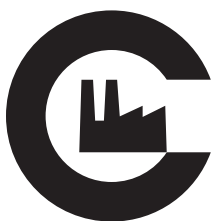
APRIL 2026



PICTURED Cayleen Del Rosario + Owen Prum

Over more than 20 years as CF's chief curatorial voice, my approach has evolved in response to challenges I faced as a young independent artist in NYC. CF remains an artist-led organization, offering flexible and long-term support to a diverse community of performance makers. I am excited to invest in an artist's long-term trajectory, guided by their unique needs, values, and points of view. I champion artists who challenge the limits of their own practices and take risks.

As an artist and a curator, my work is influenced by a lineage of "downtown" spaces like Judson Church, Club 57, 8BC, The Pyramid Club, Franklin Furnace, and early PS122, where dynamic, history-making artist communities thrived with little regard for boundaries between performance, dance, music, and visual art. CF emerged from my twin desires to create a space for my own work and to advocate for a radically shifting, risk-taking artistic community. I do this work for artists who may never align with institutional priorities or trends. For them, small-scale DIY spaces are essential. As a co-founder of a low-budget venue, I became a curator out of necessity—and, over time, developed a deep understanding of (and instincts for) how to best support these artists on their own terms.



THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY THEATER



THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY THEATER

CATCH 79



SEP
13

**2025
GALA**



SEP
30

**Optimistic
Voices
(reprise)**



JAN
8-10

BLAST!



OCT
8-10

**Saturday
Salons**

MAR
7
MAY
16

**nothing personal,
just everything**



OCT NOV
30-1

Made In Hea



Early Stage Creative Residencies

FALL
2025

Early Stage Creativ

2025 • 2026 SEASON

NOTHING: more



JAN
16-18

**Your Ghost Body +
Companion Piece**



MAR
13-14

**Mothers Day
Block Party**

+ Open House



MAY
10

Control



APRIL
23-25

Memory Fleet



JUNE
11-13

aven



MAR
25

**Plato Caves:
Screens vs Shadows**



MAR
27-29

[.../+*^%<>€£¥\$&@!!!!^^^]



JUNE
5-13

Residencies

WINTER
2026

Early Stage Creative Residencies

SPRING
2026



EARLY STAGE
**CREATIVE
RESIDENCIES**

SELECTED BY Peer Nomination

CRACKHEAD BARNEY

JESSE BONNELL

LILY GOLD

AMANDA HOROWITZ

KASHIA KANCEY

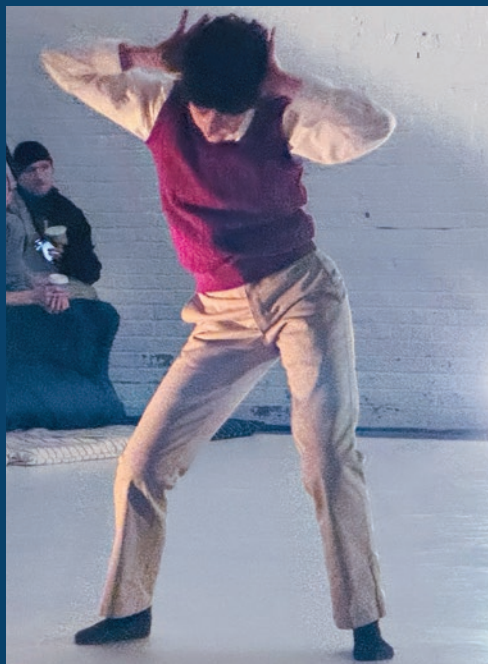
JOANNA KOTZE

MAYA LEE-PARRITZ

KIMIKO TANABE

ZERINA TYE

LU YIM





CURATED BY Jennifer Krasinski

SATURDAY SALONS

Participating Artists

ALEX JOVANOVIĆH

ANDREW LAMPERT

ERICA MANCINI

ANDREW ONDREJČAK with MEG HARPER and YUKI KAWAHISA

AMY O'NEILL

LAUREN O'NEILL-BUTLER

SUKHDEV SANDHU

KRISTIN WORRALL



THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY THEATER & AUNTS PRESENTS




Sunday
MAY 10
From 1-5 PM

THE FOURTH ANNUAL
Mother's Day
OPEN HOUSE

Block PARTY

*Family-friendly activities,
Free snacks & More!*

38-33 24TH STREET - LIC - QUEENS

chocolatefactorytheater.org




EL TEATRO DE LA FÁBRICA DE CHOCOLATE Y AUNTS PRESENTA



Domingo

MAYO 10

De las 1-5 PM

LA CUARTA EDICIÓN ANUAL

Casa Abierta del Día
DE LAS MADRES

FIESTA
del Barrio

Actividades para toda la familia
Aperitivos gratis y Mucho más!

38-33 24TH STREET - LIC - QUEENS

chocolatefactorytheater.org



SUPPORTERS

Lily Auchincloss Foundation

Booth Ferris Foundation

Con Edison

Harkness Foundation

Howard Gilman Foundation

The Henry Luce Foundation, the Willem de Kooning Foundation,
and Teiger Foundation through the Coalition of Small Arts New York

jetBlue

Lambent Foundation

M&T Bank

New York Community Trust

NYC Department of Cultural Affairs

New York State Council on the Arts

NYC Council Member Julie Won

The Chocolate Factory Theater Trustees

Mental Insight Fund at San Francisco Foundation

Mertz Gilmore Foundation

Queens Borough President Donovan Richards, Jr.


Rise Light and Power

Select Equity Group Foundation

Shubert Foundation

Shine Electronics

Tiger Baron Foundation



*We play a vital role in helping
current and future generations of independent artists
to gain visibility and support,
and to grow their artistry and careers over time.*

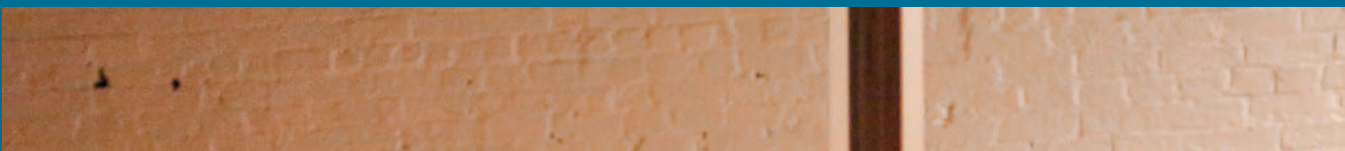
PICTURED Dominica Greene + Jasmine Hearn

STRATEGIC REVISIONING

With the support of the **New York Community Trust**, The Chocolate Factory Theater has embarked upon a multi-year process of strategic revisioning, led by **Lauren Slone** in close collaboration with CF's Staff and Board leadership.

As a founder-led organization for the entirety of its history, CF has grown its structures and practices to suit the strengths, weaknesses, and particular dynamics of its two co-founders. It has also unsustainably relied on a culture of self-sacrifice.

This is an ideal and necessary moment for the organization to deeply consider everything about its operations, practices, and staff infrastructure, to plan for a sustainable—and very different—path forward.



QUESTIONS

*How can **CF best contribute** to the future of the dance and "experimental performance" communities while embracing and encouraging risk-taking?*

*Should we continue to "**commission**" and present work or should we support the creative process in different ways?*

*Should we continue to require and provide a "**fair**" hourly wage, with its attendant challenges and limitations?*

*Is the paradigm of the "**big show**" still useful?*

*Is **disciplinarity**, or **interdisciplinarity**, important?*

*What does it mean to make and show work, and **for whom**?*

GOALS

If CF wishes to survive and thrive, it must:

- [1] bring its operations and programs **into alignment** with its available resources;
- [2] **protect its core services for artists**, even if those services look and feel different; and
- [3] do all of this within a new, **more sustainable**, organizational structure.

Supported opportunities for independent dance, theater and interdisciplinary artists to make and present work—particularly for emerging/early career artists—are rapidly shrinking.

It is common for artists, audience members, peers, and stakeholders to state that CF is the “last venue standing” for the experimental performing arts community in New York City.

CF believes that this work is critical to the future of the performing arts field, and to New York City as an artistic and cultural hub.

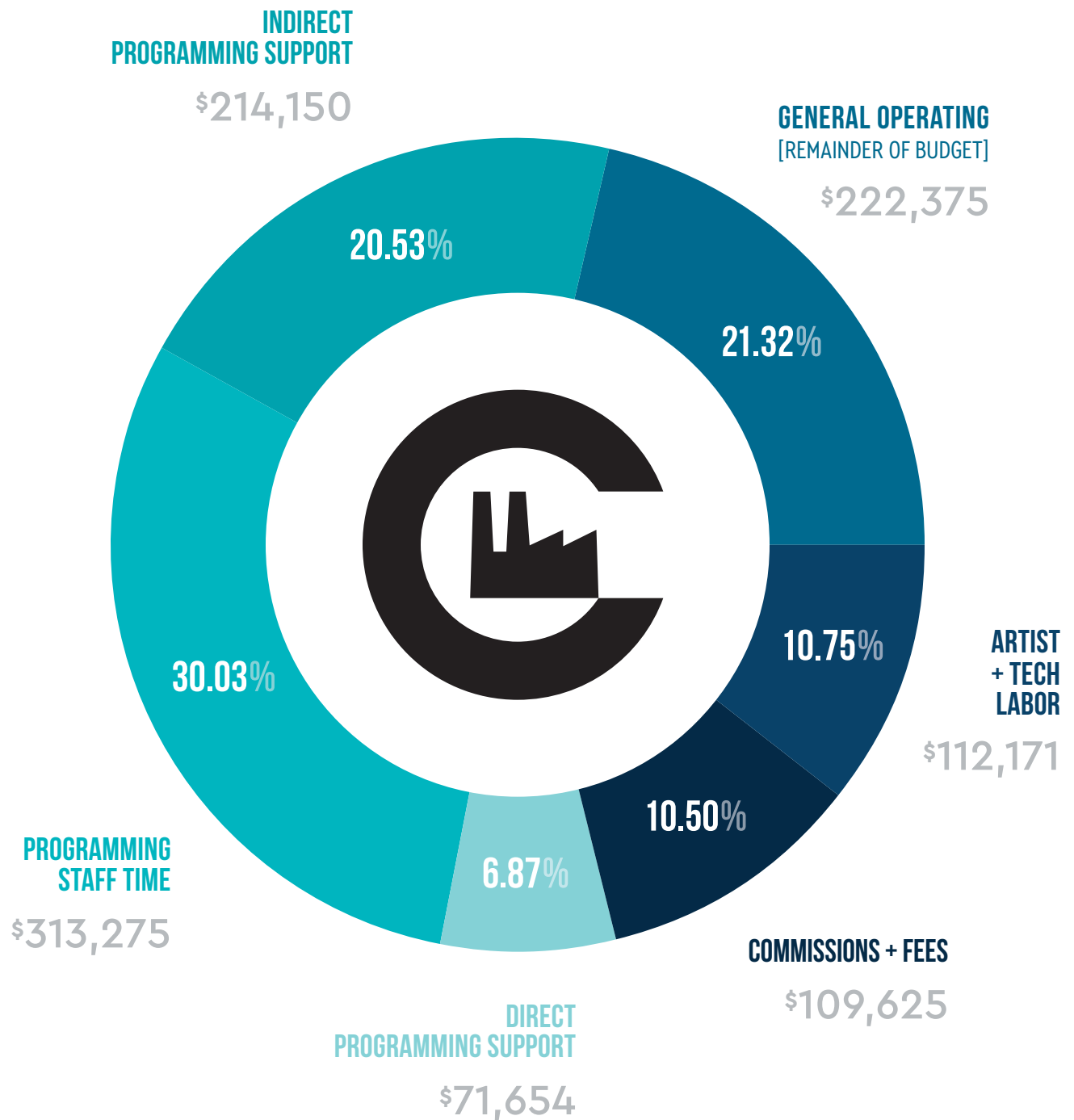
**JULIANA
MAY**

Optimistic Voice (reprise)

originally premiered at BAM
JANUARY 2026



FINANCIAL OUTLOOK [FY26]



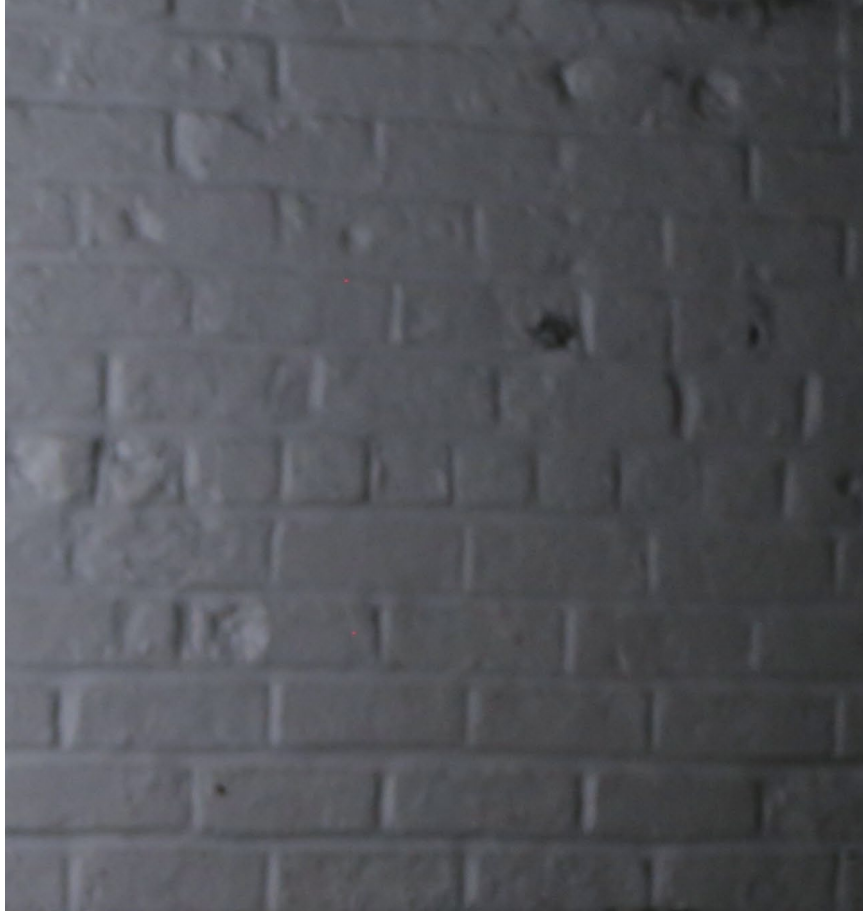
STAFF

BRIAN ROGERS CO-FOUNDER · ARTISTIC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MADELINE BEST MANAGING DIRECTOR
REGINE PIETERS DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT
SHANA CRAWFORD PRODUCTION MANAGER
MICHAEL REARDON GRAPHIC DESIGN
PETER RICHARDS HOUSE VIDEOGRAPHER

TRUSTEES

CHRIS AJEMIAN
DIANE EISENSTAT PRESIDENT
DANIEL FISH
VALLEJO GANTNER
NEIL GREENBERG SECRETARY
NILE HARRIS
NUNALLY KERSH
JERRY LASPISA
DIANA MANALANG
BRIAN ROGERS
BENJAMIN STARK
FRANK WU TREASURER
JIMMY VAN BRAMER VICE PRESIDENT
MOE YOUSUF





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