THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY THEATER
FALL 2022 / SPRING 2023

Jasmie Hearn
(creative residency)
July 2022

Jessie Young with Iris McCloughan
(creative residency)
July 2022

Phil Soltanoff and Steven Wendt /
The Institute of Useless Activity
THIS AND THAT
(co-presented with The Bushwick Starr)
September 7-24, 2022

Efraín Rozas
An Ocean of Forgiveness
(creative residency)
September 18, 2022

The Chocolate Factory's First Annual GALA
Honoring Donovan Richards Jr., Lucy Sexton
and Yoko Shioya
September 28, 2022

David Thomson
VESSEL
October 26-29, 2022

Dion TYGAPAW McKenzie
Devil Woman (Obeah Woman)
co-presented with ISSUE Project Room
and Queens Museum
November 12, 2022

Andrea Kleine
The End Is Not What I Thought It Would Be
November 4-5, 2022

Martita Abril
Huevos a la Mexcla (creative residency)
November 14-19, 2022

Ivy Baldwin
Folds
December 7-17, 2022

Linda Mary Montano
An Interactive Life And Maybe No Art Experience
co-presented with ISSUE Project Room
February 9, 2023

Aaron Landsman
Night Keeper
March 27 - April 8, 2023

Kathy Westwater
Revolver + Choreomaniacs
April 20-29, 2023

Juliana F. May
Family Happiness
co-presented with Abrons Arts Center
May 3-13, 2023

Annie Dorsen
Prometheus Firebringer
co-presented with Media Art Xploration
+ New York Live Arts
May 11-13, 2023

Yanira Castro / a canary torsi
I came here to weep
June 4-11, 2023

Mallory Catlett / Restless NYC
DECODER: Nova Express
June 24 - July 9, 2023

chocolatefactorytheater.org
THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY THEATER PRESENTS

Yanira Castro / a canary torsi
I came here to weep

June 4-11, 2023

Created by Yanira Castro Negroni in collaboration with Ariel Lembeck (Creative Producer, Open Hours Facilitator); Kathy Couch (Light); Stephan Moore (Sound); Erica Ricketts (Audio Score Design); Martita Abril (Audio Performance, Clearing Practice); devynn emory (Clearing Practice); Marielys Burgos Meléndez (Rehearsal Direction for Yanira, Audio Performance, Meal Curation); Doris Reyes (Styling for Yanira); Katie Dean (Graphic Design); LD DeArmon (Stage Management, Open Hours Facilitator); Brandon Kazen-Maddox (Hearing ASL Artist & Curator); Elizabeth Ramirez (Hearing ASL Interpreter); Marselette Davis (Director of Artistic Sign Language); Gabo Tomasini (Guest Artist Opening Meal, Percussionist); Yarisa Colón Torres (Guest Artist Opening Meal, Poet & Ph.D. student, Puerto Rican and Caribbean Literature); José Troche (Guest Artist Opening Meal, Artist-Thinker, M.A. Puerto Rican Studies); Girl Scouts Troop 6000* (Tea Ritual and Closing Meal).

SPECIAL THANKS:

First and foremost to the artists. For their devotion. To Ariel, Kathy, Stephan, Erica, devynn, Martita, Marielys, Doris, Katie, Lewis, Brandon, Marselette, Elizabeth, Gabo, Yarisa, Jose. You are all beyond. Thank you for walking this path with me. Helping us to all arrive together. It is an honor.

Thank you to Brian, Sheila, Madeline, Shana and everyone at The Chocolate Factory. Thank you for the home you build. I always feel “en casa.”

Thank you to Girl Scouts Troop 6000 and Giselle, Jimmy and Heidi for their trust in us and to Christina, Jazlyn, Hailey, Karina, and Maria for giving so much of themselves. It has been magical.

Thank you to the people who gave me space to develop this work: Lucien Zayan and Leyya Mona Tawil and Nathan Elbogen. And to those that helped me build the work: Catalina Bertani (on masks!), Brett Crocitto (on tarps) and Christine Crocito (on Puerto Rican towels, tarps and costume alterations). Could not have made it to the finish line without you.

To so many who came into the process and shared their thoughts with me: Christopher, Kyle, Ivan, Susan, Joseph, Marcela, Janet, Martha.


BIOS:

Martita Abril (Pichu) is a performer, choreographer, and teaching artist from the border city of Tijuana, México. Her work digs at the raw feelings and distortions generated by the intersecting physical and conceptual boundaries of race, culture, and laws. She’s active in the NYFA Immigrant Artist Mentoring Program and has been a volunteer interpreter aiding families seeking asylum at Dilley, Texas detention facility. Martita is interested in working with other artists and being in different processes; she has collaborated with Lux Boreal, Kim Brandt, Yanira Castro, Yoshiko Chuma, Milka Djordjevich, Daria Fain
& Robert Kocik, Allyson Green, Mina Nishimura, Cori Olinghouse, okwui okpokwasili, David Thompson, and Will Rawls, among others. She performed in Simone Forti’s Dance Constructions and the Handles exhibition by Haegue Yang at The Museum of Modern Art. Martita is the Coordinator of Movement Research at the Judson Memorial Church and teaches workshops in Bushwick for Spanish-speaking familias through the iLAND (Interdisciplinary Laboratory for Art Nature and Dance) program by Jennifer Monson. Martita is currently an artist in the Dance and Process program at The Kitchen.

**Yanira Castro**’s work is rooted in communal construction as a rehearsal for radical democracy. She is an interdisciplinary artist born in Borikén (Puerto Rico), living in Lenapehoking (Brooklyn), and working at the intersection of communal practices, performance, installation, and interactive technology. Yanira forms iterative, multimodal projects that center the complexity of land, citizenship, and governance in works activated and performed by the public. Since 2009, she’s created and performed with a team of collaborators as a canary torsi.

Castro has recently been commissioned and presented by The Chocolate Factory Theater, New York Live Arts, MCA Chicago, The Invisible Dog Art Center, Abrons Arts Center, SPACE Gallery, PICA, and The Bates Dance Festival. Her work has recently been supported by Creative Capital, The Alpert Award, The MAP Fund, a NYFA Choreography Fellowship, Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography, Gibney, MacDowell, Yaddo, and Marble House Project, and has received two Bessie Awards for Outstanding Production.

**Kathy Couch** is an artist, educator, advocate, and Bessie Award-winning designer living in Northampton, MA. Working in mediums of light, space, collaboration, and movement improvisation, Couch creates visual landscapes for performance and installation with/in traditional and non-traditional spaces. She is a long-time collaborative member of a canary torsi and is honored to continue this work on Yanira Castro’s I came here to weep. Kathy has current collaborations with Adele Myers + Dancers, Deborah Goffe/Scapegoat Garden, Vanessa Anspaugh, improvisation ensemble The Architects, and musician Batya Sobel. Her work has also been seen at Danspace Project, Abrons Arts Center, LaMaMa, the New Museum, the Immigration Museum in Melbourne, the streets of Prague, as well as in Armenia, Russia, Latvia, Serbia and throughout New England. She is the co-director of A.P.E. (Available Potential Enterprises), an arts organization that stewards a gallery and performance space in Northampton, MA. Kathy is a founding board member and two-time president of the Northampton Community Arts Trust which seeks innovative ways to preserve space for creativity and imagination.

**Miss Marsellette Davis** moved from the Midwest to New York City, it has been 21 years. YAY!! She has been with a long-time partner, David. She is a Deaf Interpreter, DASL, Artist, Mistress of the Ceremony, and Presenter. She enjoys working with the Body Language Production and the crew. Currently, She is a President of the New York City Black Deaf Advocates from the 2021-2023 term under National Black Deaf Advocates, (NBDA). She is also a member of the House of Justice Deaf Club (HOJ), National Alliance Of Black Interpreters (NAOBI), and Registry of Interpreters (RID). She enjoys being an Anchor/Hostess for ASL COFFEE Podcast. Since 2020, She has also been a hostess and owner of Deaf is NOT Dirty Word Show and Party On or Move On Entertainment, virtually or hybrid. When she is not working, She enjoys dancing, traveling, meditating, yoga, and cooking! She is the true social butterfly you will ever meet! Her burst energy and strive is to help people and support businesses and organizations run by, work with, and for our Black and Indigenous Deaf Communities.

**Katie Dean** (she/her) is a collaborative designer and performer. As a designer, she specializes in print work and web design and has worked as the in-house graphic designer for HERE Arts Center; with organizations, applications, and podcasts including Cora Dance; Dance Well Podcast; FINAL NOTICE, an environmental justice app; Gibney; MAP Fund; Movement Research; and has built websites and online spaces for artists and organizations. As a performer, Dean has performed in work spanning from physical theater and stage work to durational work for museums for visual artists and choreographers including Phoebe Berglund, Kim Brandt, Xavier Cha, Jessica Cook, Ayano Elson, Ivy Baldwin Dance, Melanie McLain, Phoebe Osborne, and Shannon Hummel/Cora Dance. katiedean.net

Dean has been collaborating as a graphic designer with
Yanira Castro / a canary torsi for the last two years and is very grateful to be part of this project.

**LD DeArmon** worked in New York City from 2008-2020 in the field of dance as a performer, stage manager, production manager and lighting designer. During those years they worked on projects for artists including Yvonne Meier, Kim Brand, Sam Kim, Faye Driscoll, Yvonne Rainer, Larissa Veloz-Jackson, Ayano Elson, as well as Bessie award winning productions with Yanira Castro, Tess Dworman, and David Thomson. They currently work as a part time Park Ranger in Richmond, VA and tour as a Lighting Supervisor for Ephrat Asherie’s odeon and as a Lighting Designer for jaamil olawale kosoko. They are a recurring guest Lighting Designer with Whitman College.

devynn emory is a choreographer/dance artist (devynnemory/beastproductions), dual licensed bodyworker (sage), Spirit channeler and registered nurse-practicing in the fields of acute/critical care, hospice, COVID and integrative health. They are thrilled to be joining Castro again, after collaborating on may projects since 2015.

emory’s performance company devynnmemory/beastproductions finds the intersection of these fields, walking the edges of thresholds- drawing from their multiple in-between states of being, holding space for liminal bodies bridging multiple planes of transition, finding reciprocity practice as a constant decolonial practice. They are currently working on a trilogy centering medical mannequins holding the wisdom of end of life experiences. (deadbird + can anybody help me hold this body 2021, Cindy Sessions: Grandmother Cindy + Cindy Sessions LOVE, LOSS, LAND 2022, boiling-rain tbd). Emory is a research group fellow at danspace 2020-2023, a recipient of the Onassis Eureka award, and 2022 Art Matters Artist2Artist awardee, a 2023 FCA award recipient and a 2023 USA Fellowship awardee. Born on Lenape Land, emory is a reconnecting descendent of mixed Lenape/Blackfoot/settler ancestry. devynnemory.com + deadbird.land

**Brandon Kazen-Maddox** is a Grandchild of Deaf Adults (GODA) and third-generation native signer of American Sign Language (ASL) who identifies as a Nonbinary, Black Indigenous Person of Color and a member of the LGBTQAI+ community. From 2010 to 2017, Brandon worked as a professional circus acrobat in San Francisco, CA and honed their circus training and dance technique through various collaborations in theatre, film and opera. In May 2019, Brandon graduated from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts with an MFA in Dance and New Technology and currently works as a professional artist, choreographer, director, editor and ASL Artist both in New York City and remotely.

In the summer of 2020, Brandon became a co-founder of Up Until Now Collective, a newly-established non-profit organization focused on radical empathy and inclusion. Brandon collaborates with and provides opportunities for Deaf artists who share a passion for bringing artistic works of ASL Dance Theater to the stage, screen and beyond. Within their commitment to creating work for and with the Deaf community, Brandon also highlights and empowers BIPOC and LGBTQAI+ artists, building multicultural bridges of collaboration and community for artists of all backgrounds and abilities.

Brandon and Up Until Now Collective were recently commissioned by Broadstream, a new streaming platform that launched in September 2021, to create SOUL(SIGNS), a series of 10 ASL music videos featuring iconic songs by Black women, which was both featured in The New York Times, ABC World News, and in the Midnight Moment in Times Square throughout the month of July, 2021. Up Until Now was also commissioned by Boston Lyric Opera, Portland Opera, Opera Omaha and Opera Columbus to make a series of Opera ASL Music Videos called SOUL(SIGNS): OPERA and by Global Citizen to make a series of videos celebrating Pride 2022.

Throughout the summer of 2021, Brandon served as the lead liaison for providing ASL services at The Shed, Little Island, Lincoln Center and the Park Avenue Armory, where they are bringing Deaf Directors of ASL into the inner workings of arts organizations themselves and integrating both the Deaf perspective and Deaf performers onstage, on camera and behind the scenes. Brandon continues to lend their artistry to the empowerment of the Deaf, Disability and Arts community on a local, national and international scale.

Brandon’s work as an interpreter and social
activist has been featured on CNN and they have appeared as a co-star in “The Good Fight” (CBS), “High Maintenance” (HBO) and “New Amsterdam” (NBC). Brandon was also a featured story-teller for the 100th episode of “Stories From The Stage” (PBS). They are also a recipient of the New England Foundation for the Arts Grant and an awardee of the 2022 cycle of the Creative Capital Award for the ASL Dance Theatre Reimagining of Andrew Lippa’s The Wild Party. For more information, follow their Instagram accounts @bkazenmaddox, visit their websites, www.brandonkazen-maddox.com, www.upuntilnowcollective.com

Ariel Lembeck is an interdisciplinary artist, creative producer and artist manager based in Lenapehoking (Brooklyn, NY). She received a Bachelors of Fine Arts from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts and a minor from the Stern School of Business. Her artistic practice is rooted in creating experiential performances through the use of video, dance and installation. Her work has been presented by Triskelion Arts, MotIVe Brooklyn, WaxWorks, JudsonChurch (STUFFED), The Jack Crystal Theater, The Footlight (MerdetheShow), Ruth Page Center for the Arts (Harvest Chicago Contemporary Dance Festival), The Floor on Atlantic, and The Wild Project Theater (International Human Rights Arts Festival). Ariel has performed with/for artists Meredith Monk, Douglas Dunn, Celia Rowlson-Hall, Anat Vaadia (Tel Aviv - Yasmeen Godder’s Storm End Come), Jessica Gaynor, Elisabeth Motley, Joanna Kotze, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company, among others.

As creative producer and artist manager, Ariel has worked as Project Manager and Events/Tour coordinator for Stephen Petronio Company, Company Manager for STEELEDANCE’s 20th Anniversary season, Arts Administrator for Motley Dance, and Associate Producer for Q&A Events and Production. In 2016 and 2017 she worked with the Village Alliance as Talent Coordinator/Project Manager on their annual Astor Alive! Festival. And in 2018, 2019, 2023 with the Joyce Theater and Hudson River Park Trust to produce the Hudson River Dance Festival.

From 2020-2021, Ariel was part of the Creating New Futures Phase 2 group, a group of arts workers whose collective labor is centered around dismantling harmful systems within the dance field, and helped in the building and sharing of the Phase 2 document: “Notes for Equitable Funding from Arts Workers”. www.ariellembeck.com

Marielys Burgos Meléndez, MA Dance Studies AfroBorikua artistic researcher, somatic educator, writer, dancer and audio describer. Since 2014, she investigates experiences, poetics and narratives of mobility-migration-dislocation. Marielys got stranded in Lenapehoking in 2017 in the midst of Hurricane María and found a home in NYC. While in Lenapehoking, she has worked/ performed with Pramila Vasudevan, Antonio Ramos, iele paloumpis, Jill Sigman/ThinkDance, zavé martohardjono - as part of Territory: The Island Remembers, nominated for a 2022 Bessie’s Award-, Christopher Unpezverde Núñez, and Yanira Castro/ a canary torsi. She received a 2023 Bessie’s Award nomination for Outstanding Performance alongside Rafael Cañals and Christopher Unpezverde Núñez for their work in The Circle as an ensemble.

Marielys poetic audio description work has been part of projects like ‘deadbird’ film by devynn emory, ‘a fuzzy yellow spot’ and The Square by Christopher Unpezverde Núñez, and Sing by Ogemdi Ude. As 2021-2023 Artist-in-Residence at Movement Research, she has been excavating the presence of Latinx in the “experimental dance scene” in NYC, the body as a living archive, contemplative movement, pleasure, and her own ancestral indigenous wisdom.

Starting in Fall 2023, Marielys will continue her dance research as a Ph.D. candidate in Critical Dance Studies at the University of California-Riverside. Errática her first self-published artist book (2019) in collaboration with Taller Asiray/ Yarisa Colón Torres. www.marielysbm.com

Stephan Moore is a sound artist, designer, composer, improviser, programmer, engineer, teacher, and curator based in Chicago. His creative work manifests as electronic studio compositions, improvisational outbursts, sound installations, scores for collaborative performances, algorithmic compositions, interactive art, and sound designs for unusual circumstances. Much of his work has been realized in collaborative projects, most notably with sound artist Scott Smallwood in their duo Evidence and with choreographer Yanira Castro.
in the collective a canary torsi. He is the curator of sound art for the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts, organizing annual exhibitions since 2014. He is also the president of Isobel Audio LLC, which builds and sells his Hemisphere loudspeakers. He was the music coordinator and touring sound engineer of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company (2004-10), and has worked with Pauline Oliveros, Anthony McCall, and Animal Collective, among many others. In 2019, he co-founded the Chicago Laboratory for Electro-Acoustic Theater to promote and encourage the creation of multichannel audio works. He is a Distinguished Associate Professor of Instruction in the Sound Arts and Industries program at Northwestern University.

Elizabeth Lisi Ramirez was born “Elizabeth Ramirez”. She added “Lisi” to her professional name as it is the nickname given to her and used by her family. She was born in Miami, FL, and raised in Hialeah, FL. For those who aren’t familiar with South Florida, Hialeah is considered a part of the whole of Miami. In 2021, she moved back to Miami after living on Long Island, New York for about 5 years. However, she travels to Long Island frequently. She was raised by her mother and grandmother in a half-Deaf cultured and half-Hispanic cultured household. Well, it really was a mixture of cultures: Deaf, Hearing, American, and Cuban culture. She is an Only Child Of Deaf Adults (OCODA), which is where the Deaf culture influence comes from.

She is a native speaker of English and Spanish and a native signer of American Sign Language. She graduated from Miami Dade College in Miami, FL with her Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees in Foreign Language and ASL Interpretation, respectively. In 2016, she began her professional interpreter career. Then, she attended and graduated from Five Towns College in Dix Hills, NY with her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting. She loves creating, exploring and adventure.

Doris Reyes (b. Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic) hails from the world of luxury fashion and design. Her work incorporates diverse media to create dynamic and engaging aesthetic environments that manifest sensuous beauty and opulent, rarefied experiences. As a curator of art and performance within a high-end retail context, Doris has organized dance performances featuring artists such as Jodi Melnick and Andrea Miller, design exhibitions of the work of Yves Behar, Marcel Wanders and Arik Levy, as well as overseeing a multi-year ongoing exhibition with the Parsons School of Design photography program. As a costume designer, she has created for Irene Hultman, Jodi Melnick, Dennis O’Connor, and Kyle Bukhari. For I Came Here to Weep, Doris has drawn from her personal archives for Yanira to investigate through dress the dichotomies of solid and pattern, layering and peeling, and the visual potential of the afterlife of the performance.

Erica Ricketts (she/they) is an audio artist working in film, tv, podcasting and performance in roles such as foley artist, sfx editor, dialogue editor, sound designer, and re-recording mixer. Some of their recent credits include “Daughter of the Bride,” “Rounding,” “My Summer Vacation,” “Puppet Man,” Season Two of “Bottom Lines Top Dollars,” and “Last Audience: a performance podcast.” Erica enjoys making anything that has meaning and explores meaning but particularly loves working in audio only formats and making intimate experiences for headphones.

Gabo Tomasini, Percussionist. A native of Hatillo, Puerto Rico, Gabo Tomasini is a professional percussionist of Afro-Caribbean rhythms who has played throughout North America, The Caribbean, and Europe. He dedicated a large part of his performance career playing with the internationally acclaimed band, Bio Ritmo, having a major role in establishing the ensemble’s rhythmic foundation.

Gabo currently plays with several established bands in the NYC area including the Brooklyn based Latin band, Yotoco (Cuban Son, Rumba, Plena, and Cumbia). He is also heavily involved in musical projects such as Zemog, Williamsburg Salsa Orchestra, and his own Latin trio/quartet, The San Juanabees.

Yarisa Colón Torres is a Puerto Rican poet, educator, and handmade book creator, with a Bachelor’s Degree in Black & Puerto Rican Studies and Psychology from Hunter College, CUNY, and a Master’s Degree in Puerto Rican and Caribbean Literature from the Centro de Estudios Avanzados de Puerto Rico y el Caribe, where she is currently enrolled in their literature doctoral program. For over twenty years, she has been experimenting with
the creation of unique handmade books and hand-cut collages, and has nurtured collaborations with visual artists, performers, musicians, writers, and artisans on projects that revolve around the written word. In 2012, Yarisa was selected to participate at the Global Voices Bloggers Summit, held in Nairobi, Kenya. She also received the Cropper Foundation Writer’s Fellowship based in Trinidad & Tobago in 2010, and the BRIO Awards (Crafts, 2014) granted by the Bronx Council on the Arts. Yarisa is the recipient of the 2022 Letras Boricuas Fellowship granted by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Flamboyan Foundation’s Arts Fund.

José Troche is a sound artist and Puerto Rican historian currently living in NYC. He pursued a B.A. in Economics from the University of Puerto Rico and early in his career he worked in the financial cooperative industry. His passion for Puerto Rican culture and music has become his lifelong research interest. Troche obtained a Masters in Puerto Rican History from El Centro de Estudios Avanzados de Puerto Rico y el Caribe -Center of Advance Studies of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean- focusing on Puerto Rico’s music economy, especially from Puerto Ricans who lived in New York City. His thesis, Victoria Hernández: El contexto Histórico de la Migración Puertorriqueña y los Cambios en la Industria Musical a Principios del Siglo XX, investigated the contributions of pioneer musician and entrepreneur Victoria Hernández, who was the pillar of Rafael Hernández’ musical career. As a musician, his soundsscapes have been presented in Puerto Rico, New York, Greece and Cyprus via the collaboration with experimental movement artist and improviser, Marielys Burgos Meléndez.

Troop 6000TM is a Girl Scout program specially designed to serve girls in the New York City Shelter System. Each week, Troop 6000 meets in shelters across the city. Troop meetings are facilitated by trained troop leaders – women also living in the shelter system paired with community-based volunteers – and give girls the opportunity to make new friends, earn badges, and see themselves as leaders in their communities.
LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that The Chocolate Factory Theater is situated on the unceded ancestral lands of the Munsee Lenape and Canarsie people. We pay respect to the past, present and future stewards of these lands. The Chocolate Factory Theater respectfully offers this acknowledgment as a small step on a path towards recognition and repair, with the understanding that acknowledgment is not a substitute for action.
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 artists and the public presentation of their work, 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.
