



NATIONAL PERFORMANCE NETWORK
2019 CREATION & DEVELOPMENT FUND AWARDS

Through The Creation & Development Fund, the National Performance Network (NPN) awards \$300,000 – and leverages an additional \$1.6 million – in support of the creation of 20 new artistic works.

Creation & Development Funds are awarded to artists across disciplines, geographies and cultures that reflect NPN's commitment to advancing racial and cultural justice through the arts. Sixteen of the 20 artist companies are first-time recipients, and they hail from 16 cities across the country from Tucson, AZ to Bighill, KY.

The Fund supports the creation, development and mobility of new artistic work resulting in live experiential exchange between artists and community. It provides a framework for relationships to develop over time among diverse artists, arts organizations, and communities.

Through the investment of commissioning funds from cultural organizations and NPN direct subsidies, each project is eligible for multilevel support. Forty-seven organizations from Homer, AK to Wilmington, NC are participating as co-commissioners, which will result in more than 60 paid artist engagements over the next three years.

Learn more about the Creation & Development Fund [here](#).

The Creation and Development Fund is made possible with support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency) and Co-commissioners.

2019 Creation & Development Fund Recipients

[Jaamil Olawale Kosoko](#) – Brooklyn, NY - *Chameleon*

Co-commissioners: [Wexner Center for the Arts](#) Columbus, OH; [PICA](#) Portland, OR; [Tanz im August](#) Berlin, Germany

Chameleon is a multi-tiered, multimedia performance project that examines the shapeshifting, illegible, and fugitive realities of Black diasporan people in the United States. The work moves between installation and performance, creating instabilities and slippages between the body and the environment, the breath and musical score, and inviting the audience to encounter the many ways meaning might be projected or demanded from abstract and narrative material.

[Borderlands Theater](#) – Tucson, AZ - *Antigone at the Border*

Co-commissioners: [International Sonoran Desert Alliance](#) Ajo, AZ; [Su Teatro](#) Denver, CO; [Milagro](#) Portland, OR

Antigone at the Border is a collaboration between theatre artists and DACA communities in Arizona, Oregon, and Denver exploring the immigration crisis through the framework of Sophocles' *Antigone*. Artistic Directors, Marc David Piñate (Borderlands Theater) and Ricardo Araiza (Teatro Bravo) combine ensembles to create a contemporary adaptation based on ethnographic interviews with DACA recipients and Border Patrol agents.

[Will Rawls](#) – Brooklyn, NY - *[siccer]*

Commissioners: [PICA](#) Portland, OR; [MCA Chicago](#) Chicago, IL; [The Momentary](#) Benton, AR; [The Kitchen](#) New York, NY

Building from the editorial term for a misspelled word, "[sic]", *[siccer]* is a dance and film project challenging widespread citation and misrepresentation of black bodies. Exploring the restlessness of gesture and language as strategies of black performance, *[siccer]* cultivates elusiveness and abstraction to resist the "racial gristmill" of mass media. Created by lead artist choreographer Will Rawls, with dramaturg Kemi Adeyemi, and performers Holland Andrews, keyon gaskin, jess pretty and Jeremy Toussaint-Baptiste

[Ephrat Asherie Dance](#) – New York, NY – *Underscored*

Commissioners: [ArtPower at UC San Diego](#) San Diego, CA; [The Momentary](#) Benton, AR; [The Yard](#) Chilmark, MA; [Works and Process, Inc.](#), [Guggenheim](#) New York, NY

UnderScored (working title) is a dance theater piece created and performed by members of Ephrat Asherie Dance, with special guest artists from New York City's underground dance community. Inspired by the inter-generational memories of club dancers, the work explores the ever-changing physical landscape of New York City's underground dance scene.

[Art2Action](#) – Tampa, FL – *DRONE*

Commissioners: [Art2Action](#) Tampa, FL; [Arab American National Museum](#) Dearborn, MI; [CAC New Orleans](#) New Orleans, LA

DRONE is a multimedia, ensemble theatre project integrating live music, drone technology, and artistic containers for public dialogue. It explores the drone as a metaphor for how we become desensitized to daily violence, both domestic and global, and the effects of remote-control warfare on the human soul. The finished work will include a touring production, an interactive online platform, and a process model for community dialogue and engagement.

[Emily Johnson/Catalyst Dance](#) – Minneapolis, MN – *Being Future Being*

Commissioners: [Bunnell Arts](#) Homer, AK; [Peak Performances](#) Montclair, NJ; [New York Live Arts](#) New York, NY; [PICA](#) Portland, OR

Being Future Being examines the way that the stories we tell ourselves about how we came to be, set the potentials for who we will become. This new work seeks to (re)build new visions of the force that brought this world into being, bringing into focus new futures with the potential to reshape the way we relate to ourselves, and to the human and more- than-human cohabitants of our worlds. Emily Johnson and six to eight dancers serve as a chorus of beings from another realm.

[Gesel Mason](#) – Austin, TX - *Yes, And*

Commissioners: [Dance Place](#) Washington, DC; [Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning](#) Queens, NY; [Fusebox Festival](#) Austin, TX; [Women & Their Work](#) Austin, TX

Yes, And (working title) re-centers Black womanhood and femininity as the norm and operating force in the creative process. From this recalibrated place, Mason explores the perspectives, approaches, and ideas that emerge within a community of self-identified Black female women. Seemly contradictory, the work is both: YES, an unapologetic celebration of Black sisterhood, AND, a complex investigation of issues and experiences (motherhood, trauma, sexuality, joy, mental health, etc.) from a Black female center.

[Clear Creek Creative](#) – Bighill, KY - *Ezell: Ballad of a Land Man*

Commissioners: [Carpetbag Theatre](#) Knoxville, TN; [Mondo Bizarro](#) New Orleans, LA

Ezell: Ballad of a Land Man is an environmental, cultural and spiritual parable devised and performed from the perspective of a rural white working class man in Appalachia reckoning with climate change, extractive resource industry, intergenerational trauma, belonging, ancestry and generations yet to come. The project involves a site-specific performance, an interactive visual-sound installation, a locally sourced community meal and an engagement session with audiences to integrate the theatrical experience and explore themes of domination and resilience.

[theatre dybbuk](#) - Los Angeles, CA - *Protocols*

Commissioners: [LACE](#) Los Angeles, CA; [The Hive at Leichtag Commons](#) Encinitas, CA

Protocols is being created in response to the nefarious document, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the fabricated conspiracy-theory used to fuel and justify anti-Semitism 100 years ago. Using this ugly history as a

springboard, theatre dybbuk's will explore contemporary issues such as racism, propaganda, and freedom of speech using humor, levity, empathy, and virtuosity to engage audiences with thought-provoking content.

[Black Poetry Theatre](#) – Durham, NC - *Death of Cochise*

Commissioners: [Hayti Heritage Center](#) Durham, NC; [CFCC Wilson Center](#) Wilmington, NC

It is summer. Two emcee poets leave home to meet and prepare for their show that night. As they navigate through the city, they witness rising tensions and frustrations at every corner. Families are struggling, the youth are anxious and blackness is being manipulated. When news of a life lost hits, the two artists know they have to do something before the community explodes. Can they use their show as a way to provide healing and direction to those who feel pushed to the edge and overlooked?

[Tracy Murrell](#) – Atlanta, GA - *Mache Nan Soulye ou (Walking in Your Shoes) ... Exploring Haitian Migration*

Commissioners: [Hammonds House Museum](#) Atlanta, GA; [Haiti Cultural Exchange](#) Brooklyn, NY

Mache Nan Soulye ou (Walking in Your Shoes) ... Exploring Haitian Migration explores contemporary Haitian migration and produces new artistic work offering a counter-narrative to the immigration story and bringing to light the universality of migration as a shared experience.

[Open Dance Project](#) – Houston, TX - *All the Devils are Here: A Tempest in the Galapagos*

Commissioners: [DiverseWorks](#) Houston, TX; [Studio 5](#) Evanston, IL

Shakespeare's *The Tempest* collides with the true story of an unsolved murder in the Galapagos in 1929. This immersive dance theater performance follows the failed attempts of a nihilist couple, a conservative family, and a baroness and her two gay lovers to escape the world of man on the uninhabited island of Floreana. Their conflicting visions of Paradise, sexual and moral "rightness," colonial instincts, and social and psychological demons lead to disaster and provide a rich canvas for a poignant examination of basic human rights, social justice, and power structures.

[Tim Smith Stewart & Jeffrey Azevedo](#) – Seattle, WA - *SALVAGE RITUALS*

Commissioners: [On The Boards](#) Seattle, WA; [California Polytechnic University of San Luis Obispo](#) San Luis Obispo, CA

SALVAGE RITUALS is an interdisciplinary performance that physically and technologically manifests the ingenuity and resilience of marginalized communities; our ability to thrive, to salvage technologies, and to remake mythologies to sustain our light through intersecting societal and governmental hostilities.

[A Host of People](#) – Detroit, MI - *The Death of Cleopatra*

Commissioners: [Arab American National Museum](#) Dearborn, MI; [Pablo Center at the Confluence](#) Eau Claire, WI

A Host of People will collaborate with Lebanese-American poet Kamelya Youssef on a translated adaptation of famed Egyptian poet/playwright Ahmed Shawqi's 1927 play *The Death of Cleopatra*. Youssef will translate Shawqi's play from Egyptian to English and the adaptation will grow in deep collaboration with the theatre artists of A Host of People, led by AHOP Co-Director Sherrine Azab. This new *The Death of Cleopatra* is being created as a companion piece to A Host of People's latest revised work *Cleopatra Boy*.

[Jose Torres-Tama](#) - New Orleans, LA - *United States of Amnesia: from Fugitive Slave Act to Zero Tolerance*

Commissioners: [Gala Hispanic Theatre](#) Washington, DC; [Ashe Cultural Arts Center](#) New Orleans, LA

Performing the roles of shamanistic time-travelers chronicling the hidden history of a nation that seduces its citizenry to embrace forgetting, an ensemble of Black and Brown artists revisit laws such as the Fugitive Slave Act (1793) to Indian Removal Act (1830) to Zero Tolerance Policy (2018). Exposing a U.S. narrative of official legislation strategically written to dispossess people of color from their 'inalienable' constitutional rights and their liberated bodies in the United States of Amnesia, which was founded on white supremacist beliefs.

[Kate Speer & Kayla Hamilton](#) – Denver, CO – *Place Holder*

Commissioners: [RedLine](#) Denver, CO; [Gibney Dance](#) New York City, NY; [Building Bridges Art Exchange](#) Santa Monica, CA

Place Holder (working title) is a performance work collaboratively made by Kayla Hamilton and Kate Speer that exposes how surveillance actualizes and strips identities. Committed to crafting experiential performance work, *Place Holder* will be a multimedia, multi-sensory event rooted in physicality, voice, and the deeply personal.

[Leyla McCalla](#) - New Orleans, LA - *Breaking the Thermometer to Hide the Fever*

Commissioners: [CAC New Orleans](#) New Orleans, LA; [Duke Performances](#) Durham, NC; [MDC Live Arts](#) Miami, FL

Breaking the Thermometer to Hide the Fever is a multidisciplinary performance set to music by Haitian-American singer-songwriter Leyla McCalla. The project explores the legacy of Radio Haiti-Inter, Haiti's first privately owned Creole-speaking radio station, and the assassination of its owner, Jean Dominique, in 2000. Directed by Kiyoko McCrae, this work combines storytelling, dance, video projection, and audio recordings from the Radio Haiti Archive housed at Duke University.

[Mary Prescott](#) – Minneapolis, MN - *Tida*

Commissioners: [Living Arts](#) Tulsa, OK; [Public Functionary](#) Minneapolis, MN

Tida is an evening-length performance about intergenerational cultural identity through a Thai-American woman's maternal lineage. Integrating music, movement and word, Prescott investigates her mother's undocumented Thai ancestry and her experience as a Southeast Asian immigrant raising biracial and bicultural children in America, and the resulting impact. *Tida* shares a significant but unheard perspective that gives voice to a social, racial, cultural, generational and artistic minority.

[Christopher K. Morgan](#)- Washington, DC - *Native Intelligence / Innate Intelligence*

Commissioners: [Maui Arts & Cultural Center](#) Kahului, HI; [Dance Place](#) Washington, DC; [PA'I Foundation](#) Honolulu, HI

Native Intelligence/Innate Intelligence is a two-part dance performance that incorporates modern dance, hula, Hawaiian chant, and live music. In solo work, *Native Intelligence*, Morgan investigates how he maintains his root cultural identity when separated from ancestral land. *Innate Intelligence* is an ensemble work that uses movement, scenery and music to examine the human instinct to connect to one another. The two parts create a comprehensive picture of the multiplicity of identities Morgan navigates, and invites audiences to reflect on their perception of Native people, their own identity, and instinct.

[Ananya Dance Theatre](#) – Minneapolis, MN - *Agun*

Commissioners: [Skirball Cultural Center](#) Los Angeles, CA; [Bates Dance Festival](#) Lewiston, ME

Agun deepens Chatterjea's inquiry into footwork: as the beginning of home and belonging, as an aesthetic declaration of place and personhood in dance, and abstracted as alienation. The exploration conjures images of many feet walking away from and towards home, across time and space, crossing borders to safety and to violences, and the moments of contact between feet and ground – so evocative and pleasurable in dance – that mark complex rhythm cycles, where footwork is vibration.