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GRISHA COLEMAN

echo::system— treadmill dreamtime, running in place

APRIL
15–17 2016
YBCA FORUM

YBCA.ORG
#ECHOSYSTEM

YERBA BUENA
CENTER FOR
THE ARTS



WELCOME TO YERBA BUENA CENTER FOR THE ARTS



Our organization was founded in 1993 as a citizen institution that would be home to the diverse local arts community while serving to connect the Bay Area to the world. YBCA's mission is to generate culture that moves people. We believe that culture—a collection of art, traditions, values, human experiences, and stories—is what enables us to act with imagination and creativity, to act socially, politically, and with conviction. Culture instigates change in the world.

We believe that more and different kinds of people need to be defining culture today and that more people need to have access to cultural experiences that are relevant to their lives and their communities. We need new definitions and new experiences that bring people together regardless of their differences in order to make the inclusive and equitable culture we need today. We believe that the arts should be on the front line of change and that cultural institutions exist to spur and support big societal movements. Through powerful art experiences, thoughtful and provocative content, and deep opportunities for participation, we are committed to kindling inclusive culture that cultivates empathy, awakens personal and societal transformation, and reaches for a world fueled by inspiration. The need has never been stronger than now, and there is no better place than YBCA to answer the call. We are so glad that you are here. We are grateful for your cultural participation, and we hope you will come back and enjoy all that YBCA has to offer.

Warmly,

DEBORAH CULLINAN
CEO of YERBA BUENA
CENTER FOR THE ARTS

YBCA Presents

GRISHA COLEMAN

echo::system — treadmill dreamtime, running in place

GRISHA COLEMAN

CREATOR, CHOREOGRAPHER, COMPOSER

Featuring

PERFORMERS

Monstah Black
Anitra Brooks
Sherwood Chen
Miko Doi-Smith
Jonathan Gonzalez
Marguerite Hemmings
Ron Ragin
Anthony Shevlin

DESIGN TEAM

Emily Auble projection design
Vita Berezina-Blackburn 3D animation design
Daragh Byrne sensor design
Gia Cacalano choreographic assistant
Onome Ekeh writer
Brandon Giordano / Collin Weber costume design
Walter Kitundu sound composition
Steven Klems projection design
Tony Mulanix lighting design
Tony Obr sound design
John Oduro spatial design
David Tinapple interface design

RESEARCH TEAM

Shaun Ylatupa-McWhorter data collection
Arina Melkozernova field video
Katherine Profeta guest dramaturgy
Kruthika Tanikella software development

PRODUCTION TEAM

Jack Beuttler production manager
Megan Kendzior project manager
Lai Yi Ohlsen project intern

SPECIAL THANKS

This work would not be here without the labor, attention, and love of many collaborators over many years of research and development. Special thanks to collaborators past, present, and future for contributing, passing on, and passing through this echo world. And thanks to Harper for the project title.

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The School of Arts, Media, and Engineering at Arizona State University
Creative Capital
The Surdna Foundation
The National Endowment for the Arts
The MAP Fund
The Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography, Florida State University

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The School of Arts, Media, and Engineering at Arizona State University
www.artsmediaengineering.asu.edu

A Project of Creative Capital
www.creative-capital.org

The development of echo::system - treadmill dreamtime running in place was made possible in part, by the Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography at Florida State University.

www.mancc.org.



Creative Capital



A NOTE FROM THE CURATOR

MARC BAMUTHI JOSEPH
CHIEF OF PROGRAM AND PEDAGOGY



We, the people,
collectively alone
inside the solitude
of our palm-sized
silver screens... See
us daydreaming face-
down, eyes locked onto
real-time reports of
the recent past... See
us among the missed
opportunity of purple
horizons, chance
encounters with soul
mates, we the people,
entrenched in the
wallet-length currency
of our filtered focus...

I have two children, and both of them were born after the invention of the iPod. My son recently let me in on the secret of his eighth-grade heartbreak by playing me a song he'd just recorded in Garage Band. The idea that art would be a point of intersection and emotional access between my kid and me warms me from within. I also wonder if a twenty-first-century emotion is ever completely felt until it takes the form of a compressed data file. Can the teenage heart still break without the aid of an app?

In her laboratory/classroom/studio at Arizona State University, Grisha Coleman is exploring a somewhat related question. She and her team have reconfigured multiple treadmills to allow her company of performers to “play” them as instruments. This technology, functional and metaphorical, references American gym culture as well as the practice of the Australian aboriginal walkabout. Caught in a paradox of walking without traveling, the performers enact an interface with the land, introducing the notion of a contemporary ritual to activate memory and a greater understanding of the land. They are in the early stages of creating a choreographed multimedia performance, which follows a fictional tribe seeking knowledge of the evolutionary future of their species. Coleman’s work asks us to hold on to a vision of our future selves somehow still calibrated to wonder, but unable to imagine the sun rising on the horizon without first checking in through the filter of a screen.

In this moment, there is *echo::system*, a work of science and compassion that provides its audience with a dystopic and creatively instructive moment in theater. The piece disrupts our common practices of perceiving. Technology still plays the role of surrogate here, but the performing bodies in space consume and repurpose that technology. *echo::system* immerses us in a human and emotional reach that outstrips its own landscape of machinery, taking us out to a sense-sharp horizon where anything is still possible, as long as we’re able to hold our gaze upward.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

treadmill dreamtime, running in place

treadmill dreamtime, running in place pairs installation with performance, exploring the crossing of art, performance, nature, and science. Transforming abstract information about the environment into a full sensory experience, the work inspires a significant perspective shift in how we interact with our environment. The participatory installation showcases surreal ecologies, or “echo” systems, that provide pseudo-experiences of a natural habitat. Performance places the highly visceral expression of contemporary dance into a media-rich space to develop a movement-based evocation of various natural habitats. The choreography depicts an ambulatory narrative that explores the transitional space between urban and “country” environments by following a tribe as they embark on a journey into a mythic desert. Video, sound, light, animation, and art installation work together to replace the boundaries of the theater walls and immerse the audience in a world in which they are free to interact and reflect upon their simulated surroundings.

This work is the second installment of *echo::system*, a series that offers a platform for creative, arts-driven research. Fusing art installation, choreographed multimedia performance, and public engagement, the vision of this five part series is to mediate connections between art and science.

**THE GEOGRAPHICAL PILGRIMAGE
IS THE SYMBOLIC ACTING OUT OF
AN INNER JOURNEY. THE INNER
JOURNEY IS THE INTERPOLATION
OF THE MEANINGS AND SIGNS OF
THE OUTER PILGRIMAGE. ONE CAN
HAVE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER.
IT IS BETTER TO HAVE BOTH.**

THOMAS MERTON
MYSTICS AND ZEN MASTERS



Photo by Tim Frieze

ARTIST PROFILES

GRISHA COLEMAN

(creator, choreographer, composer)

A composer and choreographer in performance and experiential media, Grisha Coleman explores relationships among our physiological, technological, and ecological systems. She is an associate professor of movement, computation, and digital media at the School of Arts, Media, and Engineering and the School of Dance at Arizona State University. Her current work *echo::system* is a springboard for reimagining the environment, environmental change, and environmental justice. Part of this multiplatform work has been presented at the International Society of Electronic Arts in Dubai, ArtXScience, the Pasadena City of Art and Science Festival, and the 2011 New Media Art Triennial at the National Art Museum in Beijing. The work has been collaboratively developed with an interdisciplinary team of artists, researchers, scientists, architects, animators, and performers. Coleman's work has been presented and supported nationally and internationally by numerous grants and awards, including a National Endowment for the Arts "Arts in Media" Award (2012); a Surdna Foundation "Thriving Cultures" Award (2014); the Mohr Visiting Artist at Stanford University (2014); artist fellowships at the MacDowell Colony and the Rockefeller Center in Bellagio, Italy (2015); and a commission from the Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography.



Grisha Coleman — Photo by Maurice Gunning

MONSTAH BLACK

(performer) Known for his multidimensional funk-drenched audio, dance, and visual designs, Monstah Black blurs the lines of genre and gender. His aesthetic reflects pop culture of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. He has performed in Miami, Brazil, Scotland, Ireland, and Germany, and his work has appeared at Art Basel, Switzerland; the New Media Performance Festival, Moscow; and the New Museum, New York. He is currently an artist in residence at Dixon Place in New York, where he is being commissioned to build a new work titled *HYPERBOLIC! (the last spectacle)*.

ANITRA BROOKS

(performer) A singer-songwriter, musician, actor, and educator, Anitra Brooks graduated from Brown University and the Integrative Sound and Music Institute. She has toured internationally with the Drama Desk Award-nominated artists Big Nazo and Hotmouth, and with the dance performance and installation *echo::system*. In her fifteen years in New York she has performed at the Public Theater, Belasco Theater, La MaMa, HERE Arts Center, the Kraine Theater, the Ohio Theatre, and National Black Theatre. She has also been featured in numerous television and radio commercials, TV shows, and soap operas. As a recording artist she has released two albums of original music, *Flood* (2008) and *I Walk in Your Light* (2015).

SHERWOOD CHEN

(performer) Sherwood Chen has worked as a performer for the artists Anna Halprin, Xavier Le Roy, Min Tanaka, l'agence touriste, Sara Shelton Mann, inkBoat, and Ko Murobushi. He cofounded the dance collaborative Headmistress with Amara Tabor-Smith, and leads workshops internationally in the studio and in natural and urban landscapes. For more than twenty years he has contributed to Body Weather research initiated by Min Tanaka and his associates.

MIKO DOI-SMITH

(performer) Originally from Southern California, Miko Doi-Smith began dancing

while attending the University of Hawaii. She has performed and worked with various choreographers and companies, including Ballet-X, Charles O. Anderson / Dance Theatre X, Kate Watson-Wallace / Anonymous Bodies, Liz Lerman, Philadanco, and Ralph Lemon. In addition to her life as a performer, she has been a registered nurse for more than twenty years and teaches yoga in Philadelphia.

JONATHAN GONZALEZ

(performer) Jonathan Gonzalez is a New York-based artist working in performance and sound design. He has had the pleasure of working in varied disciplines with Patricia Hoffbauer, Will Rawls, Jaamil Olawale Kosoko, Ni'Ja Whitson, and Urban Bush Women. He is currently a New York Live Arts Fresh Tracks artist (2015–16) and a BAX/Dancing While Black Fellow (2015–16).

MARGUERITE HEMMINGS

(performer) As a dancer, Marguerite Hemmings specializes in street styles, social dances, hip-hop, and dancehall,

and has been trained in modern and West African dance. Born in Jamaica and raised in New Jersey, Hemmings has lived in New York for the past ten years. She graduated from Columbia University with a degree in education and urban studies. "She currently teaches experimental dancehall" is the phrase she has coined to capture her love of dancehall/reggae culture and music as well as her love of movement, exploration, improvisation, and challenging the norms of how we express ourselves.

RON RAGIN

(performer) The writer, singer, and composer Ron Ragin creates interdisciplinary performance work that integrates sound, text, and movement. His creative interests include music of the African diaspora, embodied ancestral memory, improvisational creative processes, liberation aesthetics, and the development and maintenance of spiritual technologies. Ragin grew up in Perry, Georgia, and received his musical training at the Saint James Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. He performed with



Photo by Chris Cameron



Photo by Tim Frieze

and was musical director for Stanford Talisman, and he has studied writing and performance with Joy Harjo and Brenda Wong Aoki. Ragin is a soloist on Christopher Tin's Grammy-winning album *Calling All Dawns* (2009).

ANTHONY SHEVLIN

(performer) The Brooklyn-based artist Anthony Shevlin hails from the Sonoran Desert, where he studied dance at Arizona State University under the direction of Simon Dove. While there he had the privilege of working with such remarkable artists as Mary Fitzgerald, Thomas Lehmen, Ashleigh Leite, and Eileen Standley. Shevlin creates revolutionary and empowering work that inspires honest inquiry and dialogue. He challenges and believes in his physicality, and deeply values the process of creation as research that contributes to broader discourses. He believes in dancing with human-ness, faultless and free. When not making his own work or involved in other collaborations, he dances for Gaspard & Dancers and Dishman + Co. in New York.

EMILY AUBLE

(projection design) As an artist and designer, Emily Auble explores diverse models of collaboration. She builds bridges between the crafts of film, theater, and fine art to translate ideas into new and unique forms. She received her MFA from the California Institute for the Arts in 2011 and continues to live and work in Los Angeles. Her credits include associate video designer, Rocky Das Musical (2012); Propmaster, Ryan Trecartin—Venice Biennale films (2013); co-creator, Visions in HD, Southern Machine Exposure Project (2013); set decorator, Speech & Debate (2015); and production designer, Rom.Com (2015).

VITA BEREZINA-BLACKBURN

(3D animation design) Vita Berezina-Blackburn is a visual artist working with motion capture and 3D computer animation for film, performance, and installation. Her works have been featured at the MIT Museum, Dance Theater Workshop, PBS, and animation festivals in the United States, Brazil, Poland, Italy, the Czech

Republic, Russia, and the Netherlands. Berezina-Blackburn's collaborative works with choreographers such as Bebe Miller have been featured at Danspace Project, the Kitchen, Wexner Center for the Arts, PICA, REDCAT, and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. She is currently a staff member at Ohio State University's Advanced Computing Center for the Arts and Design.

DARAGH BYRNE

(sensor design) Daragh Byrne is a research scientist with the Visible Process Lab at the School of Design at Carnegie Mellon University, where he explores the design of experiential media systems through process-oriented methods. At Carnegie Mellon and in his previous role as an assistant research professor at Arizona State University's School of Arts, Media, and Engineering, he manages the NSF-funded XSEAD project, which supports interdisciplinary collaboration by bridging the arts, design, science, and engineering. He earned his PhD and BS at Dublin City University, and holds a MRes degree from Lancaster University. He has published more than forty scientific papers and is deeply engaged with the lifelogging community. His doctoral work involved the establishment of long-term multimodal lifelog collections to explore the creation of personal digital stories.

GIA CACALANO

(choreographic assistant) Gia Cacalano is an educator, choreographer, improviser, and performer, currently based in Pittsburgh and originally from New York. In her thirty-five-year career she has worked with countless acclaimed and renowned companies, both nationally and internationally. She has received numerous accolades, honors, and nominations for her independent solo and ensemble work. Cacalano continues to serve on panels and as an adjudicator.

ONOME EKEH

(writer) Raised on both sides of the Atlantic, Onome Ekeh started as a painter, then gravitated toward design and cinema. Somewhere in the collusion, she went digital. Ekeh has produced works for film, theater, and radio. She

is the recipient of several fellowships, including from the Jerome Foundation, Künstlerhaus Büchsenhausen, and the Greenwall Foundation. She has written for literary, film, and technology journals in the United States and Europe. As a dramaturge she has worked on projects such as David Thomson's *Venus Knot* and Okwui Okpokwasili's *Bronx Gothic*, and has collaborated with the artists Kate McGarry, Carl Hancock Rux, Knut Asdam, Clarinda Mac Low, and Paul Boockock. She is the creative director of Featurezoo, a New York-based digital boutique agency.

BRANDON GIORDANO / COLLIN WEBER

(costume design) Brandon Giordano and Collin Weber of James Veloria Studio in Brooklyn sell, rent, and create custom pieces for personal use, theater, film, and photo shoots. James Veloria Studio was created by Weber and Giordano as an outlet for their expanding personal archive and creative design ideas. *echo::system's* wardrobe design was inspired by many things, including early Margiela, desert beetles, and Nicolas Roeg's 1976 film *The Man Who Fell to Earth*. To peruse and shop their archive, visit jamesveloria.com.

WALTER KITUNDU

(music composition) A sound artist, instrument builder, photographer, performer, and installation artist, Walter Kitundu explores print, web, and environmental design. He is the inventor of a family of phono harps, multi-stringed instruments made from record players that rely on the turntable's sensitivity to vibration. As an artist he has hand-built record players powered by the wind and rain, fire and earthquakes, birds, light, and ocean waves. He received a MacArthur Fellowship for his work in this field.

STEVEN KLEMS

(projection design) A video designer based in Los Angeles, Steven Klems has had his work appear domestically and internationally in the worlds of film, theater, television, fine art, and theme parks. Originally from Berkeley, he holds a master's degree in design from the California Institute for the Arts. His interests range from drama to music to

computer interactivity. He originally got into video design because he was trying to “make computers dance.” His work on *echo::system* is in many respects an extension of that same line of inquiry.

TONY MULANIX

(lighting design) Tony Mulanix is a multidisciplinary artist and lighting designer based in New York. He brings his sculptural, immersive lighting environments to the fields of theater, dance, music, and multimedia installation. He has designed for national and international venues, ensembles, and institutes, including P.S. 122, St. Ann’s Warehouse, La MaMa, Jean Cocteau Repertory, *evidence Room*, REDCAT, the Actors’ Gang, Boston Lyric Opera, Compagnia de’ Colombari, the Guggenheim, Eyebeam, University Settlement, and Carnegie Mellon. Mulanix received his MFA from California Institute of the Arts.

TONY OBR

(sound design) Tony Obr is a composer, sound artist, and media designer whose work attempts to redefine the boundaries of musicality and the place of sound in music. He frequently works in the development of interactive systems for dance performance and art installation along with his solo musical work as *tsone*. His work has been heard in the Scottsdale Center for Performing Arts, the Phoenix Art Museum, Haas Gallery of Art, and on a variety of international record labels, including Home Normal, Tessellate Recordings, Stereoscenic, Tsuku-Boshi, Audiotalaia, Dark Era Tapes, and Pocket Fields.

JOHN ODUROE

(spatial design) John Oduroe received his bachelor of architecture degree from Carnegie Mellon’s School of Architecture in 2003, and completed a Fulbright scholarship in 2006 at University College London, Department of Geography. His design work is fueled by an interest in the relationships between space, architecture, and identity; more specifically he is fascinated by the idea that spatial expressions of cultural, ethnic, and racial difference can serve as sources of

inspiration for generations of architectural forms and experiences. In addition to architecture, Oduroe explores these concepts as an artist, published writer, and installation designer.

DAVID TINAPPLE

(interface design) Part artist, designer, and engineer, David Tinapple is an assistant professor at Arizona State University’s School of Arts, Media, and Engineering. Tinapple’s work is about discovering and creating new interactive experiences that support human performance in complex settings. In his creative practice, he builds and exhibits interactive sculptures, responsive media environments, and audiovisual experiences. In his design practice, he creates and deploys new tools to support attention, perception, and collaboration. Tinapple takes the perspective that art and engineering are mutually reinforcing and complementary modes of investigation that together allow for the creation of works that act as hypotheses about the impacts of technology change.

JACK BEUTTLER

(production manager) Jack Beuttler is a Bay Area native who studied philosophy at UC Berkeley. His design portfolio includes work for Dance Theatre of San Francisco, ODC School, Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, Post:Ballet, LEVYdance, Lamplighters Music Theatre, and LINES BFA and Training Programs. He is a recipient, with GERALDCASELDANCE, of the 2015 Lighting Artists in Dance Grant. He has also worked for ODC Dance and Theater, the Oakland Ballet, Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, Hope Mohr Dance, Composers Inc., Fluid Hug-Hug, REDCAT, and others as a production manager, stage manager, and technical director. Currently Beuttler is the production manager for the Sun Valley Summer Symphony in Idaho and a freelance designer in San Francisco, where he continues to be a Giants fan from before they were good.

MEGAN KENDZIOR

(project manager) A New York-based dance maker and arts advocate, Megan Kendzior is the development manager

for Movement Research and works as an administrative and project consultant for Grisha Coleman, iLAND (interdisciplinary Laboratory for Art, Nature & and Dance), and Donna Uchizono, among others. Her choreographic work offers buoyant explorative scores that allow imagination to blend with environmental influence, abstract narrative, and historical inquiry. Her work has been presented by Danspace Project and New York Live Arts (Fresh Tracks), among other venues in New York, Florida, North Carolina, Illinois, Virginia, Montana, Washington, DC, and Israel.

LAI YI OHLSEN

(project intern) Lai Yi Ohlsen is a full stack developer and urban/modern dancer currently working in engineering management and arts administration. She will graduate in May 2016 with a BS. in computer science and a minor in art history from Barrett, the Honors College at Arizona State University. She is working on a thesis that explores the intersection of choice making within improvisational movement and algorithmic design.



Photo by Tim Frieze

**ABORIGINALS COULD NOT BELIEVE THE COUNTRY EXISTED BEFORE THEY
COULD SEE IT AND SING IT— JUST AS, IN THE DREAMTIME, THE COUNTRY
HAD NOT EXISTED UNTIL THE ANCESTORS SANG IT.**

BRUCE CHATWIN
THE SONGLINES



**OUR TECHNOLOGY FORCES US TO
LIVE MYTHICALLY.**

MARSHALL MCLUHAN
THEORETICAL ELABORATIONS, VOL. 2

Photo by Tim Frieze

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Chinaka Hodge, *Associate Director of Program & Pedagogy*
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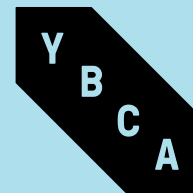
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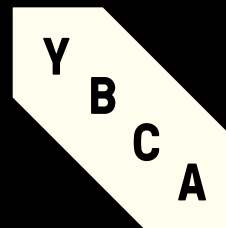
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ENSEMBLE

APRIL 30 8PM
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& GRAND LOBBY

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