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## **OZ Arts Nashville Announces Slate of Innovative Virtual Fall 2020 Programming, Including Livestream Performances from Acclaimed Local and National Artists**

Nashville, TN – October 20, 2020 – [OZ Arts Nashville](#) today announced its virtual slate of fall 2020 programming, which features leading artists across disciplines and underscores OZ’s commitment to bringing innovative contemporary art experiences to the region during the current environment. The start of the 2020-2021 season features a variety of Nashville-based and national artists in livestream performances, ranging from provocative writers and performers who confront urgent topics such as civil rights issues, to imaginative holiday-themed events that stretch the limits of theatrical and online forms.

“Although we’re eagerly looking forward to hosting live performances again in 2021, we know that these virtual fall events will resonate deeply with the expanded audiences across our community and country that can now experience them,” said Mark Murphy, OZ’s Executive and Artistic Director. “We remain committed to reimagining our programming so that we can continue to deliver innovative arts experiences at a time they are needed most.”

The fall virtual programming slate kicks off on October 29th with a dynamic evening of conversation and performance from acclaimed actor and writer **Roger Guenveur Smith** and local luminary **Caroline Randall Williams**. The two prestigious writers and performers will delve into a timely examination of civil rights and the ways the past informs the present, and the conversation will be live-streamed free of charge. In November, a variety of local artists will create short-form works performed in the OZ Arts creative warehouse in an event entitled *Fast/Forward*, hosted by Nashville favorite **Ciona Rouse**. A duo of wildly different holiday experiences from artists who have previously visited OZ Arts round out the fall programming in December: MacArthur “Genius” Fellow **Taylor Mac** premieres his queer yuletide survival guide *Holiday Sauce... Pandemic!* on December 12th and Chicago-based **Manual Cinema**’s inventive, family-friendly interpretation of Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol* will be live-streamed for two performances on December 19th.

Full details for fall programming are as follows:

### **A Conversation with Roger Guenveur Smith & Caroline Randall Williams**

**Thursday, October 29, 2020 | 7pm**

This dynamic, free of charge evening features two acclaimed writers and performers who are influencing the national conversation about civil rights through powerful work that confronts the issues through both personal and historical lenses. Incisive Nashville poet and author Caroline Randall Williams is an influential activist/scholar/performer whose recent *New York Times* essay, "My Body Is a Confederate Monument," has become an important touchstone in the heated 2020 conversations about race relations and history. Award-winning writer and performer Roger Guenveur Smith is a frequent collaborator with filmmaker Spike Lee, who directed film versions of Smith's acclaimed solo performances, which are often based on historic characters in the history of civil rights, including *A Huey P. Newton Story*, current Netflix offering *Rodney King*, and the upcoming *Frederick Douglass Now*. Both artists will read excerpts from their work and engage in an insightful discussion about the ways the past is informing our present moment.

### **Fast/Forward: Nashville Artists Envision Our Future**

**Thursday, November 19, 2020 | 7pm**

In this lively evening of performances featuring artists from various disciplines, Nashville-based dancers, poets, musicians, theatre-makers and more reflect on the revelations, revolutions, and resiliency of the day. The evening features short-form works from 8 different projects, many from OZ past and present, that explore personal vulnerability, civic responsibility, and the sheer madness of the unexpected. Featured artists include: Dave Ragland and Shabaz Ujima, Becca Hoback, Cameron Mitchell, and the artists behind *This Holding*, all hosted by the evening's emcee Ciona Rouse. Together, these inspiring artists share a vision of the world we hope to build together and spark the hope that will fuel us into the future.

### **Taylor Mac's Holiday Sauce... Pandemic!**

**Saturday, December 12, 2020 | 9pm**

Join the most subversive event of the yuletide season: *Holiday Sauce... Pandemic!* will blend music, film, burlesque, and random acts of fabulousness to reframe the songs you love and the holidays you hate. 2020 Ibsen Award winner and MacArthur Fellow Taylor Mac and his longtime collaborators, designer Machine Dazzle, music director Matt Ray, and producers Pomegranate Arts join together to create a virtual experience celebrating the holidays in all of their dysfunction. There is more to the holidays than rampant capitalism and gift giving, and in Taylor's world, creativity and imagination are their own spirituality. His cathartic spell ultimately reminds us of the collective power of our chosen families -- a message that rings true in such a bittersweet holiday season. This dazzling, and at times shocking, take-down of the sentimentality of the holidays celebrates and rails against Christmas as calamity.

### **Manual Cinema's A Christmas Carol**

**Saturday, December 19, 2020 | 3pm & 7pm**

In this world premiere online event created for audiences of all ages, Chicago-based multimedia collective Manual Cinema takes on Charles Dickens's holiday classic with a visually inventive adaptation made to broadcast directly to your home. An avowed holiday skeptic, Aunt Trudy has been recruited to channel her late husband Joe's famous Christmas cheer. From the isolation of her studio apartment, she reconstructs his annual Christmas Carol puppet show – over a Zoom call while the family celebrates Christmas Eve under lockdown. But as Trudy becomes more absorbed in her own version of the story, the puppets take on a life of their own, and the family's call transforms into a stunning cinematic adaptation of Dickens's classic ghost story. OZ Arts Nashville presents this world premiere performance event on December 19, performed live by Manual Cinema from their Chicago studio in a socially distanced manner, and live streamed to audiences at home. In signature Manual Cinema fashion, hundreds of paper

puppets, miniatures, silhouettes and a live original score will come together to tell an imaginative re-invention of this cherished holiday classic.

OZ Arts Nashville continues to plan for a dynamic lineup of live and virtual performances throughout 2021. Diverse performances include the Nashville premiere of Roger Guenveur Smith's tour-de-force solo production *FREDERICK DOUGLASS NOW*, Miwa Matreyek's visually stunning environmental animation *Infinitely Yours*, an evening of riveting solo dance performed by New Dialect's Becca Hoback, a visit from world-renowned choreographer Ronald K. Brown and his company EVIDENCE, the World Premiere of *Steal Away* from Nashville composer Dave Ragland with Inversion Vocal Ensemble & Shacked Feet Dance, and the debut of *Grand Magnolia*, an immersive theatre production delving into Nashville's forgotten history. Due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, dates and additional details for these productions will be announced in early 2021.

This season is made possible with generous support from donors and grants, including funding from the Metro Nashville Arts Commission, National Endowment for the Arts and the Tennessee Arts Commission. To purchase tickets or learn more about this season's performances, please visit <https://www.ozartsnashville.org/>.

### **About OZ Arts Nashville**

Founded in 2013, OZ Arts Nashville has quickly established itself as one of the Southeast's most influential and respected producers and presenters focused on the creation and presentation of significant performing and visual art works by diverse cultural visionaries who are making vital contributions to the evolution of contemporary culture. Through performances, exhibitions, and community events, OZ Arts focuses on producing and presenting the work of local and visiting artists who reflect our diverse society, utilize new artistic forms and technology in creative ways, and provide opportunities for meaningful engagement with audiences, students and cultural and civic leaders. OZ Arts' unique creative warehouse has developed a reputation as a major national and regional laboratory for experimentation and a home for contemporary dance and performance. More than 50,000 audience members have been introduced to adventurous artists from around the world since the organization opened, and hundreds of local and regional artists have used OZ's 10,000 square-foot warehouse theater to develop new works. For more information, please visit [ozartsnashville.org](https://www.ozartsnashville.org/).