



For Immediate Release

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OZ Arts Nashville Presents *Fast/Forward*, a Virtual Premiere of Powerful Short Performances from Influential Nashville Dancers, Musicians, Poets, and Performers

Evening of Inspiration to be Hosted by Nashville Poet and Writer Ciona Rouse

Nashville, TN – November 6, 2020 – [OZ Arts Nashville](#) today announced the virtual premiere of *Fast/Forward: Nashville Artists Look To Our Future*, a lively evening of performances featuring Nashville-based dancers, poets, musicians, theatre-makers and more, on November 19 at 7pm through its website. Hosted by Ciona Rouse, a Nashville poet and writer, the evening will spotlight short-form works from 8 different projects, many from OZ artists past and present, that explore personal vulnerability, civic responsibility, and the sheer madness of the unexpected.

The performances will be prerecorded in the OZ Arts creative warehouse and reflect on the revelations, revolutions, and resiliency of today. The subtitle of the event, "Nashville Artists Look To Our Future," signifies the idea of moving forward and uniting as a country to ensure a bright future for all.

"At a time when emotions are running high, and more change is imminent, *Fast/Forward* is an opportunity for a range of artists to reflect on this historic moment, and to bring us together -- even if we can't all be in the same room for a live performance," said Mark Murphy, OZ's Executive and Artistic Director. "I've always felt that artists can help us understand a rapidly changing world, and this is a particularly urgent moment."

Performances and artists include:

- A moving performance of the title song from the upcoming *Steal Away*, conceived and composed by **Dave Ragland** with choreography from **Shabaz Ujima**
- A riveting, self-choreographed solo performance by dancer **Becca Hoback**
- Special excerpts of the *This Holding* performance film, introduced by visual artist **Jana Harper** and choreographer **Rebecca Steinberg**

- A powerful spoken word performance by local poets **Cameron Mitchell** and **Jems Destine**
- A stripped-down, acoustic selection from ghoulish rockers **Fable Cry**
- An emotionally stirring multimedia-music presentation by **Gardening, Not Architecture**
- An original solo dance piece created by dancer **Joi Ware**

Tickets for *Fast/Forward* start at \$15 and are available now at <https://www.ozartsnashville.org/2020-21-season/>. Ticket holders will receive a watch link and password via email prior to the event and are able to watch the film through Sunday, November 22.

OZ Arts Nashville continues to plan a dynamic lineup of virtual and live performances throughout 2021. 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.

In 2021, a diverse lineup of performances includes 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.

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 Ciona Rouse

Poet, editor, and teaching artist Ciona Rouse is the author of *Vantablack*, the first chapbook of Third Man Books’ limited chapbook series (2017), which sold out within a few months of publication. She has appeared at OZ Arts on stage in performances of *The Longest Night* and the 2017 Nashville International Women’s Day. Her poetry has appeared in *Oxford American*, *The Account*, *Talking River*, *Gabby Journal*, *Matter: a journal of political poetry and commentary* and has also been featured on WPLN Nashville Public Radio, the Nashville Scene, and Nashville Public Television.

A literary citizen, she is poetry editor of *Wordpeace*, the curator of several reading series in Nashville, and teaches poetry workshops and courses to various age groups. Rouse cohosts the podcast *Re\VERB* with poet Kendra DeColo, a Third Man Books podcast where literature and pop culture meet. Ciona often collaborates with other poets and artists and in 2017-2018, she served as a resident poet for the “Nick Cave: FEAT” art exhibition at Frist Art Museum, culminating in a poem called “We,” which was named 2018’s “Best Poetry Performance” by Nashville Scene. Her poetry was featured on NPR Music in collaboration with musician and poet Adia Victoria and poet Caroline Randall Williams in August 2019. A graduate of Columbia College of South Carolina, Rouse currently lives in Nashville, where she is working on her first full collection of poetry & several literary collaborations.

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.