

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 26, 2021

PICA announces 2021 spring Creative Exchange Lab artists Javaad Alipoor (Manchester, UK), Reese Bowes (Portland, OR), Fernanda D'Agostino (Portland, OR), Sorour Darabi (Iran / France), devynn emory (New York, NY), Elisa Harkins (Muscogee (Creek) Reservation [Tulsa, OK]), shawné michaelain holloway (Chicago, IL), Raja Feather Kelly (New York, NY), Mohammed Murshed (Beaverton, OR), Marcela Torres (Salt Lake City, UT / Chicago, IL), and Sarah Turner (Portland, OR). Join us for a virtual Meet the Artists event on Saturday, April 24th at 12:00 pm PDT.

Dates: Saturday, April 24, 2021 / 12:00 pm PDT
Location: picatv.org
Website: pica.org/events/CXLspring2021
Press Contact: Leslie Vigeant, Director of Marketing and Communications
leslie@pica.org

The logo for PICA, consisting of the word "PICA" in a bold, black, sans-serif font, positioned above a thick yellow horizontal bar.

After a year-long hiatus, PICA's beloved [Creative Exchange Lab \(CXL\)](http://pica.org/events/CXLspring2021) is back –this time as a COVID-safe virtual residency. Launched in 2015, CXL brings together artists from across geographies, cultures, and forms to promote artistic exchange, dialogue, and the development of new interdisciplinary work. Our Spring 2021 Creative Exchange Lab artists-in-residence are Javaad Alipoor, Reese Bowes, Fernanda D'Agostino, Sorour Darabi, devynn emory, Elisa Harkins, shawné michaelain holloway, Raja Feather Kelly, Mohammed Murshed, Marcela Torres, and Sarah Turner.

Please join us on picatv.org on Saturday, April 24th at 12:00 pm PDT to meet the artists and hear behind-the-scenes presentations about their current practices and projects. This program is particularly special in that it provides essential generative time for both independent and collective research and experimentation, while also sparking collaborations, connections, and friendships that strengthen Portland's art community. Register now and come see what CXL is all about.

Creative Exchange Lab is generously supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

*****EVENT AND ARTIST INFORMATION TO FOLLOW*****

IMPORTANT INFORMATION / DATES / TIMES

Event Details: pica.org/events/CXLspring2021

Location/Registration: picatv.org

Date/Time: Saturday, April 24th at 12:00 pm PDT

Price: free

Access: Auto-captioning will be available for this event

Artists:

Javaad Alipoor (Manchester, UK)

Reese Bowes (Portland, OR)

Fernanda D'Agostino (Portland, OR)

Sorour Darabi (Iran / France)

devynn emory (New York, NY)

Elisa Harkins (Muscogee (Creek) Reservation [Tulsa, OK])

shawné michaelain holloway (Chicago, IL)

Raja Feather Kelly (New York, NY)

Mohammed Murshed (Beaverton, OR)

Marcela Torres (Salt Lake City, UT / Chicago, IL)

Sarah Turner (Portland, OR)

ARTIST INFORMATION TO FOLLOW

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Javaad Alipoor (Manchester, UK)

Javaad Alipoor is a multi-award-winning playwright, director, filmmaker, and performer. *The Believers Are But Brothers* (2017) opened in Edinburgh where it won a Fringe First Award, before transferring to London's Bush Theatre, and on to an international tour. Javaad adapted the play for the BBC in 2018. The play's sequel – *Rich Kids: A History of Shopping Malls in Tehran* (2019) – premiered at the Traverse Theatre. Its London transfer, and subsequent national tour, was postponed by COVID-19. A new digital version for online audiences. This version went on to tour online, including at the Public Theatre's Under The Radar Festival, and was selected for the Sundance Film Festival. He is the artistic director of The Javaad Alipoor Company- they are currently developing work with theatres and festivals around the world including The National Theatre of Great Britain, The National Theatre of Paramatta, National Theatre Mannheim, Battersea Arts Centre, HOME Manchester.

Reese Bowes (Portland, OR)

The work I have focused on as an independent artist and technologist has straddled the invisible lines that serve to cordon off the landscapes of traditional visual art, digital art, electronic and experimental music, and interactive installation. What I make and the ideas I explore are a direct reflection of experiences that are situated in my personal life as an immigrant in the United States, as a discourse on individual perception across cultures, as a response to quasi-cultural and dismissive practices in the tech industry that I have witnessed, and my understanding and research into how technological interfaces have served to both bind us as a species and create vast rifts in our attempts at intimate communication.

I believe that the arts, in all their forms, serve as a continuing attempt to shore our evolutionary growth along an upward and positive path. I do not make art that exists specifically as a descriptor of my own ethnic experience – my struggle has been to depict what lies beyond, in the place where future generations depict their thoughts and experiences independent of the labels and stereotypes that other cultures have attempted to lay claim to. We are all – every one of our varied and myriad cultures – capable of profound artistic expression, and my aim is to continue exploring the non-existent boundaries placed before me.

Fernanda D'Agostino (Portland, OR)

Fernanda D'Agostino is a public art and new media installation artist based in Portland, OR, USA. D'Agostino has exhibited nationally and internationally with video installation, large-scale public art projects, and performance. Her work has been featured in numerous public art and new media festivals, and exhibitions, and she strives to share what she has learned with others. Most recently, she has collaborated with Collection Action Studio, led by Curator Justin Hoover, to produce large-scale outdoor projection works in San Francisco and Hong Kong. Her Borderline series of installations were exhibited in 2018-19 at 1A Space Hong Kong, Disjecta Contemporary Art Center, Open Signal, and Portland Art Museum (all Portland, OR.) D'Agostino works between sculpture, installation, creative coding, and video mapping on several programming platforms. The connecting thread in all her work

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is creating an immersive, interactive environment that places viewers within the work. D'Agostino's work has been recognized by the Flintridge Foundation, Bonnie Bronson Fellowship, Andy Warhol Foundation, Oregon Community Foundation, Ford Family Foundation, 4Culture TechSpecific Award, National Endowment for the Arts, and with the Oregon Arts Commission Artist Fellowship. D'Agostino is co-founder and co-director with Sarah Turner of Mobile Projection Unit (MPU). MPU is a creative platform, curatorial platform, and a supporter of social justice movements through volunteer tech support.

Sorour Darabi (Iran / France)

Sorour Darabi is a self-taught Iranian artist living and working in Paris. Working actively in Iran, they were a part of the underground organization ICCD, whose festival *Untimely* (Teheran) hosted their work before their departure for France. During studies at the CCN de Montpellier, they created the solo *Subject to Change*, a performance that questions transformation with regards to time and one's cohabitation with an environment.

In 2016, they created *Farci.e* a solo dealing with notions of language, gender identity, and sexuality, as part of the Montpellier danse festival. In 2018, they created *Savušun*, an ode to affection, vulnerability, and affected beings, which draws inspiration from Muharram's mourning ceremonies and addresses the issue of emotions: grief, fear, and suffering. In 2021, they create *Mowgli* - inspired by the jungle as an infinite territory at the crossroads of contemporary myths - and *Natural Drama* - a post-dystopic myth that questions the notion of "Nature".

devynn emory (New York, NY)

devynn emory is a mixed Lenape/Blackfoot transgender choreographer, dance artist, bodyworker, ceremonial guide, acute care, and hospice nurse currently working as a COVID-19 nurse in NYC. emory's performance company devynmemory/beastproductions draws from their multiple in-between states of being, holding space for liminal bodies bridging multiple planes of transition. their formal dance training pulls on mathematical and mapped scores to support bodies decolonizing and bleeding human truths, opening peepholes and revelations for collective performers and audiences. they are currently working on a trilogy centering medical mannequins processing transitional mediumship. *deadbird* with its touring public altar *can anyone help me hold this body* will be first. *Cindy Sessions* and *boiling-rain* are to follow which are interactive storytelling projects with an elder mannequin holding a collection of grandmother wisdom. As a healer, they have dual licenses in "western" and "eastern" bodywork and run a private practice sage-massage that offers end of life consultation, channeled counseling, and hands-on care modalities in conversation with thresholds. you can find their work at devynmemory.com and [sage-massage](http://sage-massage.com).

Elisa Harkins (Muscogee (Creek) Reservation [Tulsa, OK])

Elisa Harkins is a Native American (Cherokee/Muscogee) artist and composer based in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Her work is concerned with translation, language preservation, and Indigenous musicology. Harkins uses the Cherokee and Mvskoke languages, electronic music, sculpture, and the body as her tools.

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Harkins received a BA from Columbia College, Chicago, and an MFA from CALARTS. She has since continued her education at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. She has exhibited her work at Crystal Bridges, documenta 14, The Hammer Museum, The Heard Museum, and Vancouver Art Gallery. She is a Tulsa Artist Fellow Integration Grant awardee, with her grant she created an online Indigenous concert series called 6 Moons, and published a CD of Indigenous Hymns. She is also the DJ of Mvhayv Radio, an Indigenous Radio Show on 91.1FM in Tulsa, OK, and 99.1FM in Indianapolis, IN.

Radio III / ~~SHOW~~ KT is a dance performance that features music and choreography by Harkins. With support from PICA and Western Front, songs from the performance have been collected into a limited edition double-LP which can be found on Harkins' Bandcamp.

Harkins resides on the Muscogee (Creek) Reservation and is an enrolled member of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

shawné michaelain holloway (Chicago, IL)

SHAWNÉ MICHAELAIN HOLLOWAY is a new media artist and poet. Known for using sound, video, and performance, HOLLOWAY shapes the rhetorics of technology and sexuality into tools for exposing structures of power. She has spoken and exhibited work internationally in spaces like The New Museum (NYC), The Kitchen (NYC), the Time-Based Art Festival at the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Institute of Contemporary Arts (London), and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. Currently, SHAWNÉ is a 20-21 Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art Queer Theatre & Performance Resident and is teaching across the New Arts Journalism and the Film Video New Media and Animation departments at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

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Raja Feather Kelly (New York, NY)

Raja Feather Kelly is a choreographer, a director, and the artistic director of the feath3r theory. He is a three-time Princess Grace Award winner (2017, 2018, 2019), two-time Lucille Lortel Award nominee (2019, 2020), and 2019 Chita Rivera Award nominee. In 2020 he was the Obie Award winner and Outer Critics Circle Award honoree for choreography for the Pulitzer-winning musical *A Strange Loop*. In 2019 he was an SDCF Joe A. Callaway Award finalist for both *A Strange Loop* and the Pulitzer-winning play *Fairview*. Raja is also the 2019–2020 Randjelović/Stryker Resident Commissioned Artist at New York Live Arts, an inaugural Jerome Hill Artist Fellow, and a 2019 Creative Capital award recipient. He is a current fellow of HERE Arts, the Center for Ballet and the Arts at NYU, and a Creative Associate at The Juilliard School. Over the past decade, Kelly has created fifteen evening-length premieres with his company the feath3r theory as well as directing and choreographing extensively for Off-Broadway theatre in New York City. His choreography has also garnered a 2018 Breakout Award from the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation (SDCF) and the Solange MacArthur Award for New Choreography (2016), and he was *Dance Magazine's* inaugural Harkness Promise Award (2018). He was born in Fort Hood, Texas, and holds a B.A. in Dance and English from Connecticut College.

Mohammed Murshed (Beaverton, OR)

I was born and raised in Sana'a, Yemen; it's a country right below Saudi Arabia. While living with my parents and my little brother in my childhood, the neighborhood was lively and full of friends and neighbors. Unfortunately, many of them died because of the civil wars in Yemen and the Youth Revolution in 2011, especially the devastating civil war since 2015. I moved to the states in 2012 during the Arab Spring. Saw many of my closest friends killed in front of me before I left. I consider myself one of the lucky ones able to escape war before it was too late for my family and me. I graduated with a Bachelor of Art and Technology and now a Master's (MFA) degree at PNCA in Visual Studies 2020. The mediums I use are painting, textile, sculpture, video art, sound, programming for art, and video games. I am interested in challenging myself and in trying things that I haven't done before. I try to bring awareness to Yemen's issues and help unpack my Trauma layers in my art. Yemen, a third-world country with backward traditions with no fundamental human rights, has caused many people mental anguish. PTSD keeps me in chains, but within my process, I break one ring at a time from the strings of my Trauma.

My name is Mohammed Murshed, a Yemeni American Visual Artist that investigates colonialism, imperialism, sexism, and racism; I also incorporate/highlight the micro-aggressions and racism I experience as an immigrant. I try to capture my memories in Yemen. The didactic of war showed us that war doesn't discriminate. Often affected by conflict are women and children—sharing knowledge about Yemen and the humanitarian crisis with integrity. Using different mediums encouraged me to push my experience to a different level without being labeled a political activist. I use art as a tool to visualize my Trauma by creating art in various mediums to heal my PTSD from the mental wounds that I inherited due to war in Yemen.

Marcela Torres (Salt Lake City, UT / Chicago, IL)

Born in Salt Lake City, Utah, and residing in Chicago, Illinois. Torres received a BA in Sculpture Intermedia and a BFA in Art History from the University of Utah, continuing their studies in MFA in Performance from School of the Art Institute Chicago. Torres has performed at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (Chicago, IL) Performances is Alive (Miami, FL), Fringe Festival (Detroit, MI), Experimental Actions (Houston, TX), and Time Based Arts (Portland, Oregon). Torres has exhibited work at the Green Gallery at Yale School of Art (New Haven, CT), Tropical Contemporary (Eugene, OR), Petzel Gallery (NYC, NY). In 2020 Torres was a resident at Recess in Brooklyn, NYC, and Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts in Omaha, NE.

Sarah Turner (Portland, OR)

Sarah Turner is a new media artist, curator, and community builder based in Portland, OR. She is the artistic director of Pink noise and the Co-Founder of Mobile Projection Unit. Her work utilizes large-scale video mapping projection and immersive installations. Her work has been shown at Portland Institute for Contemporary Art's TBA Festival, Portland International Film Festival, Portland Art Museum, Northwest Film Center, Spaceness Festival, Marfa Open Festival, and more.

ABOUT PORTLAND INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART (PICA)

Portland Institute for Contemporary Art acknowledges and advances new developments in contemporary art, fostering the explorations of artists and audiences. Since 1995, PICA has championed the practice of contemporary artists from around the world, driving vital conversations about the art and issues of today. PICA presents artists from visual and performance backgrounds and embraces those individuals who exist at the borders of genres and ideas. Through artist residencies and exhibitions, lectures and workshops, and the annual Time-Based Art Festival, PICA constructs a broad platform for contemporary art. More information can be found at pica.org.

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15 NE HANCOCK STREET
PORTLAND OREGON 97212
503 242 1419
pica.org