



# a canary TORSI

"...radiant, mythic beasts, glamorous and terrifying..."  
- Eva Yaa Asantewaa, *The Village Voice*

## MISSION

**a canary torsi** creates site-adaptable, performance-based projects. Formed in 2009 by New York choreographer Yanira Castro, **a canary torsi** invites audiences to participate in work that is anchored in live performance and extends into other media and online platforms. Ranging from formal movement explorations and immersive environments to interactive video installations and audience-driven websites, **a canary torsi** explores the relationship between audience and event, developing scenarios where the audience's presence dramatically impacts the work.



*The People to Come* (2013) at The Invisible Doa Center ©David Blivins

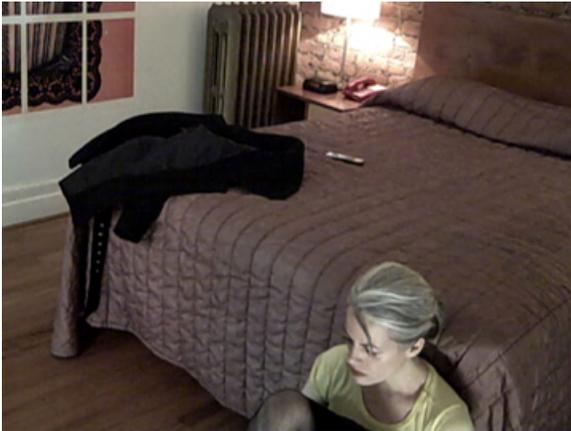
**a canary torsi** has developed over seven works since its founding in 2009—six live performances with accompanying media projects and an interactive video installation, *Performer Standing with Curtain* (2016). In 2009, **a canary torsi** commissioned three artists to join Castro in creating projects aligned with the Bessie-award-winning dance installation for public bathrooms, *Dark Horse/Black Forest*. It was presented in New York by Performance Space 122 in the men's lobby bathroom of the Gershwin Hotel. Writer Rozalia Jovanovic created two fictional Twitter feeds (doghebitdme and darkbloom8) inspired by the love affair of the two characters in *Dark Horse*. New media artist Lauren McCarthy then gave the Twitter feeds automated voices, playing their conversation through ordinary objects placed in the hotel lobby. Lastly, video artist Peter Richards created a video for the Gershwin's private TV channel, giving a voyeuristic peak of the work for all their guests.

**a canary torsi's** *The People to Come* (2012/13) had an interactive website (thepeopletocome.org) for visitors/audiences to contribute source material to the project from which the performers built dances. On the site, audience contributions were linked to the dances created. By acting as an archive for all audience and performance material, the website acts as the final portrait of the project. Thepeopletocome.org was featured in the New Museum's *Performance Archiving Performance* exhibition in 2013/2014. For *Court/Garden* (2014) web-developer Helen Gaffigan created aspectacleinthreeracts.org, a journey into the visual research for the project.

Through projects like these, **a canary torsi** is dedicated to working in a multiplicity of spaces and media, expanding how we interact with live performance.

## DIRECTOR/CHOREOGRAPHER BACKGROUND

Yanira Castro is a Bessie-Award-Winning artist born in Puerto Rico and based in Brooklyn. She collaborates with performers and designers on individual projects under the name **a canary torsi**. Her focus is the formal investigation of performance structures - from the rise of a curtain, to audience seating, to the presence of a cast. She explores the relationship between the audience and performance event: examining questions of intimacy, distance, control, and ultimately our agency in the performance environment.



Video still from *Dark Horse/Black Forest: Gershwin (2009)* ©Peter Richards

*“Castro specializes in work that feels more like a personal encounter than a performance, creating environments that don’t allow audience members the option of viewing from a safe distance.”*

- Michelle Vellucci, *Flavorwire*

Castro’s work has been presented in New York by Danspace Project, Dance Theater Workshop, New York Live Arts, Performance Space 122, ISSUE Project Room, The Invisible Dog Art Center, The Chocolate Factory, The Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC), The New Museum, and The BEAT Festival, among others. Her work has often incorporated untraditional spaces including public bathrooms, warehouses, former bathhouses, and gardens. Nationally, her work has been presented by the Institute of Contemporary Arts/Boston; City of Chicago’s Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events; Space Gallery in Portland, ME; The Grannoff Center for the Creative Arts at Brown University; The Yard at Martha’s Vineyard; Vermont Performance Lab; Redfern Arts Center at Keene State College, NH; Zoellner Performing Arts Center in Bethlehem, PA; and Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. Internationally, her dance installation for public bathrooms, *Dark Horse/Black Forest*, has been presented at George Bacovia Theater in Bacau, Romania; the Daile Theatre in Riga, Latvia and the Tanzhaus in Düsseldorf, Germany for the International Tanzmesse.

Castro and the team of *Dark Horse/Black Forest* won a 2009 NY Dance & Performance (aka Bessie) Award for the performance of that project at The Gershwin Hotel. *The People to Come* (2013) was nominated for a Bessie for “Outstanding Production of a work at the forefront of contemporary dance and performance practices.” The archive for *The People to Come* (thepeopletocome.org) was featured in New Museum’s exhibit, “Performance Archiving Performance,” November 6, 2013 – January 12, 2014. Her most recent collaboration, an interactive video installation, *Performer Standing with Curtain*, was featured in 2016 at the Ammerman Center for Arts & Technology 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Symposium on Arts and Technology and the Conference for Research on Choreographic Interfaces at Brown University.

Castro has received several awards for her work, including The New England Foundation for the Arts’ National Dance Project, The MAP Fund, The Jerome Foundation, New Music USA, Trust for Mutual Understanding, and USArtists International. She has been commissioned to create work for Danspace Project, Dance Theater Workshop, The Chocolate Factory, The Wooden Floor (CA), Keene State College (NH), Barnard College (NYC), and Island Moving Company (RI). She has recently been invited to participate in the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC)’s Extended Life Dance Development program. Other fellowships and Artist-in-Residency programs include: Returning Choreographic Fellow at Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography (2014-2013), LMCC’s Process Space AIR program (2014), American Dance Abroad’s Beyond Our Borders (2014), Dance New Amsterdam AIR (2013), Vermont Performance Lab Artist (2012), LMCC Swing Space AIR program (2012, 2010), MANCC Media and Choreographic Fellowships (2012, 2007), ARC (2009-2008), Artist Ne(s)t (2007, Romania), Sugar Salon (2007), and Rockefeller Foundation (2006, Bellagio, Italy). Castro received her B.A. in Theater & Dance and Literature from Amherst College.

## CRITICS' COMMENTS

Forget the safety of distance; this is the palpable sensation of art – up-close and personal.

- Debra Griboff, *Encore Magazine*

Yanira Castro's intimate dance performance recaptures life's most private stolen moments... Castro here challenges all your assumptions about performance, and forces you to wake up. Gamble on it.

- Elizabeth Zimmer, *Metro*

Castro's work is intellectual. Her movement is quirky; remarkably polished performances propel her unexpected stutters and awkward positions... Castro's smart, kooky shenanigans captivate...

- Chris Dohse, *The Village Voice*



Center of Sleep at Dance Theater Workshop, NYC (2008) © Julieta Cervantes

Throughout *[Court/Garden]*, Castro maintains an interesting tension between high expectations and low-level means of delivery, between firm control of things and awkward execution, between glittering artifice and banal transparency, between seductive beauty and those things that make you seriously question what you find beautiful, why you do and who the hell you think you are to judge.

- Eva Yaa Asantewaa, *Infinite Body*

A dance evolves within me over time. What isn't memorable eventually slips away, while other moments may become more vivid. An entire scene can be condensed into a single image. I've always felt this with performance, but never have I experienced this evolution so intensely, as I did after seeing *Paradis* by Yanira Castro | a canary torsi. – Christine Shan Shan Hou, *Idiom*

*Wilderness* is, among many other things, about the expectations ingrained in the minds of audiences preparing to watch dance, and about that which might emerge out of a less compartmentalized dialogue with the unknown, with the immediacy and potential of the performative moment. Watching, or rather participating, in *Wilderness*, one can just as easily lose themselves in the piece's inherent suspense and intimacy as they can reflect on its dense and layered exploration of representation, death, and the unknowable.

- Andrew Frank, *BOMBlog*

My heart is racing... This is Yanira Castro's *Dark Horse/Black Forest*, and it's gripping, scary, adrenaline producing work. Roller coasters have nothing on this.

- Mary Hodges, *Brooklyn Rail*

*[Dark Horse/Black Forest]* takes voyeurism to a precipice. It's about being in a scary, unsafe place. And it doesn't happen on a stage but in a bathroom like yours. There couldn't be a more intimate setting for this work for two: menace and mate.

- Lori Ortiz, *The Villager*

*Center of Sleep* is one of the most beautiful, primal images you're likely to see on any New York stage.

- Brian McCormick, *Gay City News*



Paradis at Brooklyn Botanic Garden (2011) © Charles Houghton

One beauty of *Sleep* is that watching other audience members watching the piece can be just as compelling as watching the performers. The imperceptibly shifting audio space and the ambiguous physical space of the piece, along with nakedness & strange interactions, feel just like a nightmare or a dream.

- Quinn Batson, *Offoffoff.com*

It was a measure of the piece's effectiveness that I felt trust & a vague, developing fondness for the people I kept bumping into at every turn. For an hour at least, the audience felt like a community, or maybe even an organism, like a fetus sloshing around in the womb.

- Tom Philips, *dancereviewtimes.com*

SCHEDULE

2017 PROJECTED PERFORMANCE & RESIDENCY SCHEDULE

Abrons Art Center's Playhouse (NYC)	<i>STAGE</i>	fall TBD
Abrons Art Center Production Residency	<i>STAGE</i>	summer TBD
The Chocolate Factory	<i>CAST</i>	2016/2017 TBD
The Chocolate Factory Residency	<i>CAST</i>	2016/2017 TBD

2016 PERFORMANCE & RESIDENCY SCHEDULE

The Invisible Dog Art Center (Brooklyn, NY)	<i>Performance Portrait: Live</i>	Dec 1-31
Abrons Art Center Residency	<i>CAST</i>	summer TBD
Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, <i>Extended Life</i> Residency (NYC)	<i>CAST</i>	Jun 28-Aug 1
Institute of Contemporary Art (Boston, MA)	<i>Court/Garden</i>	Apr 8-9
Redfern Arts Center (Keene State College, NH)	<i>Court/Garden</i>	Mar 30
Choreographic Interface Conference (Brown University, RI)	<i>Performance Portrait: Live</i>	Mar 3-4
15 <sup>th</sup> Biennial Symposium for Arts & Technology, <i>Open All Ports</i> (Ammerman Center for Arts & Technology, Connecticut College)	<i>Performance Portrait: Live</i>	Feb 25-27

2015 PERFORMANCE & RESIDENCY SCHEDULE

BRIClab Residency (Brooklyn, NY)	<i>Performance Portrait: Live</i>	Nov 10-21
<i>BRIClab Showing</i> , (Brooklyn, NY)	<i>Performance Portrait: Live</i>	Nov 20-21
Gibney Dance Center Residency (NYC)	<i>Performance Portrait: Live</i>	Aug 10-17
Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, <i>River To River Festival</i> (NYC)	<i>Court/Garden</i>	Jun 19-20
Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, <i>Open Studio</i> (NYC)	<i>Court/Garden</i>	May 23
Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, <i>Extended Life</i> Residency (NYC)	<i>Court/Garden</i>	Apr 28–May 23

2014 PERFORMANCE & RESIDENCY SCHEDULE

Danspace Project (NYC)	<i>Court/Garden</i>	Oct 9-11
Danspace Project, Production Residency (NYC)	<i>Court/Garden</i>	Sep 8-13
Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's <i>Process Space</i> (NYC)	<i>Court/Garden</i>	Apr 28–May 9 Jul 28–Aug 23
Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, <i>Open Studio</i> (NYC)	<i>Court/Garden</i>	Aug 23
Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography (FL)	<i>Court/Garden</i>	May 29-Jun 11



Court/Garden at Federal Hall, LMCC's River To River Festival (2015) ©Maria Baranova

WORKS

PERFORMANCE PORTRAIT: LIVE (2015)

Lead Collaborators

Concept & Choreographer: Yanira Castro  
 Installation Designer: Kathy Couch  
 Interaction Designer: Stephan Moore  
 Filmmaker: Julie Wyman

Performers

Anna Azrieli, Leslie Cuyjet, Peter B. Schmitz, David Thomson  
 The Invisible Dog Art Center  
 December 1-31, 2015

Premiere Venue & Dates



*Performance Portrait: Live* is a multi-channel, interactive video installation that invites spectators to an intimate encounter with a performer. Four life-size HD video images (16:9 aspect ratio) are projected in portrait mode onto four 7' by 12' vertical screens to form the environment. Each video image is a different performer holding the gaze of the spectator. Using Kinect2 sensors, the movement of the spectator is tracked and specific moments of the video are mapped to each spectator. In *Performance Portrait: Live* time is arrested and manipulated, and the live action is that of the audience – whose performance as spectator determines playback of the recorded image.

COURT/GARDEN (2014)

Direction & Choreography: Yanira Castro  
 Performance & Choreography: Simon Courchel, Luke Miller, Kirsten Schnittker, Pamela Vail, Darrin Wright, Kimberly Young  
 Cupids: Martita Abril + Tony Carlson  
 Environment/Lighting: Kathy Couch  
 Costumes: Miodrag Guberinic  
 Composer: Stephan Moore  
 Video: Peter Richards  
 Dramaturg: Susan Mar Landau  
 Premiere Venue & Dates: Danspace Project  
 October 9-11, 2014



Court/Garden (2014) ©Simon Courchel

*Court/Garden* (CG) is a performance that takes as its inspiration the imperial ballets of Louis XIV's French Court, the spectatorship of the proscenium stage and the presentation of video feeds as cultural, social and political frames of experience. The audience's relationship to the performance is in constant flux, investigating the structures behind the act of watching and being seen. CG delves into an operatic, spectacle-driven vocabulary to reflect on how power functions in contemporary theatrical images from the fashion runway to the creation of cultural icons.

*“Alert and thrumming with energy, this sextet ornaments their hopping, marching, and stomping with glittering steps nabbed from classic dances like the Gigue and the Canarie. The spaces between their feet, delightfully varied in size and shape, invoke the opulent, patterning of the period; their costumes, snazzy black and gold body suits with hooded visors, render them into futuristic royalty. “Court” closes with a wink of commentary. Pleating and twisting paper towels, the performers fashion a lavish gown on one of the black-masked dancers, transforming her into an archetypal queen: potent in symbolism, powerless in reality.” - DanceEnthusiast, Erin Bomboy*

## THE PEOPLE TO COME (2012/13)

Direction & Choreography: Yanira Castro  
 Performance: Simon Courchel, Luke Miller, Peter Musante, Peter Schmitz, Darrin Wright  
 Installation & Lighting: Kathy Couch  
 Sound Installation: Stephan Moore  
 Musicians: Peter Bussigel, Stephan Moore, Caroline Park, Tim Rovinelli, Suzanne Thorpe  
 Preview Venue & Dates: Vermont Performance Lab  
 September 29, 2012  
 Premiere Venue & Dates: Granoff Art Center, Oct 25-26, 2012  
 NY Premiere Venue & Dates: The Invisible Dog Art Center  
 June 25-29, 2013



The People to Come (2012) ©Simon Courchel

*The People to Come* is a participatory performance installation that invites audience members to become part of the work unfolding before them. Anyone can contribute pictures, text, or video on [thepeopletocome.org](http://thepeopletocome.org), and this material becomes the inspiration for each performer. Working from a 19-minute solo by Castro, the performers take this material and create an original dance, turning words, images, and ideas from the contributors into a live performance. Mundane and sublime, prosaic and virtuosic, *The People to Come* is the effort of five performers making a dance and the chance that the audience may recognize themselves in it.

*“Castro certainly leaves it up to interpretation – you’re left wondering who is the translator? Who is the narrator? Does the dancer translate the messages the audience gives, or does the audience translate for themselves what the dancer expresses through his movements? Does the dancer narrate a storyline, woven from the material given, or has the audience dictated what the story is?... The People to Come is unique in its more subtle approach, encouraging and inviting people -- everyone, not just from the dance community -- to come to a show and ‘recognize yourself ... or your neighbor ... or the person you came to the show with.’ ... a canary torsi’s site-adaptable explorations bring us closer, revealing what important processes and relations we may have overlooked from traditional conventions of the stage and of dance.”*

- KUSC Arts Alive Blog, Cynthia Park

## PARADIS (2011)

Direction & Choreography: Yanira Castro  
 Performance: Peggy H. Cheng, Simon Courchel, Shayla-Vie Jenkins, Luke Miller, Peter Schmitz (soloist), Stuart Singer, Pamela Vail, Darrin Wright and Kimberly Young  
 Sound Installation: Stephan Moore  
 Pianist: Michael Dauphinais  
 Production Stage Manager: William Schaffner  
 Premiere Venue & Dates: Brooklyn Botanic Garden  
 presented by DTW, June 2-4, 2011



Paradis (2011) ©Kevin Kwan

*Paradis* is a performance and audio installation with live piano performed outdoors at twilight. Inspired by the final section of Jean-Luc Godard’s 2004 film, *Notre Musique*, *Paradis* continues Castro’s exploration of the space between the performer and audience member: the tension in the simultaneous experience of distance and intimacy inherent in the live performed moment.

*“Castro’s Paradis feels like it grew organically out of the ground (or descended from the heavens), like the lovely trees and flowers that cover the garden’s fifty-two lush acres. No mere spectacle, the piece invites the viewer to become part of a magical experience, a fitting tribute to the beauty of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and the endless imagination of Castro and her company.”*

- This Week In New York

## WILDERNESS (2010)

Direction & Choreography: Yanira Castro  
 Performance: Luke Miller, Peter Schmitz, Pamela Vail, Kimberly Young, & Darrin Wright  
 Installation & Lighting: Roderick Murray  
 Costumes: Albert Sakhai  
 Sound Installation: Stephan Moore  
 Pianist: Michael Dauphinaï  
 Premiere Venue & Dates: EMPAC, Oct 1-3, 2010  
 NY Premiere Venue & Dates: DTW at The Invisible Dog, Oct 27-Nov 7, 2010



Wilderness (2010) © Yi-Chun Wu

In *Wilderness*, the behavior of the audience informs, interrupts, and generates aspects of the dance. Enclosed with the audience in an elliptical field of black rubber mulch, a seasoned male performer's mercurial and stark opening solo is transformed by four dancers into a dance that slides from formal to potentially anarchic. The score is composed entirely of the audience and performers' movements, determined by sensors below the mulch. A pianist immediately interprets the score into large orchestral gestures or bursts of minimal pointillism. The 75-minute performance is intended for a 40-person audience in an intimate gathering.

*"Wilderness is, among many other things, about the expectations ingrained in the minds of audiences preparing to watch dance, and about that which might emerge out of a less compartmentalized dialogue with the unknown, with the immediacy and potential of the performative moment. Watching, or rather participating, in Wilderness, one can just as easily lose themselves in the piece's inherent suspense and intimacy as they can reflect on its dense and layered exploration of representation, death, and the unknowable."*

- Andrew Frank, BOMBlog

## DARK HORSE/BLACK FOREST (2009)

Direction & Choreography: Yanira Castro  
 Performance: Heather Olson & Joseph Poulson  
 Luke Miller & Darrin Wright  
 Lighting: Kathy Couch  
 Costumes: Suzanne Dougan  
 Installation: Charles Merritt Houghton  
 Sound: Stephan Moore  
 Video: Peter Richards  
 Length: Approx. 40 minutes  
 NYC Premiere Venue: Gershwin Hotel  
 June 5-28, 2009



Dark Horse/Black Forest at the Gershwin Hotel © Julieta Cervantes

*Dark Horse/Black Forest* is a Bessie-Award-Winning dance installation for public bathrooms. The audience is privy to a tempestuous, private exchange between a couple that evolves into a formal, sensual dance. There are two casts that interpret the work: Heather Olson + Joseph Poulson, Luke Miller + Darrin Wright. Fluorescents, mirrors, and video screens create a hyper-reflective space, multiplying performers and audience members. The sound score plays on a portable cassette player manipulated by the performers.

*My heart is racing... Dark Horse/Black Forest is a gripping, scary, adrenaline-producing work. I walked away from it with the kind of thrill of doing something totally crazy with a stranger. It feels dangerous. There's that intensity, the intimacy, immediacy, physicality, and emotional suggestion—and the utter impossibility of being able to recreate that rush with words. Roller coasters have nothing on this.*

— Mary Hodges, *The Brooklyn Rail*

ARTIST' BIOS: COURT/GARDERN PERFORMERS

**Simon Courchel** was born in 1979 in Paris and studied dance at the Paris Opera Ballet and the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris, from where he graduated. He then worked with William Forsythe, Michel Kelemenis, Jean-Claude Gallota, Dominique Bagouet, Karole Armitage, Yuval Pick, Tero Saarinen and Russel Maliphant among others. In 2006, he joined the Belgium choreographer Frederic Flamand and his team in Marseille as a principal dancer. Since 2010, Simon lives in New York, where he worked until 2013 as Deputy Director at The Invisible Dog Art Center. Simon is currently collaborating and dancing with Yanira Castro, John Jasperse, Jon Kinzel, Paul-Andre Fortier, Enrico Wey and Rebecca Lazier. [www.simoncourchel.com](http://www.simoncourchel.com)

**Luke Miller**, originally from Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, studied dance at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. He has performed with Yanira Castro / a canary torsi in *2:1*, *Center of Sleep*, *Wilderness*, *Paradis*, *The People to Come* and received a Bessie award in '09 for his collaboration and performance in *Dark Horse/Black Forest*. He is also currently a member of Susan Marshall & Co. and has danced in the work of Martha Clarke, David Dorfman, Molissa Fenley, Keely Garfield, Neil Greenberg, Antonio Ramos, Fiona Marcotty, Julie Atlas Muz, Neta Pulvermacher, Stephen Petronio, Sally Silvers, Christopher Williams, and Bill Young / Colleen Thomas. He has curated several live performance events at Location One art gallery in SOHO. Luke collaborates often with Quinndustry Collective infusing performance and dance within the world of David Quinn's fashion. He is in his third year teaching Movement for Actors at Playwrights Horizons Theater School at NYU and is staging repertory at Princeton this Fall for Susan Marshall & Co. For more information please visit [www.lukemillerdance.com](http://www.lukemillerdance.com).

**Kirsten Schnittker** is a dance-maker and performer living in Brooklyn. She has shown her work throughout New York City with ROVE/Rooftop Dance Introducing Series at the Roger Smith Hotel, Spring Movement at Center for Performance Research, AUNTS, Dance New Amsterdam, Green Space, Movement Research and she was a 2012 UPSTART Artist at Brooklyn Arts Exchange. Kirsten has the pleasure of dancing in the work of Yanira Castro | a canary torsi and Annette Herwander and has previously worked with Ilona Bito, Tara Aisha Willis, the A.O. Movement Collective, Andrew Schneider, and Kelley Donovan & Dancers.

**Pamela Vail** is a performer, choreographer, improviser, and teacher. She has been working with Yanira Castro since the mid-1990s. She is a co-founding member of the Architects, a performance improvisation ensemble, and also works with independent choreographers including Terry Creach, Heidi Henderson/elephant JANE dance, Tori Lawrence and Peter Schmitz, in addition to producing her own work. Recent collaborators include filmmaker Jeremy Moss and philosopher Keith Lehrer. She is currently Assistant Professor of Dance at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pa.

**Darrin M. Wright** is a native of Los Angeles, California where he started tap dancing at the age of six. His early training began with Ian Gary, Janet Roston and Rudy Perez. In 1997, Darrin joined the Bella Lewitzky Dance Company as part of its farewell tour. He received his BFA in dance from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign in 2002. Since graduation, Darrin has had the pleasure of working with Susan Marshall, Antonio Ramos, Terry Creach, Bill Young/Colleen Thomas, Jack Ferver, Tami Stronach, Amber Sloan, Jane Comfort, Lindsay Dietz-Marchant, Linsey Bostwick and Nina Winthrop. Darrin teaches master classes in technique, composition and improvisation throughout the country. He has loved working with a canary torsi since 2008. Currently Darrin lives in Brooklyn, New York.

**Kimberly Young** is a performer, choreographer and teacher based in Providence, RI. Her work has been presented in New York by ISSUE Project Room, Movement Research at the Judson Church, in association with Joyce SoHo, and at national venues including the Granoff Center for the Creative Arts (Providence, RI), SUNY Stony Brook's Staller Center (Stony Brook, NY), Stevie Eller Dance Theater (University of AZ, Tuscon), Studio 121 (Freeport, IL) and by Summer Stages Danceat Concord Academy (Concord, MA). As a performer, Young has worked with Robert Ashley, Tere O'Connor, Heather Olson, Helene Lesterlin, Jennifer Schmermund, Paul Singh, Todd Williams, and the Jen Mesch Dance Conspiracy. She is proud to have been dancing with a canary torsi since 2010.

ARTIST' BIOS: PERFORMANCE PORTRAIT LIVE PERFORMERS

Anna Azrieli is a dance artist who was born in the Soviet Union and has lived in New York since she was seven. She first danced with Miguel Gutierrez at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, where she earned a BFA in Dance. She began working with the Powerful People at their inception. She has danced with Luciana Achugar, Sam Kim, Donna Uchizono, Levi Gonzalez, Wendy Perron, Fred Darsow, Erin Cornell, Freefall, and others. Anna's solo choreography has been presented by The Kitchen's *Works in Process* series, Dixon Place's *Brink* series and by Danspace Projects's *DraftWork* series. Her next project will be presented at The Chocolate Factory in 2016. Her collaborative choreography has been shown by Movement Research at the Judson Church and by Dixon Place's Body Blend. She recently created a work for students at University of Texas-Pan American. Anna has been a yoga teacher for eleven years.

Leslie Cuyjet is an independent performer and choreographer who lives in Brooklyn. Leslie arrived in New York in 2004 with a B.F.A. (Dance) from the University of Illinois. Her independent work has been presented in New York by AUNTS Realness and Populous, Movement Research at Judson Church, Danspace Draftworks, and Wild Project. Other self-produced choreographic and performance work lives in theaters and galleries in both Chicago and Portland, Oregon with her collaborators, Happydog. Cuyjet has a long-standing touring and performance record with Cynthia Oliver and has been a member of Jane Comfort and Company since 2005. She has had the privilege to work and learn from Meredith Monk, David Gordon, Mark Dendy, Tere O'Connor, Vanessa Walters, Kim Brandt, Sean Donovan, Niall Noel Jones, Sean Donovan (Donovan and Calderón), and Emily Wexler, among others, which now gratefully includes Yanira and **a canary torsi**.

Peter B. Schmitz has been involved in the creative and performing arts for over 30 years as a dancer, choreographer, actor. As a professional dancer/choreographer, Peter has worked through out the United States, Amsterdam, Germany, France, England, New Zealand and recently in Ankara, Turkey. He was a founding member of Dance Gallery, a small modern dance company, a member of Creach/Co in New York City for over 8 years, and has performed in the works of Wendy Woodson, Ann Carlson, Richard Colton/Amy Spencer. He has choreographed for New World Theatre, Medicine Show Theater and Potomac Theater Project and is a member of Actors Equity. The other challenging and rewarding performing engagements with Yanira and **a canary torsi** include *Wilderness*, *Paradis* and *The People to Come*.

David Thomson is a collaborative artist in the fields of music, dance, theater and performance since the early 1980's. David has worked with a wide range of companies and artists including Mel Wong, Trisha Brown ('87-'93), Jane Comfort, Susan Rethorst, Remy Charlip, David Roussève, Ralph Lemon, Muna Tseng, Dean Moss/Layla Ali, and Alain Buffard, among many others. Thomson has performed downtown, Off Broadway and in London with the acclaimed a cappella performance group Hot Mouth, which garnered a Drama Desk nomination for "Unique Theatrical Experience." Thomson's other projects have included work as choreographer/performer in Tracie Morris' *Afrofuturistic*, Sekou Sundiata's final project *the 51st (dream) state*, Meg Stuart's *Auf Den Tisch*, and as a re-performer in Marina Abramović's MoMA retrospective, *The Artist is Present*. His work has been presented by The Kitchen, Danspace Project at St Mark's Church, Dance Theater Workshop, Movement Research at Judson Church, Baryshnikov Arts Center, Gibney Dance Center, LMCC Governors Island and The Invisible Dog. He has been artist-in-residence at Joyce SoHo, Dance Theater Workshop, and Movement Research, and is an inaugural Gibney DiP Resident Artist. He has won "Bessies" for Sustained Achievement and as part of the creative team for Bebe Miller's *Landing/Place*. He is a 2012 USA Ford Fellow, a 2013 NYFA Fellow in Choreography and a 2014 MacDowell Fellow.

ARTISTS' BIOS: DESIGNERS

KATHY COUCH INSTALLATION/LIGHTING/COSTUME DESIGNER

For 20 years, **Kathy Couch** has been designing and creating visual landscapes in performance and installation works. Primarily working in the mediums of light and space, Couch has designed over 300 performances in New York, Boston, Washington D.C., Australia, Armenia, Russia, Latvia, Serbia and throughout New England. Creating installations and designs for a variety of traditional and non-traditional spaces, Couch's artistic practice focuses on the vital role of the audience/viewer as active contributors to the work. Kathy Couch has ongoing performance collaborations with Adele Myers, Candice Salyers, The Architects and Chimaera Physical Theater. As a member of the creative team for Yanira Castro's *Dark Horse/Black Forest*, Couch received a 2009 Bessie Award. Most recently, she collaborated with choreographer and video artist Wendy Woodson in the creation of *Belonging: Reflections on Place*, a video installation for the Immigration Museum of Melbourne (Australia). Kathy Couch currently teaches Lighting Design at Amherst College and received an MFA in Visual Arts from the Vermont College of Fine Arts. She is a founding board member of the Northampton Community Arts Trust that seeks innovative ways to preserve arts space in Northampton, MA and a member of the arts organization C3, a creative community collective.

MIODRAG GUBERINIC COURT/GARDEN COSTUME DESIGNER

**Miodrag Guberinic** grew up in Serbia and graduated from the Academy of Applied Arts in Belgrade with a BFA in Costume and Fashion Design. He was awarded a full scholarship to Northwestern University's Stage Design Program in Chicago, and graduated with an MFA in Theater Costume Design. He was honored with the Norrenbroock Design Award from Northwestern University 2011 and The Merritt award for the best Graduating exhibition from The Goodman Theater in Chicago 2011. Since moving to New York City, he has been designing extensively in a range of theater productions from contemporary to avant-garde, always exploring clothing as a tool to tell the story and express the character. Recently he became Resident Costume Designer for Nerve Tank Theater Company. In 2011, he started collaborating with Spaeth Design Company in NYC, where he had the opportunity to design and create small-scale costume, craft and puppetry work, which has been featured in the holiday season window display designs for Bloomingdale's, Macy's, Saks Fifth Avenue and Lord & Taylor. Miodrag has had the great opportunity to design costumes for advertising and large-scale commercial events such as The Cosmic Opera at The Hammerstein Ballroom NYC, and The Black Party annual Event in 2012 and 2013 at Roseland Ballroom. You can see body of his work at [miodragnuberinic.com](http://miodragnuberinic.com).

STEPHAN MOORE COMPOSER + MUSICIAN + INTERACTION DESIGNER

**Stephan Moore**'s creative work is primarily concerned with the creation and perception of sonic environments, encompassing practices in field recording, physical programming, studio production, audio spatialization, loudspeaker construction and interactive software design, manifesting as sound installations, sound designs and scores for dance and theater productions, solo and group performance works and improvisations, and recordings. As a musician and sound engineer, he toured with the Merce Cunningham Dance company from 2004 to 2010. He was given a 2009 New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award for his score to Yanira Castro's *Dark Horse/Black Forest*, and a 2013 nomination for his score to *The People to Come*. He is the President of the American Society for Acoustic Ecology, a member of the Wingspace Design Collective, and an active curator, most recently of the exhibition *In the Garden of Sonic Delights* at the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts. Moore holds an MFA in Electronic Art from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a Ph.D in Electronic Music and Multimedia Composition from Brown University. He is a Lecturer in Northwestern University's School of Communication in the Department of Radio/Television/Film.

PETER RICHARDS COURT/GARDEN VIDEO ARTIST

**Peter Richards** moved to New York City in 1982. He is most known as a videographer for modern dance companies. He also is a dancer, having worked with companies as diverse as CoDanceCo, Richard Bull Dance Theatre, and Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo, among others. The video projections for the stage he has created have been shown at Aaron Davis Hall, Dance Theater Workshop, The Kitchen, and Symphony Space, and his video work has also been shown at The Stark Gallery in New York City. His last touring engagement was as a live-cameraman and video technician for White Oak Dance Project's performance, "Past/Forward." In 2004 he was awarded a Fellowship to pursue a Master of Fine Arts degree in the Department of Dance at The Ohio State University, where he taught Digital Video Editing, as well as Ballet for non-majors. He completed his degree in 2007 with a thesis project film, "Legacy: Helen Alkire and the Department of Dance at The Ohio State University". While in Ohio, he started "Absolutely Fabulous Dance Company," a weekly modern dance class and performing group of special-needs dancers from ARC-North, Columbus. He has been the resident videographer of The Bates Dance Festival, at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, since 2001.

JULIE WYMAN PERFORMANCE PORTRAIT: LIVE FILMMAKER

**Julie Wyman** is an award-winning filmmaker and a performer, writer, and professor. Her films investigate the body: locating, exploring, and inventing various situations in which the codes, conditions, and visceral experiences of physicality defy expectation. Formally, her work tends toward the eclectic, incorporating both documentary and narrative storytelling modalities and often combining various formats and tones of address into a single piece. Her 2004 film, *Buoyant*, screened at MoMA New York, the Walker Arts Center, the La Jolla MoCA and at festivals internationally. Her full-length documentary, *A Boy Named Sue* (2000) aired on Showtime, the MTV's Logo TV, and screened at festivals internationally, winning the 2001 Sappho Award for Best Documentary and receiving a nomination for the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation's Media Award for Best Documentary. Wyman's writing has been published in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Protest* and an edited volume entitled *Scholarly Acts*. Wyman is also a member of the artist/activist collective BLW whose performance work, has been featured at venues including the Institute for Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, Southern Exposure Gallery, San Francisco, Pilot Television, Chicago, and the Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford. Wyman holds a an MFA from the University of California, San Diego. She is currently a Professor of Digital Filmmaking in the Cinema and Digital Media Program at UC Davis.

## COMPANY CONTACTS

YANIRA CASTRO  
Director | Choreographer

917.495.6975  
[yanira@acanarytorsi.org](mailto:yanira@acanarytorsi.org)

[www.acanarytorsi.org](http://www.acanarytorsi.org)

## MEDIA LINKS

[www.vimeo.com/acanarytorsi](http://www.vimeo.com/acanarytorsi)  
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## FOR PRESS

[www.acanarytorsi.org/category/contact/](http://www.acanarytorsi.org/category/contact/)  
password: pressonly

## BOOKING INQUIRIES

Laura Colby  
Elsie Management  
223 Jay Street, Suite 301  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
718. 797.4577  
[laurac@elsieman.org](mailto:laurac@elsieman.org)  
[www.elsieman.org](http://www.elsieman.org)  
[www.facebook.com/ElsieManagement](https://www.facebook.com/ElsieManagement)



Court/Garden at Danspace Project © Jose Espallat



Dark Horse/Black Forest at tanzhaus © Brett Crocitto