

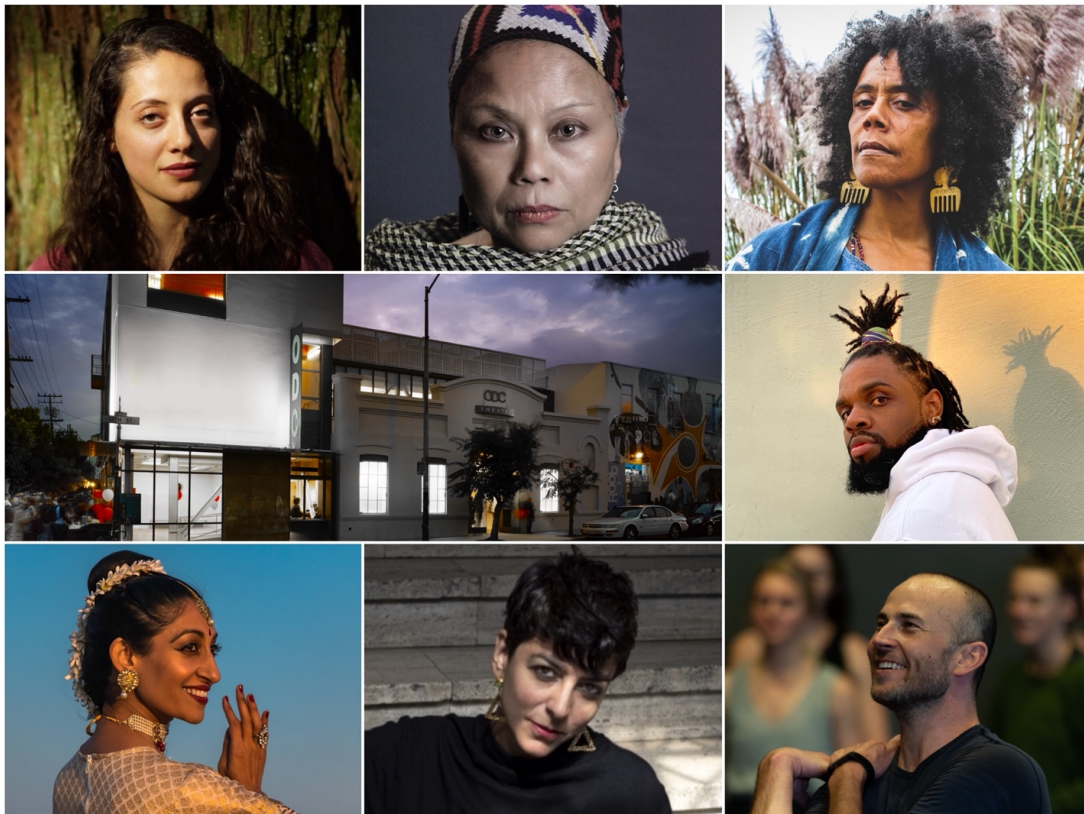


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ODC THEATER ANNOUNCES GUEST CURATORIAL TEAM FOR 2022 SEASON

Charles Slender-White & Amara Tabor-Smith
to curate summer festival and fall events

**Marlene Garcia, Alleluia Panis, Farah Yasmeen Shaikh, Dazaun Soleyn &
Leyya Mona Tawil to curate the Theater's new Rentals Discount Initiative**



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SAN FRANCISCO, CA, September 6, 2021 – ODC Theater, part of the most active center for contemporary dance on the West Coast, is proud to announce a team of Guest Curators for its 2022 Season. This diverse group of dance makers will collaborate in the selection of artists for the Theater’s summer festival, its fall season, as well as its rentals program. The Guest Curators include **Marlene Garcia, Alleluia Panis, Farah Yasmeen Shaikh, Charles Slender-White, Dazaun Soleyn, Amara Tabor-Smith** and **Leyya Mona Tawil**.

“Over the course of the last year and a half, ODC’s artistic and executive staff has engaged in a series of listening sessions with members of our local community, as well as conversations with regional and national leaders in the arts and culture sector,” said ODC Theater Creative Director **Chloë L. Zimberg**. “In response to the needs of artists in the Bay Area and beyond, we have decided to explore a model of collaborative curatorial decision-making in 2022. The dance ecosystem comprises a rich assortment of cultures, styles and aesthetics, and we believe that by expanding our curatorial leadership we can better represent and serve the diversity within our field.”

The shift to guest curation at ODC Theater in 2022 marks something of a return to ODC’s beginnings. Prior to the appointment of its first director more than 25 years ago, ODC Theater’s annual programs were developed collaboratively by members of its small collective. The curation for next year’s season will go further by centering the voices of artists from outside ODC.

Slender-White is the founder of FACT/SF, a contemporary dance company based in San Francisco, which has toured its original works internationally while supporting the development and presentation of works by Bay Area artists at home. He is also one of 40 Countertechnique teachers worldwide. Oakland-based Tabor-Smith is the artistic director of Deep Waters Dance Theater, a performance art ensemble centering ritual and folklore in an examination of issues facing people of color and the environment. In recent years, her work has foregrounded her spiritual practice as a Yoruba priest.

Together Slender-White and Tabor-Smith will work in coordination with Zimberg to curate ODC Theater’s annual summer festival, scheduled for next June. The festival will feature two weeks of cross-campus activities, highlighting the interplay of works by artists at different stages of their careers, with a focus on the process of creation, from initial impetus through fully developed work.

In addition to the festival, Slender-White and Tabor-Smith have been invited to curate two weekends of performance in the fall. This assignment includes the planning of a range of community engagement activities, joining artists and audiences in events designed to extend and amplify the performances inside the Theater.

More than a third of next year’s season, exactly 19 weeks, have been earmarked for ODC Theater’s new **Rentals Discount Initiative**. In its size, scope and emphasis on equity, this initiative breaks new ground for ODC. Ten weeks of space use will be offered completely free to artists, while the remainder will be discounted at 50%. Artists selected for this program have the option to forego a publicly ticketed event, their monies focusing instead on the development of works at an earlier stage. In addition, at least 15 of the 19 weeks will be allocated to artists who identify as Black, Native or Indigenous, People of Color, women, individuals with disabilities, and LGBTQIA2S+.

Garcia, Panis, Shaikh, Soleyn and Tawil were selected to review applications and select projects for the Theater's Rental Discount Initiative. Garcia, a participant in ODC's 2018 Pilot program for the development of emerging choreographers, has appeared on stages around the Bay Area from ODC Theater to Grace Cathedral. In 2018, the International Dance Festival Competition recognized her choreography fusing styles from contemporary to hip hop.

Panis is the founder of KULARTS, presenting contemporary and traditional Filipino arts. Since 1985, she has created 20 evening-length dance theater works, touring around the United States and abroad, from the Kennedy Center to the Singapore Arts Festival. Shaikh, a former student of Chitresh Das, is the founder of Noorani Dance. Her specialty is Kathak, one of the eight classical forms of Indian dance, which she taught at ODC as part of the School's Global Dance Passport program. Since 2015, she has divided her time between the United States and Pakistan.

Since completing his training at the Alonzo King LINES Ballet Program, Solyen founded his own company, dazaun.dance, receiving commissions from Oakland Ballet Company, the Black Choreographers Festival, Alonzo King LINES Ballet Summer Program and the University of San Francisco where he currently serves as adjunct faculty. Finally, Tawil is a Syrian Palestinian American performer and choreographer, who over a 25-year career has performed on stages from the Abrons Arts Center in New York to the plazas of Turku, Finland. Tawil's company, DANCE ELIXIR, operates out of TAC: Temescal Art Center in Oakland.

An additional four Guest Curators will be announced at a later time. They will be assigned the role of curating ODC Theater's lobby gallery space, rotating on a quarterly basis, with free "First Friday Lobby Nights" taking place each month.

An announcement of the program for ODC Theater's 2022 Season will appear later in the fall. For more information, visit odc.dance/theater.

ABOUT ODC THEATER

ODC Theater participates in the creation of new works through commissioning, presenting, mentorship and space access; it develops informed, engaged and committed audiences; and it advocates for the performing arts as an essential component to the region's economic and cultural development. The Theater is the site of over 120 performances a year involving nearly 1,000 local, regional, national and international artists.

Since 1976, ODC Theater has been the mobilizing force behind countless San Francisco artists and the foothold for national and international touring artists seeking debut in the Bay Area. The Theater, founded by Brenda Way and currently under the creative direction of Chloë L. Zimberg, has earned its place as a cultural incubator by dedicating itself to creative change-makers, those leaders who give the Bay Area its unmistakable definition and flare. Nationally known artists Spaulding Gray, Diamanda Galas, Bill T. Jones, Eiko & Koma, Ronald K. Brown/EVIDENCE, Karole Armitage, Sarah Michelson, Brian Brooks and John Heginbotham are among those whose first San Francisco appearance occurred at ODC Theater. For more information about ODC Theater and all its programs visit odc.dance/theater.