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## ODC WELCOMES MAURYA KERR AS THEATER RESIDENT CURATOR



*Maurya Kerr photographed by Kimara Dixon.*

[odc.dance/theater](http://odc.dance/theater)

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, August 1, 2023 – ODC is pleased to announce the appointment of **Maurya Kerr** as ODC Theater Resident Curator, a new position that aims to expand the Theater’s perspectives while facilitating access for artists and community members. Kerr’s position runs through the end of 2024.

The position of Resident Curator grew out of ODC Theater’s multi-curator platform initiated at the end of 2021, part of an effort to explore more collaborative forms of decision-making in curation. Under the direction of ODC Theater Creative Director **Chloë L. Zimberg**, seven diverse artists were chosen that year, two with the mandate of curating the Theater’s annual summer dance festival, State of Play, in addition to two standalone presentations, and five others tasked with curating the Theater’s Rental

Discount Initiative, providing free or discounted space to mostly local artists. The program continued this year under the same format, and Kerr, together with **Leyya Mona Tawil**, was one of the individuals in charge of curating State of Play as well as two standalone presentations which will take place early next year.

“As timelines of theatrical production continue their return to pre-pandemic levels, we discovered the need for a longer view for our curation in house,” said Zimberg. “I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work side by side with Maurya over the next year and a half. She will take on a larger set of responsibilities, reviewing artist inquiries on a rolling basis, and she will join the Rentals Discount Initiative curatorial panel, helping to bridge the gap between our presented and rental programs.”

Kerr, a former ODC Theater Resident Artist, is the artistic director of *tinypistol*, a contemporary dance company which made its New York debut this year as part of the 92nd Street Y Harkness Mainstage Series. As a freelance choreographer, Kerr has received commissions from several companies, including most recently *Whim W’Him* in Seattle. Earlier in her career, over a span of 12 years she danced with Alonzo King LINES Ballet.

Kerr is also a critically acclaimed poet and filmmaker. The *Village Voice* called her sophomore film, *Saint Leroi*, “a surreal meditation on Black history, violence and American decay, and a powerful indictment of racism.” As a poet, Kerr was nominated for a Pushcart Prize, and she is the recipient of the 2022 Tom Howard/Margaret Reid Poetry Prize. During the 2021-22 academic year, she was a Poetry & the Senses Fellow at UC Berkeley’s Arts Research Center, and her first chapbook, *MUTTOLOGY*, will be published by Harbor Editions this fall. Kerr holds an MFA in dance from Hollins University in Virginia.

“I am grateful and honored to extend my curatorial work with ODC Theater as its Resident Curator,” said Kerr. “I learned so much from my experience co-curating ODC Theater’s 2023/24 season with Leyya Mona Tawil, and I am encouraged by the racial equity and artistic excellence that we’ve supported. Curatorial praxis offers the opportunity to champion justice through the pragmatics of arts programming and advocacy, and I look forward to deepening this urgent work.”

“I am so pleased to welcome Maurya to ODC in this new curatorial capacity,” said ODC Founder and Artistic Director **Brenda Way**. “I have admired her bold vision and personal integrity since her tenure as an ODC Theater resident artist from 2015 – 18, and I look forward to her imaginative imprint on our organization.”

In addition to Kerr and Zimberg, ODC Theater’s curatorial team for the 2024 Season will include **Gabriel Christian, Zaquia Mahler-Salinas, Hope Mohr** and **Bhumi Patel**. These four artists were chosen to review applications within the Theater’s Rental Discount Initiative, offering 50% to 100% off the rental rate. For more information, visit [odc.dance/rdi-awards](https://odc.dance/rdi-awards).

## 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](http://odc.dance/theater).

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