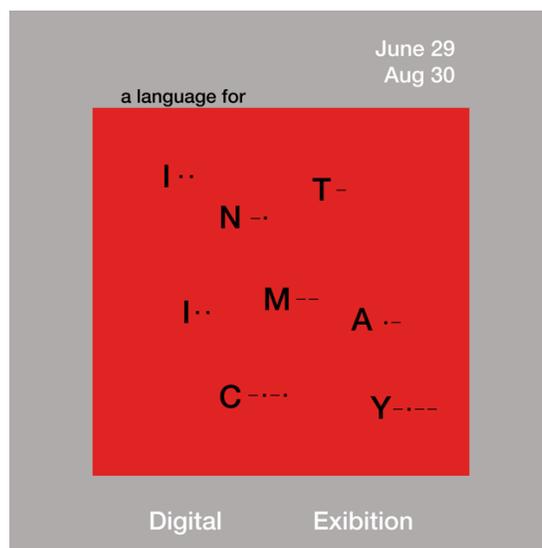


**FROM THE CURATORS: PRESS RELEASE
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A Language for Intimacy
June 29–August 30, 2020
alanguageforintimacy.com



Nine Artists and Nine Writers Explore Ideas of Intimacy in the Wake of COVID-19
A Co-Presentation by Abrons Arts Center and Boston Center for the Arts

New York, NY | June 22, 2020—Abrons Arts Center and Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) are pleased to co-present “A Language for Intimacy,” an online group exhibition, curated by Amanda Contrada and Terence Trouillot, exploring concepts of intimacy in light of the social distancing efforts across the globe in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The works and corresponding text will be presented digitally on the web June 29–August 30, 2020 at alanguageforintimacy.com.

Part of the Abrons’ summer visual arts programming and BCA’s virtual curatorial residency program—with additional support from the Laundromat Project and Topical Cream & Alice Longyu Gao—“A Language for Intimacy” will feature new and existing works in performance, sound, photography, sculpture, video, and drawing, from a group of nine artists, alongside written responses from nine fellow art writers. The works and corresponding texts consider expressions of intimacy through language, the body, collaboration and community, and material and space.

More broadly, the artists and writers in the exhibition consider what intimacy may look like and mean in an increasingly digital world during a time of global crisis, and, more recently, social uprising. The politics of intimacy are at the fore, from the racial health disparities the virus has exposed to the mass protests that have galvanized a global anti-racist movement to end state violence against black bodies. The xenophobia, transphobia, and systemic racism highlighted by this pandemic lay bare the inequalities people face when considering who can practice

intimacy, in what ways, and for what purpose. “A Language for Intimacy” offers an opportunity to engage in this conversation around intimacy and reach people in a time of fear, isolation, and change.

Moreover, in solidarity with the protestors calling for justice in the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, Riah Milton, Dominique Fells, Rayshard Books, and many more, the website will include a “DONATION” page that will feature two organizations a week (chosen by both the artists and writers in the exhibition) that are fighting for racial justice, and support our BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ communities.

“As a program of Henry Street Settlement, Abrons Arts Center is uniquely positioned to understand the ways in which equitable access to social services and the arts amplifies communities’ capacities to care deeply for themselves and each other,” says Ali Rosa-Salas, Director of Programming at Abrons Arts Center. “We are delighted to support ‘A Language for Intimacy,’ which provides a platform for artists and writers to reflect on how the cultivation of intimacy is a key organizing tool.”

Randi Hopkins, Director of Visual Arts at Boston Center for the Arts, says, “BCA is proud to support this innovative curatorial project, which is responsive not only to the environment of unprecedented physical constraints we are experiencing, but also to longstanding, underlying systemic constraints that are being exposed for the enormous injustice and danger they pose to real connection and intimacy. BCA knows that art can be a voice for change, and looks forward to the conversations that this virtual exhibition engenders.”

The exhibition includes artworks by Elliott Jerome Brown Jr., Tomás Díaz Cedeño, Jesse Chun, Sougwen Chung, Rachel Devorah, Jesse Draxler, DonChristian Jones, Sophie Kahn, and Jeremy Toussaint-Baptiste; and texts by Erica N. Cardwell, Amanda Contrada, Noah Dillon, Ladi’ Sasha Jones, Danilo Machado, Shanekia McIntosh, Amelia Rina, Mebrak Tareke, and Claire Voon.

About the Curators

Amanda Contrada is a Brooklyn-based curator, producer, and project manager working in art and music. She has produced exhibitions including *Rammellzee: Racing for Thunder* and Bjarne Melgaard’s *The Casual Pleasure of Disappointment* at Red Bull Arts New York as well as curating and overseeing contemporary art performances and installations at cultural events including Material Art Fair, MUTEK, among others.

Terence Trouillot is a freelance art writer and editor. He is a contributing editor at *BOMB Magazine* and has written about contemporary art and visual culture for magazines including *BOMB Magazine*, *Artforum*, *Art in America*, *art-agenda*, *artcritical*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *The Village Voice*, *ARTS.BLACK*, *Artnet News*, and *Eye on Design*, among others. He lives and works in New York City.

About Boston Center for the Arts

Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) supports working artists to create, perform, and exhibit new works; develops new audiences; and connects the arts to community. Opened to the public in 1970, Boston Center for the Arts has for five decades engaged the creative community for public good. While the organization's physical residence can be found in the historic South End, Boston Center for the Arts touches every part of Boston's cultural ecosystem.

A leading force in the city's cultural community, Boston Center for the Arts has supported thousands of individual artists, small organizations and performing arts companies, who add depth and dimension to the Boston arts ethos. Through residencies and programming, Boston Center for the Arts serves as an epicenter for an expanding cohort of artists working across all disciplines, and has catalyzed careers by providing fertile ground for experimentation and artistic risk-taking.

The artistic programs at BCA have evolved over the past 50 years, originally rooted in visual arts and theatre and expanding to encompass all forms and disciplines practiced by working artists across Boston. Through groundbreaking residency, exhibition, and performance programs, BCA has extended its reach and increased access points to BCA services for a wider number of artists throughout the Greater Boston community and beyond.

For press inquiries, please contact

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About Abrons Arts Center

Abrons Arts Center is the OBIE award-winning home for contemporary interdisciplinary arts in Manhattan's Lower East Side neighborhood. A core program of the Henry Street Settlement, Abrons believes that access to the arts is essential to a free and healthy society. Through performances, presentations, exhibitions, education programs and residencies, Abrons mobilizes communities with the transformative power of art.

The arts have always been an integral part of Henry Street's mission. Their vitality was cemented in 1915 with the opening of The Neighborhood Playhouse and again, in 1975, with the completion and dedication of Abrons Arts Center, one of the first arts facilities in the nation designed for a predominantly low-income population. Today, the OBIE award-winning institution is an essential cultural resource, providing diverse audiences with artistically bold work while offering artists opportunities to dynamically grow.

Each year, Abrons premieres over 20 performances, six gallery exhibitions, hosts multiple residencies for performing and studio artists, and offers 100 different classes in dance, music, theater, and visual art. Abrons also provides New York City public schools with teaching artists, introducing more than 3,000 students to the arts. Visit abronsartscenter.org for more information.

About Henry Street Settlement

Founded in 1893 by social work and public health pioneer [Lillian Wald](#) and based on Manhattan's Lower East Side, Henry Street Settlement delivers a wide range of social service, arts and health care programs to more than 60,000 New Yorkers each year. Distinguished by a profound connection to its neighbors, a willingness to address new problems with swift and innovative solutions, and a strong record of accomplishment, Henry Street challenges the effects of urban poverty by helping families achieve better lives for themselves and their children. Henry Street has a staff of 450 full-time and 400 seasonal employees, an active Board of Directors, partnerships with several organizations and a burgeoning alumni network.

Declaration of Inclusion

Abrons Arts Center values freedom of expression and creativity, ever striving to provide creative communities with a space that celebrates diversity of thought and experience. Abrons aims to be an anti-oppressive home to people from all backgrounds and does not discriminate on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, citizen status, ancestry, age, religion, disability, sex or gender identity. As definitions of expression and inclusion evolve, Abrons is committed to continually revising this statement in collaboration with our communities.

Indigenous Land Acknowledgment

Nulelìntàmuhëna èli paèkw Lenapehoking. Kulawsihëmo ènta ahpièkw. Nooleelundamuneen eeli payeekw Lunaapeewahkiing. Wulaawsii kw neeli apiyeekw.

We are glad because you people came to Lenapehoking. Live well when you are here. Abrons Arts Center is situated on the Lenape island of Manhahtaan (Mannahatta) in Lenapehoking, the Lenape homeland. We pay respect to Lenape peoples, past, present, and future and their continuing presence in the homeland and throughout the Lenape diaspora. We offer our care and gratitude to the land, water and air of Lenapehoking, and are committed to resisting colonialism and imbalance with Mother Earth through the support of Indigenous-led programming and Indigenous artistic practices.

Thank you to the [Lenape Center](#) and Emily Johnson/Catalyst for their partnership in developing Abrons Arts Center's Indigenous Land Acknowledgment.

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