

LA MAMA ⁵⁷
EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE CLUB

**LA MAMA MOVES!
DANCE FESTIVAL**

present

Calling:
a dance with faith
Directed by Jesca Prudencio



Ellen Stewart Theatre
66 East 4th Street, NYC, 10003
May 23 - 24, 2019

Calling: a dance with faith

Directed by Jesca Prudencio
Featuring Hala Shah and Samar Aafiya
Devised and choreographed with the performers
Creative advisor: Ping Chong

CREATIVE & PRODUCTION TEAM

Directed by Jesca Prudencio
Lighting Design by Cecilia Durbin
Sound Design & Composition by Fan Zhang
Stage Managed by Kristina Varshavskaya
Sound Supervised by Ernesto Valenzuela

PRODUCTION TEAM

Promotional Videos Director and Cinematographer: Delia Flores
Promotional Videos Editor: Kristina Varshavskaya
Promotional Photography: Idris Ademola
Promotional Graphic Designer: Chaesong Kim

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Ryan Conarro, Artistic Collaborator In Residence | Community
Projects Associate
Kristina Varshavskaya, Company Manager
Christina Bixland, Education Director
Chaesong Kim, Communications Associate
Minjoo Kim, Production Intern

The performance is approximately 70 minutes in length.

*We welcome all those who are observing Ramadan.
Please join us as a community for a brief breaking
of the fast after the performance.*

CALLING is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council. It was developed with the support of an Engaging Dance Audiences grant from Dance USA, made possible with funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, and the Building Bridges program of the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art

DIRECTOR'S NOTE:

Since 2008, I have been a proud member of Ping Chong + Company. In my eleven years with the company working beside my mentor Ping Chong on projects at community centers, universities, regional theaters, and opera houses, one thread stays consistent throughout: humanity is always the core of art making. I am honored to share the lives of these two incredible human beings who have given their strength, creativity, and vulnerability to this process.

Calling expands upon our traditional interview-based theater process, which is known as the *Undesirable Elements* series. In *Undesirable Elements*, create in-depth community residencies, interviewing local individuals, who are not professional performers, about questions of culture, identity and belonging. The form is a scripted story-telling structure, with little to no movement.

I have previously led the creation of *Undesirable Elements* projects, but with *Calling*, Ping Chong + Company invited me to play with the *Undesirable Elements* form and process, to translate it into dance. It began with in-depth interviews with each performer. From there I began to script their personal narratives, while we generated movement pieces in rehearsal. A question I posed to the room was, "Can dance be documentary?" Along the way, we watched *Undesirable Elements* footage, as well as past dance works such *98.6*, Ping's collaboration with Muna Tseng.

As I got to know Hala and Samar, one central conflict was identical: they have both kept their identities as a Muslim and dancer, separate. They both had not found a space to have the two identities meet, until this piece.

The initial creation process coincidentally began during Ramadan in May 2018, and I was truly in awe of how they were able to dance for hours while fasting. Witnessing their dedication to both their art and their religion in rehearsal, had gotten me closer to my own spirituality. After one year of further development, we are honored to premiere this piece in the artist safe haven that is La MaMa, during Ramadan once again. It is our hope that we take the audience on a journey of personal authenticity through language of text and the language of the body. To quote an observation from Ping from rehearsal, "The text is music, and dance is language."

Calling was developed during residencies at the La MaMa Great Jones Studio and Downtown Arts NYC.

Ping Chong + Company creates theatrical works addressing the important cultural and civic issues of our times, striving to reach the widest audiences with the greatest level of artistic innovation and social integrity. The New York City-based company was founded in 1975 by leading theatrical innovator Ping Chong with a mission to create works of theater and art that explore the intersections of race, culture, history, art, media, and technology in the modern world. Ping Chong + Company is a resident company of La MaMa. *Calling* is the 27th Ping Chong + Company production to be performed at La MaMa since 1979. pingchong.org / @pingchongco on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

JESCA PRUDENCIO (Director) is a director focused on creating highly physical productions of new plays, musicals, and documentary theater nationally, and internationally. Favorite credits include Anna Moench's *Man of God* (East West Players), Will Snider's *How To Use a Knife* (Mixed Blood), Ben Fisher's *Mobile Happiness Bazaar* (La Jolla Playhouse's WoW Festival), and *FAN: stories from the brothels of Bangkok* (Thailand). Her critically acclaimed productions of Qui Nguyen's *Vietgone* and Anna Ziegler's *Actually* at San Diego Repertory Theatre received numerous award nominations by the SD Critic's Circle including Outstanding Director. She is a recipient of The Drama League Fellowship, and the inaugural Julie Taymor World Theater Fellowship. She is Artistic Director/Founder of People Of Interest, a theater company dedicated to creating documentary dance theater works, and is currently Head of Directing at San Diego State University. BFA: NYU Tisch, MFA: UC San Diego. Upcoming: *The Great Leap* (Steppenwolf), *A&Q: on the war on drugs* (UP Theater, Philippines) jescaprudencio.com

CECILIA DURBIN (Lighting Designer) Recent Designs: *A Doll's House, Part 2* (Actor's Theatre Louisville); *Sense & Sensibility, Love Alone* (Playmakers Rep); *Selkie* (Dutch Kills Theater Co.), *South Pacific* (Triad Stage); *Disgraced* (Portland Stage, Hangar Theatre); *The Taming of the Shrew* (Chautauqua Theatre); *Bernie & Mikey's Trip to the Moon* (Strangemen Theatre Company, 59E59); *The Little Red Fish, This is Sadie* (NYC Children's Theatre); *Birthday Candles, Marie & Rosetta, Murder Ballad* (Detroit Public Theatre); *Amy Surratt's First & Last* (Show), *Hyena* (also Edinburgh Fringe, United Solo [Best Lighting]) (La MaMa); *In the Blood* (Theatre Horizon [Barrymore nom]); *Numb* (Goat in the Road Productions, JACK); *Little Women, Camelot, All Shook Up, On Golden Pond* (New London Barn Playhouse). Assistant Professor of Lighting Design Montclair State University; MFA from NYU; member USA829. www.durbinlighting.com

FAN ZHANG (Sound Designer and Composer) Off-Broadway: *Behind the Sheet* (Ensemble Studio Theatre), *The Trail of the Catonsville Nine* (Transport Group), *Beautiful Day Without you* (West End Theatre), *Scissoring* (INTAR). NYC: *Suicide Forest* (Ma-Yi & Bushwick Starr), *Three Girls Never Learnt the Way Home* (Cherry Lane Theatre), *Tania In the Gateway Van* (New Georges), *The Mecca's Tale* (The Sheen Center), *The Ideal Obituary* (The Tank), *Interstate* (Theatre Row). Regional: *Seven Guitars* at Yale Repertory Theatre (CT Critics Circle, Outstanding Sound Design), *Redeem* (Cincinnati Ballet), *Revolutionist* (Pittsburgh City Theatre), *Red Maple* (Capital Repertory Theatre). Member of Theatrical Sound Designers and Composers Association. Training: MFA, Sound Design, Yale School of Drama. fanzhangsound.com

KRISTINA VARSHAVSKAYA (Stage Manager) was born in Russia but raised in one of the greatest cities in the world, New York! Kristina earned her B.A. in Theater from Brooklyn College, and is passionate about working with non-profit + education organizations and well as film production. She is a Company Manager for Ping Chong + Company and has stage managed a number of their productions for the past 10 years including *Beyond Sacred: Voices of Muslim Identity*, *Say My Name Say My Name* in collaboration with BreakOUT in New Orleans, LA, *Secret Histories* (Lincoln Center Education), *Brooklyn '63*, *Cry For Peace: Voices from Congo*, *Inside/Out*, and many more. Her recent works include: *Bad Ass Beauty: The Rock Opera* (NYMF 2018), *HEAR THEM ROAR: The Fight For Women's Rights* (NYU), *Miracle Worker* (NYU), *Tales of the Lost Formicans* (NYU). This is her third collaboration with Jesca and she is honored to be working with such amazingly talented and powerful group of women!

FUNDING CREDITS

Ping Chong + Company is grateful for the support of the National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, The Ford Foundation, The Fan Fox & Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Howard Gilman Foundation, The Hugh and Jane Ferguson Foundation, The Hyde and Watson Foundation, Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, The Shubert Foundation, The Leon Levy Foundation, The Lucille Lortel Foundation and many generous individual donors.

THANK YOU NOTES

Special Thanks: Mia Yoo, Gian Marco Lo Forte, Nicky Paraiso, Hao Bai, Kiku Sakai, Suzanne Callahan, DanceUSA, Downtown Arts, Ryan Gilliam, Dakota Gilliam, Sadaf Habib and Amanda Lyon.

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The 14th Season of the La MaMa Moves! Dance Festival has been made possible with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, with special thanks to City Council Speaker, Corey Johnson; New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; Ford Foundation; Howard Gilman Foundation; Mertz Gilmore Foundation; The Harkness Foundation for Dance; The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; The Jerome Robbins Foundation; The Shubert Foundation and The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust.

La MaMa Moves! Dance Festival | April 26 - May 26, 2019

we want miles, in a silent way

April 26 - 28, 2019

The Downstairs

All – A Physical Poem Of Protest

May 3 - 5, 2019

The Downstairs

But The Sun Came Up And We Were Here

May 3 - 5, 2019

Ellen Stewart Theatre

Peony Dreams: On The Other Side Of Sleep

May 9 - 10, 2019

Ellen Stewart Theatre

SKIN, Mea Culpa, Uma and Holy Cow(s)

May 11 - 12, 2019

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Lost Mountain

May 16 - 19, 2019

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Surveys The Prairie Of Your Room

May 18 - 19, 2019

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Calling: A Dance With Faith

May 23 - 24, 2019

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Mirror

May 25 - 26, 2019

Ellen Stewart Theatre

Special Off-Site Events

Free Panel | Secret Journey: Stop Calling Them Dangerous #2

May 18 - 19, 2019

Location: Movement Research | 122 Community Center, 150 First Ave New York, NY 10009

LA MAMA



RESTORE A BUILDING REMAKE A WORLD



Rendering: 74 East 4th St.

La MaMa's historic, landmark building at 74 East 4th Street is undergoing an urgently needed complete renovation and restoration to preserve the historic façade, create building-wide ADA accessibility, and provide much needed performance, exhibition and community space for decades to come.

La MaMa, founded by Ellen Stewart in 1961, has been on east 4th Street since 1967. La MaMa embraces every person in its community and is legendary as the place where new artists of all nations, cultures, races, and identities are given opportunities. It is the place where art begins.

To learn more about the renovation, or to make a donation please visit www.lamama.org/remakeaworld

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LA MAMA

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April 26 - May 26, 2019
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The Downstairs

Messiah

May 23 - June 2, 2019
The Downstairs

La MaMa Squirts

May 31 - June 2, 2019
Ellen Stewart Theatre

Bach & Bleach

June 5 - 9, 2019
The Downstairs

Stonewall 50 at La MaMa

May 30 - June 30, 2019
Ellen Stewart Theatre

COMING SOON

Global Gay

June 6 - 9, 2019
Ellen Stewart Theatre

Coffeehouse Chronicles Taylor Mac

Sat, June 8, 2019 at 3pm
Ellen Stewart Theatre

La MaMa Kids Family Play Date

June 9, 2019 at Noon
The Downstairs

13 Fruitcakes

June 13 - 16, 2019
Ellen Stewart Theatre

Contradict This! A Birthday Funeral for Heroes

June 20 - 29, 2019
Ellen Stewart Theatre