

Shahryar Nashat

Force Life



MoMA

About *Force Life*

For the inaugural commission in The Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis Studio, artist Shahryar Nashat presents the installation *Force Life*. The other commission is *Shelf Life* by choreographer Adam Linder. The exhibitions alternate hourly throughout the day, so that only one is on view at a given time.

Nashat's *Force Life* is on view daily at 10:30 a.m., 12:30, 2:30, and 4:30 p.m., and on Fridays 10:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m., 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, and 8:00 p.m.

Shahryar Nashat is interested in how technological innovations can serve as prostheses that extend the abilities and functions of the human form. Pondering the question “when is the body most alive,” he is equally invested in how technology can alienate humans from themselves and from one another. His work lives in the uneasy balance between these competing aspects of technology, a force that both enhances and fragments human life.

Nashat's exhibition *Force Life* consists of three sculptures and a video set within an immersive light environment designed by the artist. Each of these works corresponds to an idea in a tripartite system: a video titled *Blood (what is authority)*; a horizontal sculpture titled *Barre (when will you get rid of my body)*; and two marble sculptures titled *Brain (you no longer have to simulate)* and *Brain (are you nervous in this system)*. Each element is a stand-in for ways in which art is experienced: a physical experience, felt with the body; a visual experience, seen by the eyes; and an intellectual experience, perceived by the mind. Deploying elements of the central nervous system across three distinct artworks, Nashat mimics the fragmentation of consciousness experienced through contemporary technologies. A prone body is the centerpiece of the video, a form subjected to relentless mechanical scanning by the camera, which zooms in and out, panning over the body as if carrying out an inventory of its component parts. Animals captured on CCTV also create a silent, menacing presence; as they interact with the camera, the lens becomes both mirror and counterpart.

Accompanying these works is an immersive lighting environment that changes throughout the course of the exhibition and in relation to the natural shift in light filtered through the windows in the Kravis Studio. The light surrounds and unifies the artworks, connecting the dispersed objects of Nashat's system into a single body.

By presenting two distinct exhibitions that occupy the same space, Linder and Nashat raise questions about where art happens and how it is communicated.

Bio

Shahryar Nashat (1975) is a Swiss artist. His work has been presented at Statens Museum for Kunst Copenhagen (2019); Swiss Institute, New York (2019); Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland (2018); Portikus, Frankfurt (2016); Schinkel Pavillon, Berlin (2016); Carpenter Center for Visual Arts at Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (2015); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2015); and 356 Mission, Los Angeles, CA (2015), among other venues. Nashat's work has been included in the Venice Biennale (2011, 2005), 8th Berlin Biennale (2014), 20th Sydney Biennale (2016), Montreal Biennial (2016), and the Hammer Biennial (2016).

List of Works

Brain (you no longer have to simulate). 2020.
Marble, 22 ¾ × 27 × 55 ⅞" (58 x 68.6 x 140 cm)

Brain (are you nervous in this system). 2020.
Marble, 22 ⅞ × 25 ½ × 55 ⅞" (57.5 x 64.7 x 140 cm)

Barre (when will you get rid of my body). 2020. Synthetic polymer, fiberglass, 26 ¾ × 78 ¾ × 15" (68 x 200 x 38 cm)

Blood (what is authority). 2020. HD video, color/sound, 14:15 min.



Shahryar Nashat: *Force Life* is commissioned by The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Organized at MoMA by Stuart Comer, The Lonti Ebers Chief Curator of Media and Performance, and Ana Janevski, Curator, with Giampaolo Bianconi, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Media and Performance Art.

Hyundai Card

The exhibition is presented as part of The Hyundai Card Performance Series.

Additional support is provided by the Harkness Foundation for Dance.

Cover image: © 2020 Shahryar Nashat, Photo: Will Davidson; Above: Still from *Blood (what is authority)*. 2020. HD video, color/sound, 14:15 min.

Blood is produced by Joni Sighvatsson and Natalie Hill, with the assistance of Alexandre Khondji, music and sound by Steffen Martin, and camera by Jeanne Vienne. Thanks to Caspian Larkins and Jess Gadani. The artist wishes to thank Josef Dalle Nogare - Dalle Nogare Graniti e Marmi and Basil Katz - Cinnabar California for their generous support. Special thanks to Riley O'Neill and Cooper Jacoby. All works courtesy of David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles, and Rodeo, London/Athens

Sheff Life is by Adam Linder. Performance: Leah Katz, Justin F. Kennedy, Mickey Mahar, Angie Pittmann, Brooke Stamp, Sandy Williams. Costume Assistant: Hannah Boone. Music: Steffen Martin. Adam Linder Studio: Andrea Niederbuchner (producer), Anna von Glasenapp (assistant producer). Very special thank you to Hannah Hoffman, Los Angeles. Thank you to Basil Katz at Cinnabar and Salmon Creek Farm. This work was made with the kind residency support of the CalArts School of Dance.

The Hyundai Card Performance Series.

Additional support is provided by the Harkness Foundation for Dance.

Cover image: © 2020 Adam Linder, Photo: Will Davidson; Above: Detail of a costume from *Sheff Life* (2020)

Organized at MoMA by Stuart Comer, The Lonti Ebers Chief Curator of Media and Performance, and Ana Janevski, Curator, with Giampaolo Bianconi, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Media and Performance Art, and produced by Lizzie Gortaine, Performance Producer, with Ginny Benson, Assistant Performance Coordinator.

Adam Linder: Sheff Life is commissioned by The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



For the inaugural commissions in The Marie-Josée and Henry Kravis Studio, choreographer Adam Linder presents the performance *Shell Life*. The other commission is *Force Life* by artist Shahrar Nashat. The exhibitions alternate throughout the day, so that only one is on view at a given time.

Adam Linder is a choreographer who works across theatrical and gallery settings. Many of his works focus on breaking down established choreographic activities and roles to reposition them within a range of historical and institutional contexts—for instance, conceiving dance as a service for hire over a contracted period of time in his series *Choreographic Services*, or dissolving the hierarchies between disciplinary elements in his opera *The WANT*.

With *Shell Life*, a work for six dancers conceived for MoMA's Kravis Studio, Linder acknowledges that dance is already part of the museological context and reflects on how a choreographic structure can be contained by the space and time of an exhibition. The work is based on three concepts: the barre, the blood, and the brain. These create a metaphorical nervous system for dance: the barre, where movement begins, which is a meditative reflection on dancers' skills performed by one dancer; the blood flow that propels the body, which is performed by a second dancer moving freely in the space; and the brain—performed simultaneously by a pair of dancers—which reflects on physical impulses and rational calculations. Each of the six dancers cycles through all of these different positions on a daily basis for five weeks. The title *Shell Life* alludes to the finite physical resources expended by the dancer's body and how the virtuosity and ephemeral nature of performance are defined within the context of a museum. By presenting two distinct exhibitions that occupy the same space, Linder and Nashat raise questions about where art happens and how it is communicated.

Linder's *Shell Life* is on view daily at 11:30 a.m., 1:30, and 3:30 p.m., and on Fridays at 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, and 7:00 p.m.

Adam Linder is a choreographer working in Los Angeles and Berlin. In 2018, the Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco, CA, presented *Adam Linder: FULL SERVICE*, which travelled to Mudam Luxembourg, and recent solos have taken place at Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland (2017), South London Gallery (2018), and Serralves Museum, Portugal (2018). His stage works have been presented at the theaters Hebbel am Ufer in Berlin and Kampnagel in Hamburg. He was awarded the Mohn Prize for artistic excellence by the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. In 2020, he will choreograph an original stage work for Ballet de Lorraine in Nancy, France.

Leah Katz is a dance artist, originally from Massachusetts, who lives and works in Berlin. She received her BFA in dance from SUNY Purchase in 2009. Katz has performed and collaborated internationally including with Adam Linder, Tino Sehgal, Alexandra Pirici, Jeremy Shaw/Justin F. Kennedy, Dafna Maimon, Kat Västatur, Liz Magic Laser & Sanya Kantarovsky, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and Staatsoper Berlin. She was the recipient of a 2017 DanceWEB scholarship.

Justin F. Kennedy is a dance artist from St. Croix, Virgin Islands. They studied dance and ethnic studies at Wesleyan University and choreography at HZT Berlin, and lead workshops about trans dance and science fiction opera. Kennedy has performed with and for many artists, including Emma Howes, Mark Fell, Tino Sehgal, Ligia Lewis, Jeremy Shaw, Adam Linder, Peaches, Faustin Linyekula, and Wu Tsang.

Mickey Mahar is a dancer and performer, originally from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who lives in Berlin. He works primarily with artists that create performances within visual art contexts, and most recently has collaborated with Anne Imhof and Maria Hassabi. Since graduating from Vassar College in 2012, Mahar has worked professionally in venues around the world, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Whitney Museum of American Art, Kunsthalle Basel, Hamburger Bahnhof, and Tate Modern, as well as at Documenta 14 and the 57th Venice Biennale.

Angie Pittman is a New York based Bessie Award-winning dance artist, choreographer, and educator. Her work investigates how the body moves through ballad, groove, sparkle, spirit, spirituality, ancestry, vulnerability, and power. Pittman is currently collaborating with Adam Linder, devyn emory/beastproductions, Anna Sperber, Stephanie Acosta, and Donna Uchizono Company. She has danced in works by Ralph Lemon, Tere O'Connor, Jennifer Monson, Jasmine Hearn, and Jonathan Gonzalez, among many others.

Brooke Stamp is an Australian dancer, choreographer, and educator. Her career spans two decades, and includes a prolific body of work with Melbourne-based experimental dance company Phillip Adams BalletLab. Stamp has performed works by Adam Linder, Miguel Gutierrez, Maria Hassabi, Rebecca Hilton, and Shelley Lasica, and has collaborated regularly with the Australian artist Agatha Gothe-Snape. Stamp is currently undertaking her PhD at the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne.

Sandy Williams, originally from Calgary, Canada, attended the University of Calgary and Concordia University before relocating to Brussels in 2002 to attend Performing Arts Research and Training Studios (P.A.R.T.S.). After completing the first P.A.R.T.S. cycle, he went on to create his own works and to collaborate with Andros Zins-Browne, Loge22, and Deborah Hay. Williams has been a member of Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker's company Rosas since 2006. He is also a co-coordinator of the training cycle at P.A.R.T.S.

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Adam Linder
ShelfLife