



Jaamil

ARTIST. CURATOR. AUTHOR. INTUITIVE.

EXTENDED BIO

JAAMIL OLAWALE KOSOKO

jaamil olawale kosoko is a multi-spirited Nigerian American author, performance artist, and curator of Yoruba and Natchez descent originally from Detroit, MI. jaamil's practice is conceptual and process based, fluidly moving within the creative realms of live art performance, video, sculpture, and poetry. Through rooted ritual and spiritual practice, embodied poetics, Black critical studies, and queer theories of the body, kosoko conjures and crafts perpetual modes of freedom, healing, and care when/where/ however possible.

jaamil is the recipient of awards including the 2022 Slamdance Jury Prize for Best Experimental Short film, 2021/22 MacDowell Fellowship, 2020 Pew Fellowship in the Arts, 2020 NCCAkron Creative Administrative Fellowship, 2019 NPN Creation & Development Fund award, 2019 Red Bull Arts Fellowship, 2019 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship in Choreography, 2017-2019 Princeton Arts Fellowship, 2018 NEFA National Dance Project Award, 2018-20 New York Live Arts Live Feed Residency, 2017 Cave Canem Poetry Fellowship, and consecutive 2016-2020 USArtists International Awards from the Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation.

Blending poetry and memoir, conversation and performance theory, their book [Black Body Amnesia: Poems and Other Speech Acts](#), was released Spring 2022. Black Body Amnesia: LIVE, the performance reading, is a live theatrical event that examines the shapeshifting, illegible, and fugitive realities of Black diasporan people negotiating the psychic lifeworlds of living inside the American context. It is performed with an alternating ensemble of performers including jaamil olawale kosoko, Raymond Pinto, mayfield brooks, DJ Maij, and features original sound compositions by Everett-Asis Saunders. In this new work, kosoko uses complexity theory—which they define as the study of adaptive survivalist strategies inside complex networks or environments—as a performance device. From this artistic vantage point, the artist explores how minoritarianized communities record and affirm their existence through collaborative actions and protests, and how they then archive these personal freedom narratives to subvert culturally charged fields of systemic oppression, loss, and erasure.

Their 2020 project, Chameleon, is a multimedia living digital art work, film, and radio transmission project that explores the fugitive realities and shapeshifting demands of surviving at the intersection of Blackness, gender fluidity, and queerness in a pirated virtual space. Chameleon is a National Performance Network (NPN) Creation & Development Fund Project co-commissioned by EMPAC / Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY; the New York Live Arts Live Feed Residency program; and the Wexner Center for the Arts at Ohio State University, in partnership with Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA), and Tanz im August/HAU Hebbel am Ufer. Additional development support for Chameleon was made possible, in part, with commissioning support from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, through the Movement Research Artist-in-Residence Program.

Their 2017 work, Séancers, premiered at Abrons Arts Center in December 2017 and has toured nationally and internationally to critical acclaim. Recent highlights include Mousonturm (Frankfurt, DE), FringeArts (Philadelphia, PA), Sophiensaele (Berlin, DE), the Wexner Center (Columbus, OH), Fusebox Festival (Austin, TX) and Montréal Arts Interculturels (Montréal, CA), among others.

Their work #negrophobia (premiered September 2015, Gibney Dance Center) was nominated for a 2016 Bessie Award and toured throughout Europe appearing in major festivals including Moving in November (Finland), TakeMeSomewhere (UK), SICK! (UK), Tanz im August (Berlin), Oslo Internasjonale Teaterfestival (Norway), Zurich MOVES! (Switzerland), Beursschouwburg (Belgium) and Spielart Festival (Munich).

They are the guest curator of the exhibition *Portal For(e) the Ephemeral Passage* on view June 10-Aug. 14th at The Wexner, Co-Curator of the 2019 Black Poetry Conference at Princeton University, 2015 Movement Research Spring Festival and the 2015 Dancing While Black performance series at BAAD in the Bronx; a contributing correspondent for Dance Journal (PHL), the Broad Street Review (PHL), and Critical Correspondence (NYC); a 2012 Live Arts Brewery Fellow as a part of the Philadelphia Live Arts Festival; a 2011 fellow as a part of the DeVos Institute of Art Management at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; and an inaugural graduate member of the Institute for Curatorial Practice in Performance (ICPP) at Wesleyan University where they earned their MA in Curatorial Studies.

jaamil has performed with various dance companies including Keely Garfield Dance, Miguel Gutierrez and The Powerful People, and Headlong Dance Theater, among others. In addition, creative consultant and/or performer credits include: Terry Creach, Lisa Kraus, Kate Watson-Wallace/anonymous bodies, Leah Stein Dance Company, Emergent Improvisation Ensemble, and Faustin Linyekula and Les Studios Kabako (The Democratic Republic of Congo).

In 2009, they published the chapbook, *Animal in Cyberspace*. In 2011, jaamil published the collection, *Notes on an Urban Kill-Floor: Poems for Detroit* (Old City Publishing). Publications include: *The American Poetry Review*, *The Dunes Review*, *The Interlochen Review*, *The Broad Street Review*, *Silo Literary and Visual Arts Magazine*.

jaamil has served on numerous curatorial and funding panels including the Foundation for Contemporary Art, the Brooklyn Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, MAP Fund, Movement Research at the Judson Church, the Philadelphia Cultural Fund, and the Baker Artists Awards, among others. From 2014 to 2020, jaamil served as a trustee on the Board of Directors for Dance/USA, the national service organization for dance professionals. jaamil is also a founding advisory board member for the Coalition for Diasporan Scholars Moving, and currently serves as an artistic advisory member of The Field Center in Vermont.

jaamil has held producing and curatorial positions at New York Live Arts, 651 Arts, and The Watermill Center among others. And has taught and lectured at various educational institutions across the world. In Fall of 2020, jaamil was appointed the 3rd annual Alma Hawkins Visiting Chair at UCLA World Arts & Cultures/Dance Department. Additionally, jaamil lectures regularly at Princeton University, The University of the Arts Stockholm, and Master Exerce, ICI-CCN in Montpellier, France. Follow jaamil's creative adventures on IG @jaamil_means_beauty

