

For Immediate Release
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**Performance Space New York Presents TGNC Resilience
Gala and Awards (March 4) and Accompanying Group
Exhibition, *Transcendence* (March 11-April 17), Organized by
Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo), with Dani
Davis, Lexii Foxx, Kaiya, Kammy-Rae, and Alethia Rael**

**Hosted by Dani Davis, Gala Honors Tahtianna Candy Fermin (CEO/Founder
of Bridges4Life), Qween Jean (CEO/Founder of Black Trans Liberation), and
Lexii Foxx (Founder of Stop Killing Us), and Fundraises for Their
Organizations at the Heart of New York's Black Trans Lives Matter
Movement**

***Transcendence*, the Group Exhibition of Sculpture, Painting, Video, and
Installation Extending from the Award Ceremony, Serves as a Platform for a
Series of Events, Including:**

- **Octopus Event Organized by Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo), with Performances from Beaujangless and Chella Man (March 15 at 8 pm)**
- **Multifaceted Healing Session with Alethia Rael (March 27 at 6 pm)**

- **Trans Umbrella Art Healing Collective, a Sober Paint and Chat and Event Led by Lexii Foxx (April 1 at 6-8:30pm) and an Empowerment Runway Through Her Stop Killing Us Campaign (April 16, 7-9pm)**
- **Concert Fundraiser Organized by Tahtianna Candy Fermin (Bridges4Life), with a 13-Instrument Band and Vocals from Qween Jean (April 9 at 8 pm)**

Performance Space New York presents **TGNC Resilience Gala and Awards** (March 4), which unfolds into a group exhibition, ***Transcendence*** (March 11-April 17), both organized by **Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo)** with **Dani Davis, Lexii Foxx, Kaiya, Kammy-Rae,** and **Alethia Rael** (all of whom will perform at the March 4 ceremony) and set within the organization's **Keith Haring Theatre** (150 1st Ave. 4th floor). These projects celebrate trans/GNC/2S+ Black, Brown, and Indigenous artists, creatives, musicians, and models—and their perseverance against the hardships they persistently face—as well as founders of organizations helping these communities near and far. Today, the group announces the interconnected events activating the exhibit with performance, music, and healing discussion and energy.

When Performance Space New York asked sculpture, installation, performance, and conceptual artist Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo) to do a commission, she extended the invitation to her community of collaborators, trans sisters and siblings. Through these projects, from March to mid-April, Performance Space New York will become a site of open creation for members of the community that grew from Black Trans Lives Matter protest groups that gathered every week for over a year at Stonewall—and continued to bond through **Tahtianna Candy Fermin's** organization **Bridges4Life**, **Qween Jean's** organization **Black Trans Liberation**, and **Lexii Foxx's** organization **Stop Killing Us**.

Kuriki-Olivo has throughout her career declared unexpected objects, places, and actions art. Formerly known to obscure her identity within blunt costume shop reifications of pop-cultural icons (Voldemort, SpongeBob)—with her identity beyond Puppies Puppies unknown to the public until 2018—the artist now asserts art in the everyday of her own life as an Indigenous, Japanese, Mixed trans woman and two-spirit person, and within the community in which she's become immersed.

She says, “When I started to transition I couldn't stay anonymous anymore, it meant something different as a trans woman to stay hidden.” Kuriki-Olivo adds, “In protesting, I realized a whole other form of action: being out in the world. It was really invigorating and it relates to ballroom culture—but outside on the street. It was this beautiful environment where we could all express ourselves freely, dress how we would want to dress if we weren't afraid someone would want to hurt us or kill us.”

TGNC Resilience Gala and Awards

March 4 | 8pm

The Keith Haring Theatre

Host: Dani Davis

Featuring: Lexii Foxx , Kaiya, Kammy-Rae, Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo), and Alethia Rael

Set along a glamorous runway beneath cascading roses, the TGNC Resilience Gala and Awards literalizes the saying frequently uttered outside Stonewall and within trans activist groups, “Give Black [and brown] trans women their roses while they’re still here,” and honors Tahtianna Candy Fermin, Qween Jean, and Lexii Foxx. Bringing elements of protest, ballroom dance, and partying into a bedazzled red carpet award ceremony format—and reframing them all as art—the TGNC Resilience Gala and Awards acknowledge the stark life expectancy disparities between trans and cis populations, and the accolades trans/GNC/2S+ deserve for existing in their truths despite society’s many attempts to hide and harm them.

Transcendence

March 11 - April 17

Thursday – Sunday | 12 – 6pm

Featuring: **Tahtianna Candy Fermin, Lexii Foxx, Kaiya, Kammy-Rae, Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo), Ameirah Neal, Chella Man, Ren Light Pan, Alethia Rael**, and a film produced by **Pilar Adara**

The exhibition, which opens March 11 (12 pm - 6 pm), treats fundamental components of the awards ceremony design as sculpture and installation: namely, a flower installation, video projection, and the centerpiece runway-stage, across which a multitude of programs will transpire. On dates throughout March and April, events organized by individual contributors—often in overlapping collaboration with one another—will converge with, spring from, and amplify *Transcendence*’s prismatic celebration.

These kick off with an **Octopus** event organized by Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo), with performances from “the meme-making, look-turning, spotlight-stealing” (*Paper Magazine*) performer/artist [Beaujangles](#) and actor/artist/model/author **Chella Man**, who made history both as the first trans masculine face of YSL beauty and trans masculine actor cast in a DC superhero series (March 15 at 7 pm). On March 27 (at 6 pm), **Alethia Rael** will lead a healing session, with sound bowls, pan flutes, reiki, and more. In an event similarly focused on healing, **Lexii Foxx** will lead a “Paint and Chat,” inviting attendees into conversations surrounding mental health awareness and substance abuse (April 1, 6-8:30pm). The sober event includes a Mutual Aid-Donation drop off; NARCAN training; bead and candle-making stations; HIV, STI, Hep C testing; meditation; raffle; and live music including healing drums and flute. On April 16, the **Stop Killing Us Campaign** by **Lexii Foxx** presents an **Empowerment Runway**, featuring an empowerment photoshoot; raffle; clothing giveaway; free gender affirming cosmetics; and HIV, STI, and Hep C testing. A second fundraiser following the gala—a concert organized by CEO/Founder of Bridges4Life **Tahtianna Candy Fermin**, featuring a

13-instrument band and vocals from CEO/Founder of Black Trans Liberation **Qween Jean**—will take place April 9 at 8 pm.

Video by **Pilar Adara**, comprising interviews and footage from the award ceremony, will sustain contributors' presences within the space across the duration of the exhibit. Sculpture from Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo), Chella Man, **Ren Light Pan**, and installation by Lexii Foxx explore the interplay of embodiment and sociality; experiences of hormone therapy; and more; and together form an eclectic celebration of trans/GNC/2S+ identity and community—and an indictment of the forces that put them at risk.

Ticketing

Octopus

Organized by Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo)

With: Beaujangless and Chella Man

[Tickets](#)

Alethia Healing Session

March 27 | 6pm

[RSVP Encouraged](#)

Paint and Chat with Lexii Foxx

April 1 | 6pm

[Tickets](#)

Concert Fundraiser organized by Tahtianna Candy Fermin

April 9 | 8pm

Sold Out

Stop Killing Us Campaign by Lexii Foxx Presents: Empowerment Runway

April 16 | 7pm

[Tickets](#)

About Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo)

Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo) is a conceptual, performance, and installation artist. Her work often draws on the emotional resonance of found objects and shared experiences, exploring love, mortality, power relations, and states of being. Much of her recent work directly reflects her experiences transitioning and addresses issues facing the LGBTQIA2S+ community.

Puppies Puppies (Jade Guanaro Kuriki-Olivo) lives and works in New York. She is the recent recipient of Toby's Award, given every two years by the Museum of Contemporary Art in Cleveland, Ohio. Recent solo exhibitions include *BODY FLUID: BLOOD*, Remail Modern,

Sakatoon, Canada; *PLAGUE*, Halle für Kunst, Luneberg, Germany; *Anxiety, Depression & Triggers*, Balice Hertling, Paris, France; *Executive Order 9066 (Soul Consoling Tower)*, Queer Thoughts, New York; *Una Mujer Fantástica (A Fantastic Woman)*, Galerie Barbara Weiss, Berlin, Germany; *Andrew D. Olivo 6.7.89-6.7.18*, What Pipeline, Detroit, Michigan; *Puppies Puppies*, XYZ Collective, Tokyo. Her work was featured in the 2017 Whitney Biennial, the 9th Berlin Biennale, and X Nicaraguan Biennale.

About Performance Space New York

Over the last 40 years Performance Space has been propelling cultural, theoretical, and political discourse forward. Futurity and world-building connect the interdisciplinary works presented here—works that have dissolved the borders of performance art, dance, theater, music, visual art, poetry and prose, ritual, night life, food, film, and technology, shattering artistic and social norms alike.

Founded in 1980, Performance Space New York (formerly Performance Space 122) became a haven for many queer and radical voices shut out by a repressive, monocultural mainstream and conservative government whose neglect exacerbated the emerging AIDS epidemic's devastation. Carrying forward the multitudinous visions of these artists who wielded the political momentum of self-expression amidst the intensifying American culture wars, Performance Space is one of the birthplaces of contemporary performance as it is known today.

As the New York performing arts world has become increasingly institutionalized, and the shortcomings within our industry were further revealed during the ravages and transformations of 2020, our focus has been not just on presenting boundary-breaking work but on restructuring our own organization towards prioritizing equity and access. We seek to build deeper relationships with our artists and communities by creating new access points. Through community councils, annual town halls, guest-curated programs such as Octopus and First Mondays, we welcome the public to actively shape our future and help us hold ourselves accountable. Programs like the revived Open Movement and the new Open Room invite the community in and reclaim the institution as a rare indoor public space in the ever-more expensive East Village.

Our search for new models is an embrace of the unknown—and an acknowledgement of transformation as a process of continuous inquiry, imagination, response, and accountability. Mirroring the spirit of experimentation artists have brought to our spaces across four decades, we strive towards something which does not yet exist. We believe this focus on changing the conditions in which art is made is just as fundamental as the art itself, and only serves to make it more substantial.

2020, the year-long project during which a cohort of salaried artists were invited together with the staff and board to re-vision Performance Space, initiated this transformation, and itself rapidly reshaped to meet artists' and community members' needs amidst the early days of the

pandemic and uprising for racial justice. 02020 was a new beginning for us, a sharp and needed turn back towards artists to help rethink the institution for the future.

Acknowledgement

Performance Space New York is situated in Lenapehoking, the land, waters, and air of the Lenape People. We acknowledge that our existence on the island of Manahatta is a consequence of the violent history of settler colonialism. Furthermore, we recognize the colonial structures that are at the origin of the digital communication technologies we rely upon.

We pay respect to the Lenape people of the past, present and future, and support the repatriation of their land.

Press Contact

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