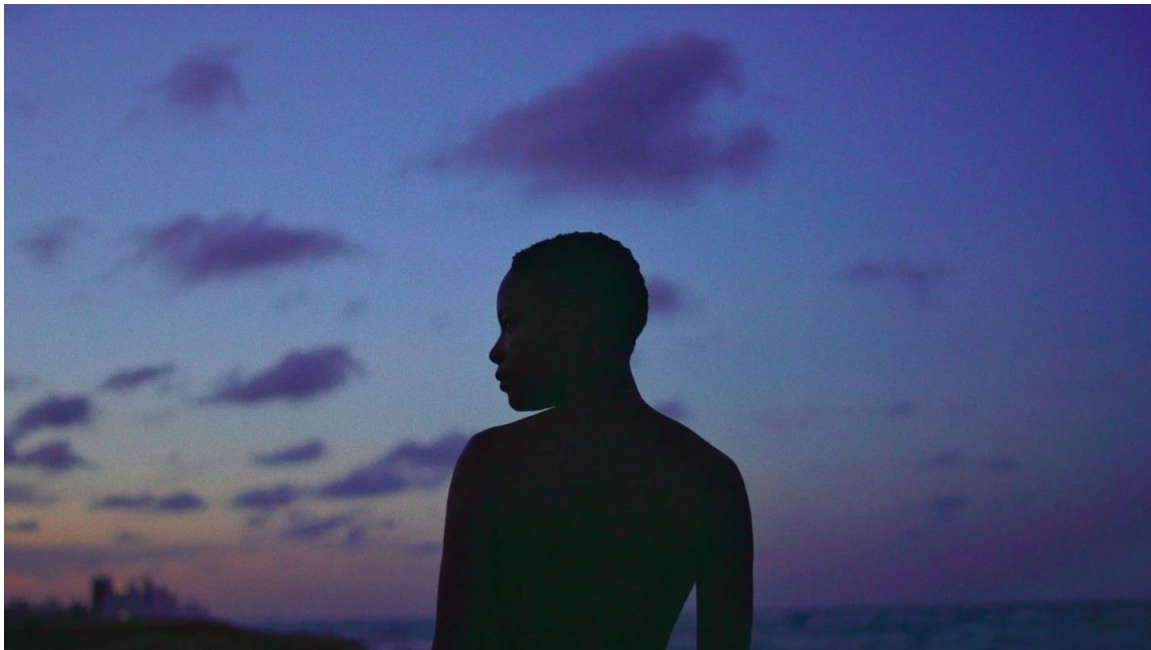


Institute of
Contemporary
University Art
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**First Solo Exhibition of Terence Nance Spotighting the Artist and
Filmmaker's Genre-Defying Practice On View at ICA in Philadelphia
This Spring**

Co-organized by BlackStar Projects, *Terence Nance: Swarm* Brings Together Six Major
Multimedia Installations



Still from *Swimming in Your Skin Again*, 2015, which will be on view as part of Nance's solo exhibition at ICA.

Philadelphia, PA (March 10, 2023) — This spring, **BlackStar Projects** and **Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania (ICA)** present ***Terence Nance: Swarm***, the first solo museum exhibition dedicated to the genre-defying and innovative practice of Terence Nance. Curated by Maori Karmael Holmes and on view from March 10 through July 9, 2023, *Terence Nance: Swarm* highlights Nance's experimentation in film, television, sound, and performance through the presentation of six large-scale, multi-channel videos and installations that the artist has reimagined specifically for the exhibition.

As a filmmaker, writer, actor, and musician, Nance brings an interdisciplinary approach to his practice, offering unexpected and alternative paths for creating work that layer video, sound, printed matter, and live performance in contemporary environments. He first gained national recognition for his semi-animated feature film, *An Oversimplification of Her Beauty*, at the Sundance Film Festival in 2012. He also attended the first edition of the BlackStar Film Festival in 2012, which Holmes, the exhibition's curator and BlackStar's chief executive and artistic officer, founded that year. He debuted another seminal work, *Random Acts of Flyness*, at the BlackStar Film Festival in 2018. The Peabody Award-winning HBO series examines contemporary Black life in America, and it returned for a second season on HBO this past December.

Nance draws much of his influence from the communities in which he creates work, including his birth city, Dallas, his current home, Baltimore, and Brooklyn. His career emerged in the wake of the Black Arts Movement of the 1960s and 1970s; its enduring creative lineage and kinship reveals itself in the work of Nance, which imagines a future that incorporates Black needs, desires, and spirit. The exhibition's title, *Swarm*, refers to a Brooklyn-based group of artists with whom he built a community in the early to mid-2000s. Holmes further describes this community in the exhibition catalog, writing: "Terence thrives in community, and I felt it was important to place that ethos at the forefront of this show. I'd read about and heard him speak about "The Swarm" in the early to mid-aughts often; in a 2019 interview with Simran Hans, Terence defines this as "Black or Black-adjacent people who find themselves in fractal, interlocking social networks in different cities."

Stated Zoë Ryan, Daniel W. Dietrich, II Director of the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, "Storytelling and ritual is at the heart of Terence's work, which expands across media and genres. We are delighted to be partnering with BlackStar Projects, a trailblazing Philadelphia-based organization dedicated to celebrating visionary Black, Brown, and Indigenous film and media artists, on the presentation of the first museum exhibition dedicated to Terence's multifaceted practice. It is especially rewarding to be collaborating again with Maori, who previously served as ICA's Director of Public Engagement, on this exhibition that will shed new insight into Terence's creativity and vision."

The exhibition opens with the new commission and video installation *Swarm Part Zero*—a meditation on Black cinematic expression, Black music, resistance, and notions of community, created specifically for the exhibition. The next room features *Univitellin*, a multi-channel projection presented at ICA within a recreated bedroom. A star-crossed romantic tragedy with a touch of the uncanny, the short film from 2016 unfolds on the streets of Marseille, France.

In *From the Void*, visitors experience excerpts of past and recent work by Nance on a linear television station broadcast by Ummah Chroma, MVMT, and Telfar. An oval projection screen shows various works from Nance's catalog, including video from *Random Acts of Flyness*, TELFAR.TV, music videos, and documentary shorts, among other works. The exhibition in the main gallery concludes with *Swimming in Your Skin Again*, a short film from 2015 celebrating the coming of age through dance- and movement-based works, scored by the artist's brother, the musician Norvis Junior. In the ICA's Tuttleman Auditorium, visitors have the opportunity to hear Nance's debut LP, *V O R T E X*, in a special listening room created for the experience of this new album.

"Terence Nance's work as a filmmaker, performer, and musician reveals an artistic practice infused with rigor and ritual. He is constantly challenging himself to explore new mediums while investigating the boundaries of romantic and familial relationships, gender, and spirituality. He makes work that isn't easily

categorized, and in my own practice as a cultural organizer and producer, I have been deeply invested in work that blurs genre and pushes the boundaries of existing forms,” added Holmes. “Nance has screened his innovative and daring work in nine of the past eleven editions of the BlackStar Film Festival, and he is always an amiable presence, cheerfully and generously engaging with fans, cineastes, donors, and fellow filmmakers. I am thrilled to collaborate with him once again.”

Public Programs

Terence Nance: Swarm is complemented by a range of public programs being offered throughout the exhibition’s presentation, including an artist talk, special screenings, and concerts.

Terence Nance Spotlight

March 15, 7:30 p.m.

Penn Live Arts’ Bruce Montgomery Theater (3680 Walnut Street)

Admissions: \$10

Register for event [here](#)

Penn Live Arts showcases a taste of Terence Nance’s fascinating cinematic work with one program of his short films:

- *Blank Canvas* (Calvin Klein commercial, 2021)
- *Guisado on Sunset* (2020)
- *Jimi Could Have Fallen from the Sky* (2017)
- *Swimming in Your Skin Again* (2014)
- *Univitellin* (2016)
- *Vortex* (2022)

Terence Nance: An Oversimplification of Her Beauty

March 16, 7:30 p.m.

Penn Live Arts’ Bruce Montgomery Theater (3680 Walnut Street)

Admissions: \$10

Register for event [here](#)

In Nance’s explosively creative debut, *An Oversimplification of Her Beauty* utilizes a mix of live action and animation to tell the story of a relationship between Nance and a young woman that teeters between the platonic and romantic.

Directed by Terence Nance, 2021, U.S., 84 min, English.

In Conversation: Terence Nance & Maori Karmael Holmes

April 28, 6 p.m.

ICA Auditorium

Free Admissions

In this conversation artist Terence Nance and curator Maori Karmael Holmes explore Nance’s genre-defying approach to film, video, television, sound and performance.

Terence Nance in Concert with Anthony Tidd and Madison McFerrin

Performing Nance's debut album V O R T E X

May 25 and May 26, 8:00 PM

Union Transfer (1026 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia)

Tickets available [here](#)

In concert with Anthony Tidd and special guest Madison McFerrin, Nance performs his debut album V O R T E X for the very first time. The concert is presented by BlackStar Projects.

Exhibition Catalog

Alongside the exhibition, a 113-page, full-color catalog published provides greater insight into Nance's practice and career. It includes contributions from Bradford Young, brontë velez, Darius Clark Monroe, Elissa Blount Moorhead, James Bartlett, Ja'Tovia Gary, John L. Jackson, Jr., Lynnée Denise, Ra Malika Imhotep, Shawn Peters, and Taylor Renee Aldridge.

Exhibition Organization and Credits

Terence Nance: Swarm is curated by Maori Karmael Holmes and co-organized and presented by BlackStar Projects and the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania.

Major support for *Terence Nance: Swarm* has been provided by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage. This project is also generously supported by the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support has been provided by Danielle Anderman, Dorothy and Martin Bandier, Stacey and Benjamin Frost, Christina Weiss Lurie, Lori and John Reinsberg, and Stephanie and David Simon.

About Terence Nance

Terence Nance is an artist, musician, and filmmaker born in Dallas, Texas in what was then referred to as the State-Thomas community. Nance wrote, directed, scored, and starred in his first feature film, *An Oversimplification of Her Beauty*, which premiered at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival and was released theatrically in 2013, was named a Guggenheim Fellow in 2014, and debuted his Peabody award-winning television series *Random Acts of Flyness* on HBO in the summer of 2018. In the fall of 2018, it was announced that Nance was tapped to write, produce, and direct *Space Jam: A New Legacy*, starring LeBron James, and in 2020 Terence released his first EP, *THINGS I NEVER HAD* under the name Terence Etc. In 2020 he also partnered with filmmakers Jenn Nkiru, Bradford Young, Nanette Nelms, and Mishka Brown to form The Ummah Chroma Creative Partners—a directors collective and production company. This team released *KILLING IN THY NAME* in collaboration with Rage Against The Machine in January of 2021. Nance is currently at work on healing, curiosity, and interdimensionality following the 2022 release of both *Random Acts of Flyness* Program II as well as his debut album, *VORTEX*.

About Maori Karmael Holmes

Maori Karmael Holmes is a curator, filmmaker, and writer. She founded BlackStar in 2012 and serves as its Chief Executive & Artistic Officer. She has organized programs in film at a myriad of organizations including Anthology Film Archives, Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles), The Underground Museum, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. As a director, her works have screened internationally including her feature documentary *Scene Not Heard: Women in Philadelphia Hip-Hop* (2006). Her writing has appeared in *The Believer*, *Film Quarterly*, *Seen*, *Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good*, *How We Fight White Supremacy: A Field Guide to Black Resistance*, and most recently, *Collective Wisdom: Co-Creating Media within Communities, across Disciplines and with Algorithms*. She is

a member of Lalibela Baltimore, Brown Girls Doc Mafia, and Programmers of Color Collective. Maori was a 2019–2020 Soros Equality Fellow and serves as mediamaker-in-residence at the Annenberg School for Communication at University of Pennsylvania, and curator-at-large at Penn Live Arts/Annenberg Center. In 2022, she was named one of the Kennedy Center’s *Next 50*, and most recently, she was awarded a Philadelphia’s Cultural Treasures Artist Fellowship.

About BlackStar Projects

BlackStar Projects is the producer of the BlackStar Film Festival, an annual celebration of the visual and storytelling traditions of the African diaspora and global communities of color—showcasing films by Black, Brown, and Indigenous people from around the world. In addition to the acclaimed festival, BlackStar presents an array of programming across film and visual culture year-round, including the twice-annual journal *Seen*, the podcast *Many Lumens*, the William and Louise Greaves Filmmaker Seminar, and the Philadelphia Filmmaker Lab, among other initiatives.

About the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

The Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) at the University of Pennsylvania is a non-collecting institution presenting interdisciplinary exhibitions and programs at the forefront of contemporary art. Through its exhibitions, commissions, special projects, publications, and programs, ICA serves as a laboratory for new artistic and curatorial practices, supporting the production of urgent work and providing a critical platform for an exchange of ideas on art and society. Since its founding in 1963, ICA has shared the University’s commitment to experimental research and belief in supporting the next generation of imaginative and creative thinkers. ICA is dedicated to advancing new directions in artistic practices, creating meaningful connections for the public with art and artists, and advocating for artists, research, and dialogues that contextualize and resonate with the socio-political conditions of our time.

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