

THE SHED Press Release

THE BLOOMBERG BUILDING
545 West 30th Street
New York, NY 10001

The Shed Launches *UP CLOSE*, A New Digital Commissioning Program for Artists of All Disciplines, on Sunday, April 19, with The HawtPlates

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New York, NY, APRIL 16, 2020—The Shed is committed to expanding the scope of how a cultural institution can serve its communities, a mission that is even more critical while distanced from one another. To continue to creatively engage artists and audiences, The Shed’s Artistic Director and CEO **Alex Poots** today announced *Up Close*, a new digital commissioning program for artists of all disciplines.

The first installment will debut on Sunday, April 19, at 6 pm EST on The Shed’s social media platforms (@theshedny) and its website (theshed.org). *Up Close* will continue on every other Sunday evening presenting intimate performances, conversations, curated playlists, and other forms of original content that explore what it means to make art right now.

“The Shed supports artists in all stages of their careers who are making new work. *Up Close* continues our mission in the digital space and evolves our commitment to artists and audiences to develop and present new work into the future,” said Alex Poots. “An artist’s ability to create and invent cannot be contained, which is all the more inspiring during this difficult time. It is our hope that these offerings will resonate with audiences who are looking for community and connection.”

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Up Close kicks off on April 19 with **Justin Hicks, Kenita MillerHicks,** and **Jade Hicks** performing as **The HawtPlates**, sharing work created in conversation with **Charlotte Brathwaite**. In a social distancing experiment—with participants currently in Indiana and the Bronx—the trio will present a DIY recording session of selections from their song cycle *House or Home: 690 Wishes*, inspired by Toni Morrison’s novel *Home* and the experimental writing of French author Georges Perec.

Artists in future installments, many of whom The Shed showcased in its 2019 season, will include **Troy Anthony** and **Jerome Ellis**; **Justin Allen, Sean D. Henry-Smith** and **Yulan Grant**; **Kameelah Janan Rasheed** and **DIS OBEY** teaching artists **NOVA BLACK, Tasha Dougé,** and **Gabriel Barraluga**; **Reggie Gray** and **D.R.E.A.M. Ring** dancers; **DJ April Hunt** and **Rashaad Newsome**; **Tomás Saraceno**; and **Kiyan Williams**.

About The HawtPlates

The HawtPlates make vocal performance works by breaking down and reconstituting vernacular musical forms such as blues, roots, and funk. In their work, there is a sense that the music is specific to them as a “family band.” Together and individually, they have worked with various institutions including National Black Theater, the Guthrie Theater, the Public Theater, Performance Space New York, Jack, the Bushwick Starr, and the Park Avenue Armory, among others. Last summer at The Shed, Justin Hicks and Kenita Miller-Hicks performed in the commissioned production, *Maze*, from street dance pioneer Reggie ‘Regg Roc’ Gray, co-directed by Kaneza Schaal.

About Up Close

Up Close is organized by **Solana Chehtman**, Director of Civic Programs, with **Adeze Wilford** and **Alessandra Gómez**, Curatorial Assistants, and **Lily Wan**, Digital Content Producer. The Shed’s multidisciplinary commissioning program is developed by **Alex Poots** with the senior program team, including **Emma Enderby**, Chief Curator, **Tamara McCaw**, Chief Civic Program Officer, **Madani Younis**, Chief Executive Producer, and **Hans Ulrich Obrist**, Senior Program Advisor.

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About The Shed

Located on Manhattan's west side, The Shed commissions original works of art, across all disciplines, for all audiences. From hip hop to classical music, painting and sculpture to literature, film to theater and dance, The Shed brings together leading and emerging artists and thinkers from all disciplines under one roof. The building—a remarkable movable structure designed by Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Lead Architect, and Rockwell Group, Collaborating Architect—physically transforms to support artists' most ambitious ideas. Committed to nurturing artistic invention and bringing creative experiences to the broadest possible audiences, The Shed, led by Artistic Director and CEO Alex Poots, is a 21st-century space of and for New York City.