

Yusuf Hassan in conversation with chaz La Pointe

on architecture, objects,
function, revision, constraint,
vulnerability, and an
expanded view of publication

Jasper Marsalis

on sound, transcription,
spontaneity, freedom, the past,
embarrassment, and an
expanded view of publication

Yusuf Hassan + chaz La Pointe

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chaz La Pointe: Hey Yusuf. Good to see you. What's the weather like? Where you at?

Yusuf Hassan: Oh, I'm in Connecticut, home. Yesterday it was 90. The day before was 90. Today the temperatures have subsided a little bit. It's a little low but it's really beautiful weather. These last couple of days, yeah, it's just been really hot. Where are you, Chicago?

cLP: Yeah Chicago, by the lake so it's always more chilly, like in the 60s. They call it the lake effect breeze. You know, even on a scorching hot day it'll be like six degrees cooler by the lake because Lake Michigan never, never warms up, bro. Yeah, it freezes all winter and never really warms up. That wind coming over this cold lake. But today it's 60s but it's beautiful, clear and not a cloud in the sky. I'm looking at a great big window.

YH: That's beautiful. My home has all the windows facing the woods. At least the back windows are facing the woods, so all I see is trees and rocks. I enjoy that and we get good, good sunlight here, so I'm really grateful for that. Anytime good sunlight can come through, I'm really happy about that.

So, I would really like to thank you for coming to spend this time with me and being a part of this conversation as one of two programs that myself and Printed Matter have coordinated for the opening of the show. My gratitude is deep. You know, we've talked a lot before and every time, before we get done talking, we talk about the talk, you know?

cLP: Yeah, I'm here for the fruits.

YH: When I was thinking about how to approach programming for this, you know, very few individuals came to mind that I wanted to sit with in this moment, at this particular time. And you were one of them.

It was right during Ramadan that we got a chance to sit down and talk and it was such a beautiful conversation. It was so natural, you know, we exchanged so much information. We learned so many beautiful things about each other. And what I've noticed from our conversations is that it's always like a continuation of where we left off. We spoke a few days ago on my train ride back up to Connecticut, on my way home. And you know, this discussion now, it's a continuation. It's a *to be continued* continuation of the previous conversation that we had a couple of days ago. And it's not just about this installation, but just everything that we've been working on.

I've lived in New York my whole life. I finally made the jump to move, and I moved up to Connecticut. It's very quiet here. It's very slow. It's a lot of nature here.

And as I told you previously it's allowed me to reinvestigate my practice — to shape and mold, so to speak, the direction I was taking and how I'm seeing my practice. And you know, there was a lot of similarities in both of our practices, whether it be how we interact with nature, how we interact in the spaces that we occupy, and how we interact with archives. It's like, what are we using these archives to do? What information is being informed from these archives? How are we filtering it? How are we contextualizing it? And what are we doing with the information that we have been introduced to?

And that's what brings us here today, like right now and in this particular moment, and I kind of just want to discuss pretty much anything. There are a few things that I've thought out in my head that I would love to discuss with you, but you know, a lot of this will be improv, it'll just be off the dome.

But I guess we could really start with architecture, which is part of the installation, and then we could dive into how, you know, how we view it through the lens of publication and beyond.

This installation is being presented as a publication. It *is* a publication. It's also being presented as one single work that folds out into different elements. So I see this publication as sculpture. I see this publication as photography. I see this publication as sound. I see this publication beyond the idea of what a publication is supposed to be. And this idea developing in my practice has been how the objects are starting to come off the pages, how the objects are starting to exist. I've removed them from this stillness and placed them outside of the original setting, and it's now taken on a new life. And a lot of the objects and pictures, and the material that I'm using in this installation at Printed Matter — it's like a page. It's page after page after page after page.

So I wanted to know, how do you view publication through sculpture and nature? How are you transcribing information through the lens of those mediums?

cLP: Well, I mean, to reference your show, the publication is architecture in itself. The objects are trusses, the objects are our dry-wall. You know, they're openings for doors, and things like that. That's the way I look at it.

But through publication, it's a challenge, you know, but it's not a challenge of the publisher — it's more so in relation to archives, a challenge of ink and a challenge of paper, to be immortal.

I think the way you're bringing everything together — you talk about removing the objects from the publication — and it's actually the reverse for me, you know, in the way that I would think about it. Something comes out of the studio or it never comes out of the studio, and so it's photographed and it gets hauled away. It begins its own life, and then another thing is made. So publication, the way I look at it, I transcribe and transmute all those ideas into pages so I can look at them in relation to each other, and see if they speak to each other, in a format which I'm extremely attracted to.

I can pull different things out of the work after it's already in the world through publication, because my way of referencing things is more so to words, to language... most of the time when I'm working in the shop, or I'm sculpting, or I'm doing contracting work, basically I'm going in and I am allowing — whether it's wood or it's clay — I'm going in and allowing it to speak to me, you know, for the form to present itself. And only after can I come to understand it, through photos and language. What about you, how do you feel about that?

YH: So here's my take on it, this idea of looking at publication through the lens of architecture. It was in 2020 where I was one of six artists that was invited to contribute a written piece for the Venice Architecture Biennale about the correlation between my practice and architecture.

In thinking about this, I started to notice how in my process I'm engaging with paper, how I'm engaging with the printing process, how I'm engaging with the packaging, how I'm engaging with the elements of print beyond the object at hand. I started to notice that I am building things at this point.

So I'm very conscious as to how I'm selecting paper. I'm very conscious on how the ink is running off. I'm very conscious as to what's taking place and, for me, everything is always a study. I'm always interested in the study before the final production. Anytime I'm looking at work, I want to know what took place before the final layout. For me, research ties into how I interact with publication.

I've now created these small presses — I have one of the copies right here. It's called *A Research Publication by Yusuf Hassan*. And in these small 16-page publications, what I'm doing is taking all the elements of my research, and I'm tying them into the small little publications that serve as research for me, and it's kind of like a journal of ideas that I have that I'm continuing to be in contact with, and nothing is off limits. Nothing is off limits on how I'm approaching publication beyond this idea of what publication is supposed to be. I'm not tying it down to one particular object, and the publication for me doesn't just live within the pages. It doesn't just live with this idea of staple and page and ink. For me the publication is now the object, and it's objects that I'm interacting with beyond the pages.

And you know, when I was a resident at the Center for Book Arts, the first work there that inspired me was this one book from a previous artist in residence. And it was that book that really inspired me to look really beyond how I'm engaging with publication. It was this beautiful book, it was housed in this little box. And it was seven little mini books, and some of them were functional and some nonfunctional — and, it's like, what do we consider to be function? And I remember one of the publications had a piece of a stone block that was included in the book, and that was the publication. And I said to myself, I was like, damn, if this is how far publication can go, then there's really no limits on how far I'm supposed to take or view publication.

And I just started to interact with it from an architect's point of view. I started to interact with it from a builder's point of view, a sculptor's point of view, you know, because now I'm engaging with it outside of the original form, and it's now not just paper for me anymore. It's beyond paper.

And you know, how you're working, it's a huge inspiration to me. I see how you interact with nature. I see your interaction with sculpting, and how you're interacting with ceramics and with clay and with all these elements. And I'm saying to myself, this is, you know...I'm working in a similar way. The object may be different but I'm working in a similar way and these ideas is taking shape and taking mold. And music — you're a musician as well...

Which brings me to what we're going to discuss next, which is music, which also is tied into my practice. How is music informing how far you go within your practice? How are you engaging with music, through the lens of your medium?

cLP: Before I answer that — and I'm going to answer that — but what's your definition of architecture?

YH: My definition of architecture is not creating a limitation with this idea that architecture only exists within the realms of building things that is overt, i.e. a building, because architecture goes beyond that idea.

cLP: If I could define architecture, I would define it as the act of imposing your will on your environment. Which, you know, it can have something to do with ground-breaking actually, but that's where music comes in, because music to me is the greatest, grandest form of architecture. Because you can think about it in so many different ways, even when you think about it down to the smallest level, just playing a note. A note is a wall, you know, four notes you've got a building. But there is this balance that you have to respect and I think the balance is where the greatest architecture happens.

It's in this space between bondage and freedom...because one thing I think about when I think about architecture — the number one thing that comes to my mind is constraint. You know, it's the idea that, when I was studying it, was constantly poured all over me. And it was something that I kind of rejected. In some forms of architecture, you can reject it.

And everything comes back to music for me, every other practice. It is what's poured

into me, and in turn, it's what pours out of me. So, when I'm looking at architecture, I'm constantly scatterbrained when it comes to making music, but I hear it all the time. And I have so many different methods of recording, I think about it as architecture.

Sometimes I'm on the keys, sometimes I'm on the drum machine, most of the time I'm all over the tape deck, and a lot of times I'm using my cell phone. But all of these pieces, which live on whatever device that I recorded them on, they come together through the tape machine and then they land on my computer. For some time they collect dust, but it's only when I bring all these pieces together where I feel like, you know...I'm Frank Gehry.

Or you know, it's only then where I feel like...the song itself, it's architecture. I look at the entire process of building a project as a bringing together of many buildings — a building of a corridor that can be traversed, but it can also be a fortress, and inescapable. They all resemble pieces that have been either struck down, or their forms are amorphous and they only fit together in a certain way.

So the way I look at design and architecture, in the most classical sense, is like a cage to me. And I feel like even though it's never building from the ground up, I think I'm operating outside of architecture with the mind of an architect. I'm working within my means, but I'm constantly having to reject this and accept that because architecture is a way of dealing with the world, in its simplest sense.

Before anything is ever erected, there's a reckoning that you have to do with the land, whether it's razing it or whether it's flooding it — there's never an example of where we can just pull up and build. There always has to be extreme and sometimes colossal and seismic destruction.

I watched a film a while back, I wish I could remember the name, but it was basically a documentary on an architecture group. They would go out every day and blow up mountains with huge sticks of dynamite. The old school way, you know? And to me it seemed like they were doing God's work, but not in the good sense. They were building shopping malls and Saks Fifth Ave, you know, shit like that. But what was interesting to me was the language around it and the work they felt they were doing. You are constantly opening up your environment to evolve into a new environment.

YH: Yeah, that's right.

cLP: I talked about the space between bondage and freedom, and I think what attracted me...I tried to really look back and see how I ever found your work, because the reason I'm so attracted to it — and that it's drawn me in for so long — is because of things like the embrace of misprints, which is just, you know, in architectural terms, allowing your environment to take over.

There's a plant that grows in Mississippi, the Kudzu. It's a vine and it was brought into Mississippi in the 50s by the USDA to fight erosion. Mississippi is red from that sediment coming off the Mississippi and the Pontchartrain, and the Kudzu was brought in to fight that erosion. It came originally from Japan, and it's proliferated, growing mostly in valleys. It was a thing that was never planned, it's everywhere. It grows on the side of people's houses and it's frightening some-times to see, the rate that it grows.

So yeah, I kind of draw that into the idea of misprints, or extra bleed. I think that's what makes your work perfect and what makes it beautiful. It's what drew me in.

YH: Thanks for that.

cLP: Where do you feel like you exist in that, in that boundary between bondage and freedom? And what would you call that middle ground?

YH: What do we see as the middle ground between bondage and freedom?

This is why I'm so inspired by J Dilla, from beginning to end. This particular work of Dilla, the *Donuts* album, it's a huge draw and an inspiration for this show. I forget the write-up, but it's a review from a writer who compared that album to skimming the radio in a small town, and not knowing what you're going to get.

That is the *Donuts* album, and it's how I see the flow of my show. The freedom for me is being able to not take the origins of something and stay pinned to the idea of how it's supposed to be presented.

I've said this time and time again and I'll continue to say that I'm no longer held — and this is the freedom — that I'm no longer held to the idea of what a publication is supposed to be. I've now got over that threshold. I've now gotten over that hurdle. What I see in publication and printed matter, it doesn't exist solely in the pages anymore.

I remember when we were talking and I posed the question to you — does the work die or become alive once it leaves the studio? I think that's how it was phrased.

And the reason why I asked this question is because I feel like that's a heavy topic. And we spoke about the nurturing process of our work at a very vulnerable stage. No one has seen it, at least no one that we have not allowed to see it. And for the most part, the only person that sees anything that I'm making before I put it out is my partner. So as far as like first eyes, she's the first eyes.

But, you know, it's this vulnerable stage, where we're making it and we're nurturing it. And this ties back to your question of freedom, and for a very long time I was obsessed with trying to figure out what was taking place with the work to where I wouldn't want to let it out of my sight. I always felt like it was not done. But I don't work this way anymore. I work at a very rapid pace. Revisions for me, it's no longer looked at as errors. I revise because my brain is constantly running. So I'm not changing something because I feel like it's not where it needs to be. I'm just adding to what I'm already creating.

cLP: You're revising because you're constantly learning.

YH: I'm constantly learning. This is why I'm making work up until the day of the show, which is not a traditional way that an artist is supposed to work. The work is supposed to be made, the art handlers come and pick it up, it's at the gallery to be installed, whatever.

cLP: You're dropping your kid off at the front door...

YH: There you go, I think that's the best — [laughs]

cLP: The traditional way is to, alright — you dress the kid, you make them take a shower, but you drop them off at the stop sign that's a stop sign away from the school, you know.

YH: Yeah! I'm not working in this manner. We constantly get boxed in as artists, you know, people trying to figure out every detail of how we're working. I always like to be a step ahead — of even myself sometimes.

I may draw one conclusion and I may not even come to that conclusion — another conclusion may come and then the two are brought together. But I may not even go with this at all, and I may totally go somewhere else. And I've really embraced this way of working now. It's like I'm working improv forever. Like, I never know what's necessarily going to come out of what I'm making.

And this is why, you know, I can make a publication on the train in 10 minutes, which I have done. I'll make something and send it to the printers right then and there and I'm going to pick it up when I get off the train. When I get off the Metro North, I'm going to the printer, and I'm going to pick up the book I just made 20 minutes ago. I'm constantly thinking of information, on what's taking place in my mind and what's taking place in the things that I'm seeing.

This is why these new publications that I'm going to be releasing are titled *Research Publications by Yusuf Hassan*. It's pretty much just like a database, an improv database of information that's just come into my mind, instantly and rapidly. And it's like I come back to these small little presses and I also use them for inspiration too. And you know, that's why I'm so infatuated with studying the study of something.

For me, the final production of whatever I'm interested in, I'm less intrigued by that. I always want to know what took place prior to that. Even friends who have given me work, I never like to be that picky but I'm always like, man, can you give me the study for this? Can you give me the study for this drawing? You know, I'm always intrigued by that, the unfinished and vulnerable stage of the work where you didn't know what the fuck was going on. You was lost and huffing and puffing. I'm intrigued by that. Because I feel like, to me, that is the purest stage of what you're creating and what you was trying to figure out. That's the purest, most vulnerable stage. I'm interested in the behind-the-scenes, so to speak, of what's taken place before this. I guess that's why I'm always researching and constantly digging into archives, and pulling and drawing from so many things.

I was looking at this chair on the street, I didn't want to carry it — I had too much in my hands. But there were the interiors of these chairs, with no seat, no back, and it was just the frame of them. And I wanted them so bad, but I just didn't want to carry them. And I thought about those frames all damn day. I said, man...I was even contemplating going back to see if they were still there, but I was just too far gone.

I was so intrigued because the chair went to its default state, you know, it was vulnerable again. It had no back, it had no seat. This is what it was before that final production and also it was just like, very beautifully molded, you know. The legs were nicely bent, and it was a very beautiful frame.

And you know, I started to think about my own practice in this vulnerable way of how I'm researching and how that scene tied into how I'm working as a creator through music, and through sculpture, publication, through furniture, which is also, you know, my next thing — how are you engaging with this idea of furniture — because I always hear people talk about furniture and how it has to be functional. And when I think of functional, it's just another word for people to say, like, if it don't meet my needs, or if it doesn't function the way that something is supposed to, then it's no use. But yeah, I've totally rejected this idea of functionality.

cLP: I reject that as well. I'm more focused on objects than I am on furniture because, you know, functional is another way to say, like, that shit is cheap. It's a cheap way to take up space.

I do understand the school of thought that comes from, like, "I'm about if it works," you know — "It has to work." But I think functional doesn't have to be a function for a person. That's why I talk all the time about the lives of objects and their personal trajectories. There's a LeRoi Jones/Amiri Baraka essay. I want to say it's called *Technology & Ethos*, where he speaks about objects or machines being extensions of their creators.

And what I take from that is that in time, in blood, in sweat and toil, you give an object life, no matter what that object is. And it is the same phenomenon of having a child, but this object is not free to do as it chooses. You are endowing it with trust, you know? I trust that my terracottas won't get up in the middle of the night and walk away. I trust that my Horton Manufacturing chair, when I sit on it, it's not going to fall out from under me.

And when I think about that, that right there is the idea of vulnerability. It's like the feeling that you make something and you're the only one in the world that knows it exists. That is the feeling. That's it right there. Because what you're seeing is work, you're seeing your own work, before it becomes secular.

I was thinking the other day about how I'm making a lot of work that is not for people to see.

YH: That's cool.

cLP: I'm making it but it's not necessarily for consumption. It's a journal. It's a way for me to take my understanding of things and package it, but you know, it may not necessarily be packaged to be sold. It's packaged to be

archived. It's packaged for when the time comes. It's packaged for a rainy day.

The work — that moment is the work. Responses are a smokescreen; the work is all that matters. When we talk about that forbidden word Art — when that form presents itself to you in that moment, that's all that we're looking for.

Everything is so connected, but I tie it into, you know, what we spoke about a few days back — that machine that we reject that puts value on these extensions of their creators, which may be the publication, it may be some wood carving, things like that. That anti-art sentiment that we spoke about, because the word you reference is the "machine," that money machine, that machine whose life force is my blood.

Furniture is...I think a lot about design as needing to be utilitarian and needing to be folk. Like, that is our greatest asset, folk creations. I look at BlackMass and you as a larger type of folk. This is a folk object. It isn't made with plastic gloves on. This is very much alive, and it's delicate as well. But it's made for what it's made for, is the point. So I think of design as almost like the key in the future that will liberate us from totalitarianism and dictatorship — which when I think of design, that dictatorship is fucking IKEA or CB2.

My belief about furniture is that it needs to be alive. If it's not alive, you shouldn't have it near you. I think about all the things that I'm bringing into my space all the time, even books. I'm digging all the time. Yesterday I had a great conversation with this guy who worked for all the national parks, you know, he worked at Yellowstone, he worked at the Grand Canyon. He had a bunch of these pamphlets, journals that he'd made during his time there. He would go and he would find different people. He found these two brothers, and their great grandfather made tomahawks — that's all he did was make tomahawks and he photographed them all and put them into these small publications. Glossy paper and stapled.

One thing he told me when I took them from him is that they were never for sale. They were ways for him to put his experience down, to amalgamate his experiences. And that sat with me for a minute, you know, because the way he said it was as if he was giving me a child. And I went through some of them and I said, you know, if the rest of them are like this, I'm going to take them off him. I started to examine them, and you know, they're heavy. They're heavier than paper and staples and ink.

So I think about that vulnerability, and that moment of creation when no one else knows the thing exists. That's all part of a bigger conversation that stretches through furniture, through design, through architecture.

I wanted to ask, what are you trying to impose with the show, on space specifically?

YH: Well, for one thing, I always pose the question to myself: why does my work need to occupy this space, and what is it going to do if I allow it to occupy this space? I don't want to take up unnecessary space and I also don't want to fill it for the sake of filling it.

I guess my true and honest and most pure intentions of this show, at this particular time in my life, is to allow myself to expand on how I have investigated my own practice and how I'm working. The show is only a fraction of how my mind is working at this particular moment, and it also takes place during this transition in my life. This project is being presented as my first solo outside of my imprint BlackMass. I founded BlackMass Publishing but I'm an extension of that; there are other things that exist within my body of work and what I'm trying to do outside of this idea of how BlackMass operates. And this work takes on a life of its own, and it allows me to still operate in publication, but out of this one track idea we spoke about — that as a black artist we're only meant to make this one kind of work. We're only supposed to approach our work in this one way, and I'm not looking for the perfect words to say — I'm processing my thoughts right now... What I'm trying to say is that no matter what work we make, no matter how we make the work, or what we put into the work, it's still Black art, right? Because, this idea that Black artists — I'm an artist first. I don't like these labels of Black artists, you know, I don't want to dabble in that.

cLP: Why does it need to be said, is what I always wonder? It's never said by us.

YH: Oh, it's usually never said by us!

cLP: I'm always wondering, like, what's the other type of artists, you know? Who else are you talking about?

YH: Even from, you know, Black artists making this traumatic work, or even questioning their own Blackness in the making of this work — "if I make this work, you know, then I'm more Black" — and I'm really not trying

to go into this, you know. I'm aware of what I am, and I don't need to hear this.

Even with the show it's a year long of like, my transition of what's took place in my life and where I am, and how I'm constantly in conversation with myself and others, and how I'm engaging with my practice. How do I see it and what do I want it to do?

I've also learned to relinquish what I'm creating in a way where I don't feel bound to it from this emotional side, because a lot of times in the past I was so connected to what I was doing. It's very emotional, you want to hold everything. You don't want to let it go. So now I let what I work on go with ease.

cLP: It's difficult. How do you manage that?

YH: Because we may think that we are the authors of everything that we do — and we are to a certain extent — but we have to also understand that it belongs to us but only so much. And again, this didn't come overnight. It took some time for me to relinquish what I've made and just say alright, that's it, on to the next, and that's also a freedom. That's a real freedom. And it takes some time to get there, you know, and I'm not the one when I get to a certain point in my life, I make it seem like oh, it was a piece of cake. I'm there. I've arrived. Yo, that takes some time. That takes a very long time. And I also don't like to put a time stamp on things because, you know, it can't exist in that manner. You have to pace yourself, and whenever you arrive to that point, it's a beautiful place to be at when you're able to relinquish your work without feeling so connected to it, to the point where you don't want to let it go.

And I love what I make so much that I do want to let it go. So I guess that's one of the most helpful things for me is to let it go. It's also very therapeutic for me because I don't want to consume so much to the point where it's like it becomes this thing of, like, gatekeeping your own work, and I'm not trying to do that.

cLP: It can become destructive because you're constantly being confronted with it. I do worry sometimes, back to this idea of art being this extension of yourself. It's like the theory of twins, like your twin gets hurt and you feel it, you know?

Yeah, but that is an interesting thing you said. Sometimes I love things so much that I don't want to let them go, but I also don't want to be confronted by it. You know? I want it to have its own place in the world — I'm free of its hooks, you know?

YH: It was a funny thing that my partner said the other day. I just had got some boxes back of my work, and we were going through it together and I pulled out one of the books and she said, oh, I thought we were supposed to keep this one, you know, in the library. I didn't know this one was supposed to be purchased.

And I was just like, it's okay, we have the most vulnerable version. We have the first copy that I ever made. This is much more in sync with how I feel about this work. And the only reason why I bring that up is because, again, I'm not conditioning my mind to make things to gatekeep.

It's like, some things I want to disperse. This one book that I did that I have not seen in a couple of years is in a library at the Schomburg, and I want to go back and sit with that book. I haven't seen it in a few years now, since, like, 2018. And it's the first copy, I don't even have a copy of it. I had to make a facsimile. So I don't have some of the original content in there. I want to go back and sit with that book and see how I'm going to engage with it at this point in my life.

And you know, it's a beautiful feeling to kind of see your work years later and how do you see it now, rather than how you'd seen it then. I'm very interested in that as well.

cLP: I was gonna say, what is your general reaction to being confronted with your old work?

YH: I would say that usually, even things that I have in my own possession, when I encounter it after not seeing it for so long, it takes me back to that moment in time of how I was dealing. It's like, literally a time capsule. You know, it takes me back mentally, physically. It just takes me back.

When I spent some time in Senegal, before I left I brought back some Touba coffee. And every now and again, because I haven't been back to Senegal since 2020, every time I want to kind of be mentally transported back, I smell that Touba coffee. It takes me back to Senegal, and I enjoy that so much. And that's kind of like what looking at old work does for me; it kind of brings me back to that place in time and what I was doing when I was making this work.

That first book that I made, I was lugging that book around with me everywhere. Like I was literally inserting the pages, it wasn't even bound. I would print, like, a couple of pages a day and on the train, you know, I would insert a page, I would subtract

a page. This is when I was looking at revisions as errors, so I would take and subtract and take and subtract and add and take this print out until I finally concluded all the pages, which was 173.

And when it was finally time for me to bind that book, I was in a very indecisive place. I was like, is it ready to be bound yet? Should I just wait, should I add another page? Like, oh, it's not done, it's probably gonna be bad, and I would look back at that time and I would say, I'm not even in that space, you know.

My revisions wouldn't have been because I thought that errors exist or because it was not done. It's just, you know, as I said, my mind is running rapid. So for me revisions is not errors. For me today, revisions is a reflection of how fast my mind is running, and I embrace them so much to where I keep everything that I print, even "misprints." Everything is kept and held and I go through it. So, this is where I'm at today.

cLP: I mean, I personally like to live with my work, you know, or I like someone else to live with it. I found a bunch of pieces that I made a couple years ago. I was pit firing a lot, and at the time I didn't really appreciate what was happening with these pieces, but it was beautiful to me because there's over 20 of these pieces, which was a lot for me at the time. I started at the top of the summer, I remember because it was a moment. I would throw clay like Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday I was off to rest, and Saturday and Sunday I would be at the crib all day, drying the pit out, getting ready to fire. And I would fire from eight o'clock all the way up until like four in the morning, and I would just go out there and I would drink a lot of beers and I would just fire the clay. I had so many of these pieces. I gave some of them away. But they're really unique.

I was transitioning between studios and I boxed them up and I put them away. And then I was going to my storage and I was getting out things that I wanted to engage with and putting away things that I felt like needed to be separate from the way I'm working. And I came across these and I brought them all back to the house, and I put them in different places. But for me, the object, that's the school that I respect. The object is about ritual. When you think of the 18th century bronzes and you think of the tomahawks of the American Indians, those were ritual items, made to be lived with, Senufo stools, Ashanti stools, things like that.

That goes back to my original idea of folk — folk craft being the most advanced type of architecture and type of design that we've ever had. I just feel more in tune knowing that these pieces are constantly in conversation with each other, even when I'm not around, maybe even more so when I'm not around.

I think a lot about Brancusi and his bronzes, and his fruit with sculptures that he got from Africa — that he took so much from, him and Picasso — but how they didn't regard them as living objects. When these were objects that were used to, like, ward off evil. They were ritual objects, and they were, in a way, snatched from their life-forms and rendered sterile — which, in general terms, is the pervasive idea that I think with my work I reject, and with yours the same way.

One thing I always thought was cool, I was talking to Ousmane, and there was a publication I think he did with you guys — I want to say the cell phone drawing.

YH: Yeah, yeah.

cLP: And I wanted one, and he told me that he never sold it, and I thought that was cool. I still want one, and I might even bring the proposition to him to trade for something, you know, even if it's for a temporary amount of time — let me live with it, I'll let you live with this. That's what I'm interested in, this meditative ritual kind of work. But I thought that was amazing, that there was only one of them. The folklore, no pun intended, the lore is just growing. It just grows because of that.

YH: That's also a beautiful way to work. I actually spoke to him a couple of days ago. I'm going to be seeing him probably on Thursday; he's in New York.

cLP: Yeah, he and I have never met but we've messaged each other for years. Kinda like you and I, we hadn't met. But he and I still haven't met to this day. We've always had that kind of mutual respect for each other. You know?

YH: Yeah, he's a beautiful person. I'm actually doing a publication with him later on this year. We're gonna be doing a really beautiful publication that we've been working on for some time now.

cLP: I don't know how we went off but you know, those pieces are — this is actually one of them here.

YH: Beautiful.

cLP: They're all kind of pit fired ash glazes, and they all kind of look different, which I was really interested in.

I have a small pamphlet that is just photos of these because a lot of them did not vitrify, you know, so they're extremely fragile. And a lot of them have huge cracks in them, but you can't pull it apart or anything. It's solid. A lot of them weren't functional for holding things, a lot of them came out just as slabs. I collected a lot of the shards of ones that had exploded in the kiln and I photographed all those. And that way, you know, sometimes for me a book is enough.

You know, a publication can transport me to wherever I need to go. I did that before I put these in storage, I photographed them and I put them into this small book that may have been 20-25 pages, something like that, with photos of each object and photos of the kiln and shit like that. And maybe a photo of a Heineken bottle or something, because I was drinking mad Heineken and I was also breaking them and throwing them in the kiln and some of them fused. I have a really cool one that fused to one of the pieces.

But, you know, that was a way for me to experience these pieces without necessarily having to handle them or have them in my possession. I still could get the same feeling from that.

YH: Very beautiful. Thanks. I want to let you know how appreciative I am for you to come in and share time. Time is a very precious thing. I'm so grateful for you being in discussion with me and allowing us to exchange and share information with each other — this is an information system that we created between us and now it is expanding beyond us. I'm grateful that we were able to do it and there will be many more between us that's not documented.

We'll have this mental documentation of it, which is the best documentation, and I just want to let you know that it was beautiful to share space with you this afternoon.

cLP: Thank you bro. Thank you for having me. You remember that thing we talked about, about the small conversation becoming a larger conversation? Like that, that's the goal, you know, because like I said earlier, the response, the reaction — it's transitory, you know? In most forms, it's empty. The work is all that matters.

YH: Absolutely, I think it's the most important thing.

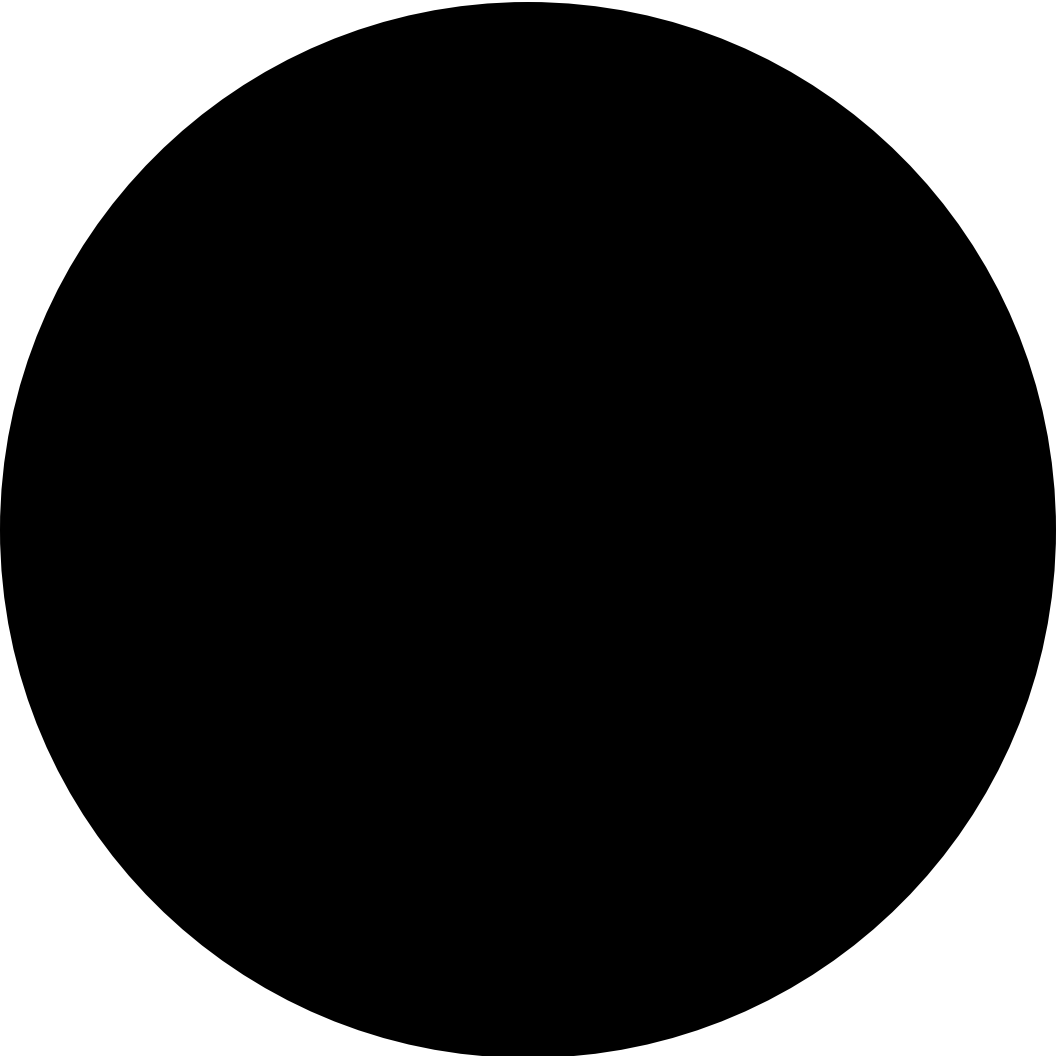
cLP: Yeah, that's what I take from that and what I hope anyone listening or reading will take.

YH: I would love to read this conversation and also listen back to it. I can't wait.

cLP: I'm interested with it living both ways. I'm interested in that data loss, as I call it, between formats. There are things that we spoke about that aren't going to be able to be expressed in print and vice versa.

YH: I would also like to thank Printed Matter who has been very wonderful to me these last couple of years, and I'd like to thank them for coordinating and facilitating this.

cLP: Thank you so much.



Yusuf Hassan + Jasper Marsalis

May 31, 2022

Yusuf Hassan: First off, I just want to say that I'm grateful to have you here with us today. Jasper is somebody I admire — I think he's a fantastic composer and a creator. And while thinking about people who I should speak with and be in conversation with, it was kind of a no brainer for me to extend this invitation. So I'm really grateful to have him here this evening, well, it's four o'clock here so you know, we're approaching the evening...

Jasper Marsalis: Thank you so much.

YH: You're welcome, man. Absolutely. We're about three weeks out from a solo show that I'm going to be presenting at Printed Matter here in New York. And this particular install deals a lot with music, sound, the presentation of architecture, furniture in some way, photography — this is a composite of things that has really been inspiring me not just lately but for a very long time, a lot of the things that I was connected to emotionally and physically. This new work that I'm creating is going to be presented as a publication. It's being presented as one work and it deals with many different elements.

And as I said, one of the focuses for this particular install is sound, and how are we interacting with sound from an emotional aspect, from a visual aspect, from a tangible aspect, and how far do we look at sound beyond hearing it? You have a very unique way of how you compose and create, whether it be through your music, your installations, your paintings...you have a very interesting way that you operate in all those different components, but particularly how you involve yourself with sound. That was the draw for me...

So I guess there's some things that I want to speak about, and we will do that, but we will also go improv and just have a discussion. I think I like that much more.

Publication is one of my main mediums, but I don't pin my practice down in this way

to the publication being a tangible thing, like the book. I'm always interested in the bit where we can break a publication down and be able to engage with it through different lenses, and I guess sound is one of the particular interests for this.

So I want to ask you, how do you coordinate the aspect of sound through the lens of publications, beyond sheet notes? How are you dealing with those components through publication whether it be visually or tangibly?

JM: It's really messy. I think it's important to start off with that because yeah, it's not clear to me as to why things are the way that they are. I just have these vague beliefs. And I let those vague beliefs guide me to how things become material. I see each medium as a sense, and certain senses heighten certain experiences, you know what I mean? Like, painting is about the eyes.

And I guess books are kind of like that, but I feel like books are way more obsolete. They just die. It's really ungraceful. Paintings die pretty ungracefully as well, but like books, you know, they just kind of like... [laughs]

YH: That kinda hurts my heart. You said books kind of die.

JM: Everything dies. Music dies but it has more of a social component, so it can be reactivated. But this is what I want to say... because I did a book originally as a catalog for a show I did in Minneapolis with Midway Art Contemporary and...

YH: Yeah I'm familiar with this publication.

JM: Yeah, basically it was a red herring because I wanted it to be misleading. A catalog is meant to display the works that are in the show, but what if the catalog doesn't have anything that's in the show, and guides you to music? I sold those books as my tour merchandise. I love this misalignment.

YH: You opened up the dialogue to a really interesting topic, when you said books die. A lot of times we connect dying to something being the end, and that it's been the end of its run, but I'm a firm believer that death is kind of the beginning. So I think it opens up this conversation, because even for myself in my own practice, a lot of my work has to do with research. And I'm not saying that every book that I'm researching is interesting or every archive that I'm engaging with is interesting, but it's also components in which I take from this tangible thing, such as the book, cause the book is just — it is what it is. It's a book.

And you know, my idea of creating publications is through whatever medium that I want to create it, particularly for this installation. It has a lot to do with sound, but you're not hearing anything. It's kind of like your heart and your mind and your emotions have to guide your sense of sound through this exhibition. And you know, there was one professor I was speaking to, and I was telling him about this show and he started to talk about sheet notes and I was like, sheet notes is the most boring entry into how we're reading music and how we're engaging with it, and for me it's never a component I like to grab from.

The way I'm creating and moving with publications is in a very improv way because, you know, each page becomes an object, an object becomes a page. I'm thinking about interlopes, and how I'm pausing and how I'm picking back up from the next place of reference, and I'm using objects to be the interlope, different things that's around me to create this component in which there's this information of exchange through the lens of sound.

So I had seen you in performance... I want to say the last time you were in New York. It was a while back in Brooklyn. And when you're in performance, particularly that performance, engaging with the music and receiving it...I went through a series of emotions, and I could not keep up. I still don't know if that was a good thing or a bad thing, but I could not keep up. But I was not uninterested, I was still very tuned in. There were parts in the performance where there was this somber slow down, and then things pick back up, and then there was one part where you screamed out and [laughs] that was kind of like...it unraveled me a bit. And, you know, there's a part in the installation where I'm trying to translate your scream visually [laughs]. I'm still looking for a way to transcribe that. And, you know, your scream

was so spontaneous, I'm looking for that exchange.

And I guess my real question to you would be when elements like that take place, while you're creating and while you're in motion, are those things that just come out in the moment, or are they predetermined?

JM: It's funny what you were saying about scores and sheet music...That performance is very scripted [laughs]. We've rehearsed many times and the scream happens at a very specific moment. When you're performing, you're dealing with people's expectation, and pleasure or non-pleasure. And I try to heighten those little moments.

I know x amount of minutes goes by and people are now bored. It can be pleasurable to be bored. But the scream was really personal because I had been going to a lot of hardcore shows when I was younger, and I thought that was the ultimate pinnacle, the freedom to just like scream, to release this energy from the inside of your body outwards.

Usually screaming is seen as an act of violence or trauma or extreme pain, but in these spaces it was welcomed and accepted. I think that's where the scream came from. I did a version of this performance where it wouldn't even be me screaming — I'd ask someone else to scream for me. And it was interesting to see what would happen because they felt like a boundary was crossed. Most people didn't know what to do with that.

But I'm trying to figure out how this relates with text. I think it's freedom...I think that can happen in every medium. You think there are these restrictions, you think there are these boundaries, but all it takes is just one little slice or cut, you know what I mean, and then you get a scream or something?

YH: I thought it was interesting because it did happen at a very particular time in the performance and it also kind of startled me. But you know, it was obviously unexpected, and if there's one part that I can take out of that performance and transcribe into what I'm doing, it would be that scream. I think for me there's a lot of spontaneous parts throughout what I'm creating, and me telling you that I'm trying to transcribe your scream visually is kind of a tough thing because I'm dealing with it through a publication. What I'm trying to create is this sense of freedom that's not pinned down, but doesn't necessarily have the traditional components of publication, if that's a better way

to explain it. I think that particularly in music there is a freedom that maybe very few musicians exercise.

Sometimes I think, for me, it comes from a place of necessarily trying to keep the viewers at bay and to keep them interested in what they're doing. And, you know, I see the freedom that you have in how you create and I think that it's such a beautiful place to be in, in the age of the internet, where everything is very performative in its own way.

I think that to hold firm to how you want to create and whatever way you want to create is a difficult thing to do, considering the obstacles that are placed in front of us. A lot of people are very heavily into tradition and they're very spoiled and they still go off this old way of creating, this old way of exchanging information, and I kind of wanted to crack down those walls of how traditional something needs to be. I see that within your own practice, especially in your paintings. I didn't get a chance to see the paintings in person but I did spend time with them online, and you know, your paintings, for me, have this very somber mood to them.

It's a very high level of intimacy that I experienced with them—and intimacy is a very huge thing that I'm connected to. Jasper on stage versus Jasper the painter... I'm not trying to rival those two aspects of you, but I sense a sense of peace through your paintings.

So I just want to know, is that by design or...how are you exchanging this information through painting versus you as the performer, because those are two separate entities?

JM: Well, I see the performance as the middle point between the painting practice and the music practice. Oftentimes I take these little snapshots of the insane distances you have when you're performing. I love the word you said — intimacy. You could be atoms close to someone, or you could be a football stadium away.

I try and think about all these distances, emotionally, and then translate that into something visual, into a painting. It becomes the easiest method, I think. But paintings, they're just very dead. They are not time based. Well, they're time based but they're just *still*, and I like this idea that in a performance, you can break time in a way that you can't in painting. So yeah, I think they create this kind of cycle and just keep snowballing.

YH: I'm saying, because I've been thinking about performances lately within my own

practice, performance art and theater, and I'm very interested again in this spontaneous, non-scripted way of operating in how I work. And improv performance for me also creates a certain level of freedom.

JM: I also, really quick, feel like freedom goes hand in hand with embarrassment.

YH: Yes.

JM: I feel like if I'm not embarrassed by something I'm doing, there's an implied lack of risk or something. I feel that was a big aspect of understanding performance. Cause it's so related to my body. I was like, wow I need to...That's when I feel most alive or something, when I'm most embarrassed.

But anyway, I just wanted to throw that out there [laughs] so I didn't lose that thought.

YH: It's cool. It's cool. I mean, for me, performance art it's kind of like this, I'll add onto this freedom of embarrassment, for whatever case you feel more freedom when you're embarrassed. I'm actually the opposite. I'm looking for this. I'm looking to be more vulnerable in that aspect because there's lots of different elements to performance art. And, for me, I'm always trying to exchange information with myself and those who are engaged. I always want it to be a huge part of my practice, being in collaboration with other artists. Whether it's like what's taking place right now—through conversation—or whatever manner we're in conversation, which is usually through publication.

But performance art has been also on my mind very heavy as of late. I am a part of my work but I also sometimes want to be literally a part of my work. And I'm also still very shy in that sense, so I don't think I could be a performer in some way. So I'm trying to look for ways where I can kind of use my own self in being a part of the work. And sometimes this exchange between myself being a part of the work and being absent from the work is two different things because when you're on the other side of it, and you're just creating it, you're kind of tucked away.

But then when you're able to inject yourself into the work, there's a spotlight on you. And you said something about....and I'm just paraphrasing, you can correct me if I'm wrong — that there's a freedom in embarrassment. I need to get over the hurdle of embarrassment, and I guess I should be looking at the freedom that exists within it. And it's a constant struggle because I'm

more comfortable tucked away, and I'm looking for this way to be spontaneous enough to share myself within the fabric of the work, and sometimes it could be a very difficult thing.

And I guess that's one of the biggest things that's really admirable about you is that you're able to kind of, as they say today, live your truth. And, you know, for some that can be a very difficult thing. And I'm not asking you "how are you able to be as free as you are?" I guess what I'm trying to say is that I'm looking to inherit that way of thought as an artist so that I can also interject myself into my performances, when they arise.

JM: It's one of those questions that seems like it should have a simple response. What's in my head the most, and what's hitting at me the hardest right now is privilege. I think it goes hand in hand with freedom.

It's an awkward conversation because freedom is always in the context of civil rights, but as an artist you're in this class that is supported by incredibly wealthy people. And because of that, then you have this freedom to kind of do whatever you want. Once you zoom out, and really zoom out, not just like a small zoom out, it kind of feels futile in a certain way. If that makes any sense.

Not to be so negative, I just...that's how I'm feeling right now. I think in the context of my work though, I'm always seeking "why"? You look at something and you're like, why is that like that? And usually I'm one or two books away from finding the next "why," you know what I mean? And then you're just like [snaps] okay I see that, I see how this is connecting to this. You start to build your own library of things that interconnect.

YH: When you said that I kind of thought about how a couple of years ago when I would print, I would throw away my...I guess you could say my "errors," and I would discard everything I wasn't satisfied with. And then you fast forward up to today and this practice of revisions is so heavily a part of my practice. And I constantly like to add back into work as it goes, as I keep receiving information. I just started these new publications that I'm going to be doing, called *Yusuf Hassan — A Research Publication* and they deal with an unlimited amount of research that's connected to all different types of things, whether it's sound, furniture, architecture, text, photography, music, all these different components.

And when you were saying what you were just saying, it connects to the way in

which I work too and, you know, that's a freedom. A lot of times when we look at how we revise, we've been constructed to believe that we are revising because something was not done correct. But I found freedom in being able to revise without feeling like there was an error but more so because there is more information that I'm receiving in real time.

And I guess the first time I felt this was on this book that I did in 2018, called *Tse Tse*. This book was done to conductions by Butch Morris. It started out with I believe 275 pages, and it was an edition of 50. And each time I assembled the book, there were more pages added. And I think it went up to around like 385 pages. I still got five copies left that I haven't assembled, and I haven't assembled a copy in over a year. The pages would be inserted into the book as Butch Morris would play his conductions. I wanted to use that particular performance to inform how I'm inserting the pages.

So, you know, a lot of the publications that I create have things that have been added later on. Like, I'll reprint it and someone may see it later and they may say, oh, I didn't see this page in there, or I didn't see this text in there. Research that's done on the whim, whether I'm on the train...and it's compiled into these paper pamphlets. I print them out and the work is all in progress—the pages are inserted in the order of the previous publication.

So everybody who got a copy would kind of have to come together to see what each person got in their books. And I guess that's kind of almost impossible because, there are people who bought the book that live in Europe, there are people who bought the book that live in the States, and they don't know one another. I don't know half of the people that purchased the book, and that spontaneous way of working kind of created this freedom for me to work in this improv way when it comes to revising. And I just thought about that when you were speaking about freedom. So I just wanted to share that. [laughs]

JM: Definitely, I think we align with that because I've done two editions of the book and each is different. And then on the albums there are page numbers that connect to the book, and there's this awesome connection to other things and past versions and new versions, but the thing I've been now dealing with is literally no one has time for all that [laughs], you know what I mean. You're lucky if you can get 10 minutes of

someone's attention. I feel like the closest thing we have to life in art are these revisions, redoing things, because otherwise if it stays the same, then it's just kind of like... [gestures]

YH: I mean, I also think of what I'm doing as a study. And I'm still studying my own work — there's things that I haven't touched in a year and then I come back to it, and I study and I look at them. I look to these things that kind of re-inspire me and re-spark thoughts and, you know, I want to touch on this idea of the work before it's shared, right? Because I always talk about how I'm so interested in what took place before the final version of what we have.

And I guess my question to you is how do you deal with what you created before it's released, when it's that vulnerable version of whatever you're creating, before it's out to the masses. How are you engaging with that part of your practice? Do you feel more connected to it when you have it in your possession? Or are you more connected to it once it leaves?

I always say we can be gatekeepers of our own work as well. And, you know, I had to learn to let things go and relinquish ownership, and so I wanted to know how you deal with that exchange between holding your work and then letting go, because sometimes we can feel so connected to it that we don't want to let it go.

But I think now where I'm at with it is I like this idea of presenting something that is intentionally unraveling so that there is curiosity to go down this rabbit hole and see how things are aligned or misaligned or gone or still there. That opportunity can present itself rather than being like, "This is finished, this is the complete object."

JM: Yeah, I mean, I'm not really sure to be honest. I think in painting I'm a bit more at peace with it, because I can approach everything serially, exploring different aspects of one idea. I think music's a bit more complicated for me. I've tried to apply that same methodology; I've done the same song over and over and over again. And that was pretty rewarding, but now it's gotten to a more unhealthy space where I'm working on basically two songs for four years, just version, version, version, version, version, and that feels unhealthy. So I don't know, I don't know the answer. I don't know if there is an answer, really. I liked what you said though [laughs], sometimes we can be gatekeepers of our own work.

YH: Well I mean, that's a conversation in its own, to use the word "unhealthy." I like to always approach everything that I do as first and foremost for myself, and everything else is a bonus from that point on. I really have no real way of determining how anybody engages with what I'm doing, and that's kind of not my job. It's not up to me on how they receive or don't receive what I'm creating. I'm really not interested in that aspect. But you know, we become so connected to the work that sometimes we don't want to let it go. It's like this question that was posed by one artist: "Do you believe that the work dies or comes alive when it leaves the studio?"

And I always answered this question in two parts because I believe that for myself, the work is more alive when it's in my possession, when I'm still figuring it out. But it takes on a new life once it leaves my hand. For some artists, they can't deal with what comes after the work leaves because they feel like they've kind of lost control of how it's being engaged with. I guess what I'm trying to say is that that is a freedom and not everybody has gotten to that place, and some may never get to that place. And, you know, I'm gonna pose the question to you—for your own work, in your own practice, whether it be music or your paintings, do you believe that your work dies or comes alive once it leaves your possession?

JM: I don't know. Maybe it's like some weird zombie...dead and alive. Because old stuff definitely comes back to haunt me, and has haunted me... [laughs]

Decisions that I've made, things I'm really happy about, things that I'm really upset about. But it all informs everything, both past and present. I think that's what's most exciting about it. I don't really think about it as a linear thing, you know, you make something and then that modifies things, decisions you've made in the past that maybe will change things in the future. So yeah, I think it's more zombie-like. Is there a word for that?

YH: I don't know [laughs]. Well, I put it like this. I like to believe that the things that I did, I did it in that moment and I was happy with the results. Speaking for myself, I never look at the past and then say, you know, I'm kind of unhappy—because at that particular moment, I had the freedom to do whatever I wanted to do, and in that moment, I wanted to do this. I guess the past could inform what we're doing moving forward. It can impact it, and in some ways it can't. But I guess

it's all in how we receive information. And, you know, I guess I would say lastly—how has the edition of *Carter Speak* concluded?

JM: *Crater Speak*, yeah.

YH: *Crater Speak*, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I'm sorry! [laughs] *Crater Speak*.

JM: How does it conclude? Well, we're working on the last edition right now. But I'll just be candid about it. I think the last edition has most of the pages erased. So you're just left with a kind of empty book. That's how it ends. [laughs]

YH: Yeah. And I think this is a nice note to end here as well. And for the record, I'm apologizing to Jasper...

JM: It's all good!

YH: I just blotched...I just blotched his book. Can we please make humor out of this? It's real hard on the eyes sometimes. So I guess let me ask you this question lastly, am I the only one that has kind of...blotched it?

JM: Well, no, it's kind of deliberate, like the first album I put out. No one says it right because there's a misspelling in the title. But it became intentional later. So, it's like, what's that Marshall McLuhan book? *Medium is the Massage* and people think it's the *Medium is the Message* but it's actually *Medium is the Massage*. But both are right.

YH: All right. And it's all love so you know, I guess we gotta end it right here. I just want to say, in all seriousness man, I really appreciate you. I admire what you do, and I really appreciate you for spending some time talking with me as part of this program. I'm pretty sure that we'll have more conversations down the road. I know that you're gonna be in New York sometime, it'd be nice to see you. And I really appreciate you. I would like to also thank Printed Matter for allowing us to do this and for organizing this. They have been working tirelessly to bring this all together.

JM: Thank you, thank you Yusuf for having me.

YH: Absolutely, thank you everyone and we'll catch up at some point in time.

JM: For sure. Peace. All right.

Yusuf Hassan

Yusuf Hassan (b. 1987) is the founder of BlackMass Publishing. Hassan's work explores the idea of the book. His reductive technique and meditative approach challenge the physical and poetic boundaries of his materials. Canceling the idea of restrictions within his work allows him to analyze it with no limitations, using printed matter as a physical way of expression. Much of Hassan's success is attributed to his unique ability to express dramatic and emotional content through publications and printmaking.

Hassan holds publications in the permanent collection of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, the Langston Hughes Library, Thomas J. Watson Library, the Houghton Library, and the Whitney Museum Library.

chaz La Pointe

chaz La Pointe (b. 1998) is a transdisciplinary maker working primarily in sound, assemblage, and printed matter. His work explores the links between architecture, the lives of ritual objects, and folk memory. He lives and works between Chicago, Illinois and Southwest Mississippi.

Jasper Marsalis

Working across painting, sculpture, music and text, Jasper Marsalis elaborates a parallel between the space of painting and a performer on stage, both of which entail an experience of being consumed by audiences. By troubling perception, Marsalis interrogates the ocular centrism of painting and the associated role of spectacle and access.

Marsalis (b. 1995) lives and works in Los Angeles. He graduated with a BFA from The Cooper Union, NY, in 2017. His solo exhibitions have been held at Emalin, London (2022); Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis (2020); Kristina Kite Gallery, Los Angeles (2020); and Svetlana, New York (2018). Selected group exhibitions include Emalin, London (2021); Lehman College Art Gallery, New York (2020); cfcg, New York (2019); and The Cooper Union, New York (2017).

As a musician, Marsalis performs under the moniker Slauson Malone 1. Recent performances have taken place at Cafe OTO, London (2022); PhilaMOCA, Philadelphia (2021); and The Underground Museum, Los Angeles (2019). His publications include the albums *for Star (Crater Speak)* (2022); *Vergangenheitsbewältigung (Crater Speak)* (2020) and *A Quiet Farwell, 2016–2018 (Crater Speak)* (2019), and the book *Crater Speak* (2020).

The texts in this publication are transcriptions of two recorded conversations between Yusuf Hassan, chaz La Pointe, and Jasper Marsalis, on occasion of the exhibition *a symphony a work in progress* by Yusuf Hassan, opening June 23, 2022 at Printed Matter.

Visit printedmatter.org/yusuf-hassan to access videos of these conversations and additional content from the exhibition.

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