

GALLERY | 400

400 SOUTH PEORIA STREET (MC 034)

Chicago, IL 60607

UIC SCHOOL OF ART & ART HISTORY

312 996 6114

gallery400.uic.edu

Tues–Fri 10–6, Sat 12–6

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Erin Nixon, Assistant Director, 312 996 6114, gallery400@uic.edu

Making Chances

An exhibition in the citywide program *Platforms: 10 Years of Chances Dances*

September 11–October 24, 2015



Image Courtesy of Chances Dances

Artists and organizations included: **Black and Brown Punk Show Collective, Elijah Burgher and Gordon Hall, Margaret Bobo-Dancy, Julius DC Bautista, Chain Reaction, Jed Dulanias for Mizzchicago.com, Hope Esser and Daviel Shy, Edie Fake, Nicole Garneau, Rami George, Jacquelyn Carmen Guerrero in collaboration with Sofia Moreno and Molly Hewitt, Amanda Gutierrez in collaboration with Mitch Said, Leon Andrew Hensley with A/S/L_Media, Christa Holka, Meg Leary, Riva Lehrer, Rebecca Mir Grady, Madsen Minax, Fawzia Mirza and Ryan Logan, Anne Elizabeth Moore, Matt Morris, Dan Paz, Mugsie Pike, Aay Preston-Myint, Macon Reed, Jules Roskam, Marian Runk, Matthew Schlagbaum, Seth & Kellen, Michael Sirianni, Sky Cubacub, Third Language, Transgender Oral History Project, Charles Vinz, Katie Vota, Dion Walton, Ethan A. White, Bruce E. Wiest, Youth Empowerment Performance Project, and Latham Zearfoss and Micah Salkind.**

August 6, 2015—Chicago, IL— ***Making Chances*** is an exhibition of the identity, history, and

community of **Chances Dances**, the radically inclusive queer dance party that builds safer spaces and supports local artists and activists. The exhibition is presented as part of the citywide program **Platforms: 10 Years of Chances Dances**, a multi-venue series of events and exhibitions featuring artwork, ephemera, herstory, performances, texts, and music by artists who have been supported by the Chances Dances granting program, past and present Chances organizers, and the greater Chances community. Gallery 400's *Making Chances*, the central exhibition of the *Platforms* program, will illuminate how the multifaceted Chances Dances collective—with their radically inclusive ethos, nonhierarchical organizational structure, broadly welcoming and safe spaces at their parties, and yearly micro grants—functions as a community catalyst.

Curated by artist/curator/educator **John Neff** and Gallery 400 director **Lorelei Stewart**, *Making Chances* meshes artworks, histories and exhibition design in a reflection of the intertwined activities and lived experiences in the Chances community. Contrary to conventional retrospectives, this exhibition is not about constructing a unified identity but rather an attempt to channel and present for exploration an ongoing process of creating/working through difference. Within the *Platforms* program various curators, galleries, and groups of artists represent distinctive facets of the work being generated by queer artists in Chicago today, while the *Making Chances* exhibition examines the visual/physical manifestations of collectivity, process, and ideology. Evoking the fluidity of Chances' community, the blending of private and public in its work, and the nomadic nature of the parties, *Making Chances* at Gallery 400 combines grantees' artworks, oral histories from Chances organizers and community members, historical objects, ephemera from the organization of Chances, and exhibition design elements commissioned from Chances community members.

Making Chances is organized in three parts: 1/ art objects, ephemera, documentary photography, audio and video histories, and textual accounts of events in the histories of Chances Dances, Chicago's LGBTIQ communities, and larger social change, all presented along a dynamic, non-linear timeline designed by artist Edie Fake, 2/ a video archive of work from Chances awardees and organizers accessible on multiple monitors along an upholstered banquette designed by artist Charlie Vinz, and 3/ a central performance platform designed by artists Elijah Burgher and Gordon Hall and planned to host a series of performances by Chances awarded performers, as well as other public events including a fashion show, poetry readings, and more.

In the way objects in the exhibition straddle positions as artworks and exhibition environments, and the multidimensional contexts for practice are presented alongside personal histories and created objects, the complexity that is Chances comes to life in *Making Chances*.

About Platforms:

Platforms is a fall 2015 multi-venue series of events and exhibitions featuring artwork, ephemera, herstory, performances, texts, and music by Critical Fierceness grantees and runners-up, past and present Chances organizers, and the greater Chances community. *Platforms* features commissioned and existing art objects and performances by this diverse group of artists, alongside ten years of ephemera, archival material, and music by Chances organizers, across divergent Chicago art spaces. *Platforms* elevates and expands the community of the long standing and multifaceted queer collective Chances Dances, their monthly inclusive parties, and the many Critical Fierceness Grants they have awarded to local luminaries.

In addition to the exhibition and multiple programs at Gallery 400, as a part of *Platforms* Nightingale Cinema will host film and video screenings; iconic music venue The Hideout will host a Chances block party with events continuing for a month; partner galleries Sector 2337, Hidden Dog, and Trunk Show will present group exhibitions; parties and events will be organized at Rainbo and Subterranean; and a party bus is planned as a shuttle between venues. A retrospective catalogue, including documentation images, contributions from writers and scholars in the Chances community, a compilation CD, and more, will be constructed in as nontraditional a fashion as the exhibitions and events in the larger *Platforms* program.

Gallery 400 Making Chances Programs:

Friday, September 11, 5-8pm—**Opening Reception: *Making Chances***

Wednesday, September 16, 7pm—**Screening: *Superimposed: Activist Video & Collective Voices***

Presented in partnership with Chicago Filmmakers, this screening summons film and video work by the spiritual predecessors of Chances Dances, reflecting the collective practices and experimental organizing models of radical artists since the 1960s.

Wednesday, September 30, 6-8pm—**Screening and Discussion: *We Came to Sweat: The Legend of Starlite***

We Came to Sweat chronicles the history of Starlite Lounge, self identified as the “oldest black-owned, non-discriminating bar/club in the heart of Brooklyn” and the community-led effort to save the club from eviction. An open dialogue led by a Chicago-based historian of queer nightlife will follow the screening.

Thursday, October 1, 4-7pm—**Spotlight: A showcase of LGBTQI organizations and resources in Chicago**

A resource fair focused on welcoming queer-identified youth and young adults to Chicago. Service agencies and groups that work with queer youth and students, as well as student groups from multiple universities, will be featured.

Saturday, October 24, 5-9pm—**Closing Reception, Fashion Show, and Catalogue Release**
Featuring a fashion show by Sky Cubacub, GNAT, Anna Rangos, and Matt Morris, plus *Platforms* catalogue release.

Forthcoming performances, readings, workshops, and panel discussions to be announced.

Tours:

Gallery 400 offers guided tours for groups of all ages. Tours are free of charge but require reservation. Please complete our online form (accessible at gallery400.uic.edu/visit/tours) to schedule a tour of *Making Chances*. For more information, or to discuss the specific needs and interests of your group, please contact us at 312 996 6114 or gallery400@uic.edu.

Major support for *Making Chances* is provided by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Additional supported is provided by the School of Art & Art History, the College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts, University of Illinois at Chicago; Raymond E. Crossman; Lisa Yun Lee; and a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency. The Daryl Gerber Stokols

and Jeff Stokols Voices Series Fund provides general support to Gallery 400. Support for the opening and closing receptions provided by Lagunitas Brewing Co., Letherbee Distillers, and Perrier.

Founded in 1983, Gallery 400 is one of the nation's most vibrant university galleries, showcasing work at the leading edge of contemporary art, architecture, and design. The Gallery's program of exhibitions, lectures, film and video screenings, and performances features interdisciplinary and experimental practices. Operating within the School of Art and Art History in the College of Architecture, Design, and the Arts at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), Gallery 400 endeavors to make the arts and its practitioners accessible to a broad spectrum of the public and to cultivate a variety of cultural and intellectual perspectives. Gallery 400 is recognized for its support of the creation of new work, the diversity of its programs and participants, and the development of experimental models for multidisciplinary exhibition.