

# STORM KING ART CENTER

## STORM KING ART CENTER TO STAGE LIVE, SITE-RESPONSIVE PERFORMANCES OF RASHID JOHNSON'S *THE HIKERS*, IN COLLABORATION WITH CHOREOGRAPHER CLAUDIA SCHREIER

Adapted from Johnson's 2019 ballet and film of the same name, *The Hikers* is presented in conjunction with the artist's site-specific sculptural installation at Storm King, *The Crisis*

### *THE HIKERS*

Five performances at select times from August 20–21, 2021

### RASHID JOHNSON & CLAUDIA SCHREIER IN CONVERSATION

August 20, 2021 at 6PM

### *THE CRISIS*

On view until November 8, 2021



From left to right: (1) Rashid Johnson, *The Hikers* (2019). Film shoot documentation. Courtesy of the artist. Photo: Van Wampler. (2) Rashid Johnson, *The Crisis* (2019). Courtesy of the artist and Hauser & Wirth. Photo: Stephanie Powell courtesy of Storm King Art Center.

*New Windsor, NY, July 22, 2021*—Storm King Art Center will stage five site-responsive performances of Rashid Johnson's ballet, *The Hikers*, from August 20 to 21, 2021.

Adapted from the film and corresponding performances of the same title, *The Hikers* follows the journey of two solo hikers, both Black: first alone, then crossing each other's path—an encounter that unfolds in sometimes lithe, sometimes lumbering balletic movements, challenging modern conceptions of blackness and fetishizations of black bodies in motion. In collaboration with choreographer Claudia Schreier, Johnson explores the physical and psychological repercussions that attend the black body in space.

Originally debuted at the Aspen Art Museum in 2019, *The Hikers* has subsequently been performed at Hauser & Wirth in New York, with presentations of the film at Aspen Art Museum, Museo Tamayo in Mexico City, and Hauser & Wirth. At Storm King, the live performance takes new form when enacted outdoors in dialogue with the landscape—and shown in concert with Johnson's site-specific sculptural installation *The Crisis*, on view through November 8, 2021. All performances of *The Hikers* at Storm King will feature Lloyd Knight and Leslie Andrea Williams of the Martha Graham Dance Company.

Johnson said: "When Claudia Schreier and I created *The Hikers* in 2019, I was building on a specific experience hiking in Colorado, which led me to think heavily about outdoor activities and how they are or aren't democratized. The ballet built on this to address the body and identity in space, so translating these ideas in a different environment has been an incredibly interesting process—the anxieties and tensions the work addresses are universal, but the nuances of context play such a critical role."

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Nora Lawrence, Storm King Senior Curator, said: “The way Rashid has reimagined these two incredible works—both of which so elegantly reflect the central currents of his practice—within the unique context of Storm King’s environment, is a testament to the subtlety and intention with which he conceives their relationship to site. Seen separately and together, the works become vehicles for an examination of identity: of the relationship between the natural and the mediated, and between the personal and the cultural. To be able to present them in dialogue with one another and with Storm King is a true gift.”

Responding directly to Storm King’s native landscape, *The Crisis*—a sixteen-foot-tall, yellow pyramidal steel structure—is set within a field of native grasses, which Storm King has reintroduced into its landscape and cultivated over the last 25 years. Over the course of the presentation, the grasses grow up within and around the geometric frame, integrating the work into the very fabric of Storm King. The structure’s shelves are populated with a range of smaller objects—including blocks of shea butter, sculpted fiberglass busts, and hand-crafted, painted ceramic vessels, planted with natural vegetation from the surrounding landscape. Johnson draws inspiration from combining architectural and organic elements, intending for *The Crisis* to capture the tension of the moment in which nature has just begun to reclaim a human-made structure.

Centrally located and viewable from both above and from a closer vantage point, the various physical approaches to the work invite a multitude of interpretations. The title *The Crisis* itself is ambiguous: *The Crisis* can speak both to something deeply personal as well as a collective event and can invoke both historical and ongoing crises. The color of Johnson’s work, in addition, evokes a multiplicity of meaning: the bright yellow of the frame and the sculpted busts contained within simultaneously signal a warning and reflect the color of shea butter—a West African product known for its healing properties, which frequently appears in Johnson’s practice. *The Crisis* at once calls upon viewers to beware and points to the regeneration that often follows trauma.

*The Crisis* (2019) is on loan to Storm King for the 2021 season from the artist and Hauser & Wirth.

Working across a variety of media, scales, and disciplines, *The Hikers* and *The Crisis* exemplify the breadth that distinguishes Johnson’s artistic practice. Reconceived for Storm King’s setting, the works taken together present a symphonic exploration of *being* in the world, interrogating and frequently collapsing the space between environment and both individual and collective notions of self.

Storm King will host a live talk between Johnson and Schreier for onsite audiences on the occasion of the ballet’s premiere.

-ENDS-

## ***The Hikers* Program Schedule**

### Friday, August 20

5:00PM Performance

6:00PM Rashid Johnson and Claudia Schreier in Conversation

7:00PM Performance

### Saturday, August 21

4:30PM Performance

6:00PM Performance

7:30PM Performance

Storm King will stay open late until 8:00PM on both nights so that guests may enjoy the performances and have time to explore the grounds.

## **Ticketing**

*The Hikers* performances and public programming are free with Storm King admission. There are two ticket options: arrival by car and arrival via the shuttle from Beacon Metro-North station. Timed-entry tickets are required for all visitors and entry will not be permitted without an advance reservation. Visit [stormking.org/thehikers](https://stormking.org/thehikers) for tickets.

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## About Rashid Johnson

Born in Chicago in 1977, Rashid Johnson is among an influential cadre of contemporary American artists whose work employs a wide range of media to explore themes of art history, individual and shared cultural identities, personal narratives, literature, philosophy, materiality, and critical history. After studying in the photography department of the Art Institute of Chicago, Johnson's practice quickly expanded to embrace a wide range of media—including sculpture, painting, drawing, filmmaking, and installation—yielding a complex multidisciplinary practice that incorporates diverse materials rich with symbolism and personal history.

Recent solo exhibitions include 'Rashid Johnson: The Hikers', Hauser & Wirth, New York, NY (2019), 'Rashid Johnson. Anxious Audience', The Power Plant, Toronto, Canada (2019), 'Rashid Johnson. Los Senderistas', Museo Tamayo, Mexico City, Mexico (2019), 'Rashid Johnson: The Hikers', Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO (2019), 'Rashid Johnson. It Never Entered My Mind', Hauser & Wirth, St. Moritz, Switzerland (2019), 'Provocations. Rashid Johnson', Institute for Contemporary Art at Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA (2018), 'Rashid Johnson. No More Water', Lismore Castle Arts, Lismore, Ireland (2018), and 'The Rainbow Sign', David Kordansky Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (2018).

Johnson's artwork is in the permanent collections of many public institutions, including: the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL; Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo, Norway; Brooklyn Art Museum, Brooklyn, NY; Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY; High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; National Museum of African American History and Culture, Washington, DC; Pérez Art Museum, Miami, FL; Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY. Johnson lives and works in New York City.

## Collaborators

**Claudia Schreier** has choreographed, directed, and produced for dance, opera, and film across the U.S. and internationally. She is the Choreographer-in-Residence at Atlanta Ballet and has been commissioned by Miami City Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Vail Dance Festival, Guggenheim Works & Process, Juilliard Opera, ABT Studio Company, New York Choreographic Institute, and New York Choral Society. She is a recipient of the Princess Grace Award for Choreography, Dance/NYC Dance Advancement Fund Grant (Ford Foundation), Lotos Foundation Prize for Dance, and Suzanne Farrell Dance Prize, and she was the 2017 Virginia B. Toulmin Fellow for Women Choreographers at the Center for Ballet and the Arts at NYU. Schreier served as choreographer and artistic co-director for Juilliard Opera's New York premiere of *Dido and Aeneas* and international tour to Opera Holland Park in London and Opéra Royal de Versailles. She has contributed to programs at the White House, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and the Kennedy Center, including the Kennedy Center Honors. Her work is the subject of two documentaries, most recently PBS's Emmy Award-winning "Dancing on the Shoulders of Giants" (Capital Region). Schreier presented her TEDx talk, "Thinking On Your Feet", at Columbia University in 2018. She has been featured by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *BBC News*, *NPR*, *Dance Magazine*, *Pointe*, *Marie Claire*, and *ELLE*. [claudiaschreier.com](http://claudiaschreier.com)

**Lloyd Knight** is a Principal dancer with the Martha Graham Dance Company. He joined the Company in 2005 and performs the major male roles of the Graham repertory including in *Appalachian Spring*, *Embattled Garden*, *Night Journey* and many others. *Dance Magazine* named him one of the "Top 25 Dancers to Watch" in 2010 and one of the best performers of 2015. Mr. Knight has starred with ballet greats Wendy Whelan and Misty Copeland in signature Graham duets and has had roles created for him by such renowned artists as Nacho Duato and Pam Tanowitz. He is currently a principal guest artist for The Royal Ballet of Flanders directed by Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui. Born in England and raised in Miami, he trained at Miami Conservatory of Ballet and New World School of the Arts.

**Leslie Andrea Williams** was born in Newport News, Virginia and grew up in Raleigh, North Carolina. Ms. Williams joined the Martha Graham Dance Company just two months after graduating from The Juilliard School in May 2015. Since then, she has traveled the world performing numerous Principal roles in iconic Martha Graham ballets. Ms. Williams has been featured in music videos for singer/songwriter Blood Orange, has danced/modeled in fashion shows for Desigual and Wiederhoeft, has been featured in campaigns for Dior and Capezio Dancewear, and dances in exhibitions for world-renowned artist Rashid Johnson. She was recently featured in the *New York Times* "Best Dance of 2019" list.

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## About Storm King Art Center

Storm King Art Center is a 500-acre outdoor museum located in New York's Hudson Valley, where visitors experience large-scale sculpture and site-specific commissions under open sky. Since 1960, Storm King has been dedicated to stewarding the hills, meadows, and forests of its site and surrounding landscape. Building on the visionary thinking of its founders, Storm King supports artists and some of their most ambitious works. Changing exhibitions, programming, and seasons offer discoveries with every visit.

**Website:** [stormking.org](http://stormking.org)

**Instagram:** [@StormKingArtCenter](https://www.instagram.com/StormKingArtCenter) | **Facebook:** [Storm King Art Center](https://www.facebook.com/StormKingArtCenter) | **Twitter:** [@StormKingArtCtr](https://twitter.com/StormKingArtCtr)

## 2021 Season

April 7, 2021 – December 12, 2021

## Opening Hours

Wednesday – Monday (closed Tuesdays)

10AM – 5:30PM

Member Mornings: Sundays 9AM – 10AM

## Discounted Admission

Storm King is pleased to offer discounted admission for the 2021 season to the following visitors. Tickets using these discounts must be reserved by phone: 845.534.3115.

- Frontline healthcare professionals (doctors, nurses, hospital staff, EMTs, paramedics)
- Active military and their family via the Blue Star Program (May 15 – September 6 only)
- SNAP participants/EBT cardholders via Museums for All
- Storm King Partner School students, families, and educators
- Modern and Contemporary Reciprocal Membership Program (Mod/Co)
- American Association of Museum (AAM) Members
- International Committee of Museums (ICOM)
- Staff of other museums

## Visitor Health & Safety

- Fully vaccinated visitors do not need to wear a mask at Storm King. Mask use is recommended for unvaccinated visitors when interacting with Storm King staff, inside the Museum Building and restrooms, and whenever a 6-foot distance cannot be maintained.
- Some amenities remain on pause, including tram service and access to the on-site Museum Store.

Advance tickets are required. All ticket reservations are on a first-come, first-served basis and entry will not be permitted without an advance reservation. For the most up-to-date information on ticket availability, amenities, and hours, please visit [stormking.org/visit](http://stormking.org/visit).

## Press Inquiries

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## Press Visits

Advance reservations are required for all visitors to Storm King, including members of the media. Accredited members of the media may contact FITZ & CO to request a reservation. Please include your first and last name, phone number, media title and position, as well as details on any planned coverage as a result of your visit. If coverage is not currently planned, please provide some examples of recent, relevant articles as they appear in a media outlet or a valid press ID.