

# WHITNEY

Whitney Museum  
of American Art  
Press Office

99 Gansevoort Street  
New York, NY 10014

pressoffice@whitney.org  
(212) 570-3633

# PRESS RELEASE

## THE WHITNEY MUSEUM PRESENTS “LACKS CRITICALITY,” A PERFORMANCE BY AWILDA STERLING-DUPREY



***Presented in conjunction with the exhibition [no existe un mundo poshuracán: Puerto Rican Art in the Wake of Hurricane Maria](#) March 3–5, 2023***

**New York, NY, February 27, 2023** — The Whitney Museum of American Art announces a presentation of *Lacks Criticality*, a performance by renowned Puerto Rican choreographer Awilda Sterling-Duprey. Responding to the cataclysmic impact of Hurricane Maria, this three-night residency, held March 3–5, 2023, explores the impact of the storm on Puerto Rican citizens’ bodies, minds, emotions, and the physical environment. Presented in conjunction with the exhibition [no existe un mundo poshuracán: Puerto Rican Art in the Wake of Hurricane Maria](#), the performance integrates abstractions of Yoruba dance traditions and the way these reference forces of nature.

“Awilda Sterling-Duprey is one of the great matriarchs in the art scene in Puerto Rico. She is an important referent to younger generations, yet her art practice is, at the same time, fresh, vibrant, and full of life,” says Marcela Guerrero, the DeMartini Family Curator at the Whitney

Museum. “Similar to the other artists in *no existe un mundo poshuracán*, Sterling-Duprey’s performance examines in physical form the complex feelings associated with Hurricane Maria and its aftermath.”

Making its New York City debut, *Lacks Criticality* draws on traditional movement techniques and the dances of Oyá, goddess of the wind, storms, and lightning. The choreography moves from slowness to violence, like the force of a hurricane, developing around a center and altering the wind and water, destroying everything in its path and allowing space for regeneration. In this iteration of *Lacks Criticality*, presented in the Museum’s Susan and John Hess Family Theater, Sterling-Duprey will perform alongside vocalist Jainardo Batista and percussionists Rafael Monteagudo and Román Díazand. The performance was originally presented at the Institute for Dance Scholarship at Temple University.

Tickets are available for purchase on [whitney.org](https://whitney.org).

### **Performance Listings**

#### ***Lacks Criticality***

Friday, March 3, 7 pm

Saturday, March 4, 7 pm

Sunday, March 5, 7 pm

**Location:** Floor 3, Susan and John Hess Family Gallery and Theater

**Tickets:** Tickets are required (\$12 adults; \$8 students, seniors, and visitors with disabilities; \$12 for Members).

**Event Link:** <https://whitney.org/events/lacks-criticality>

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## **ABOUT AWILDA STERLING-DUPREY**

Awilda Sterling-Duprey is a central figure in Puerto Rico’s cultural scene. Equally celebrated as a painter, performance artist, and dancer, Sterling-Duprey interweaves performance into her paintings and installations. Conceptual art and Dada are significant influences in her work, as are Caribbean cultural and religious traditions. For more than forty years, she has created and performed experimental dance works combining Afro-Caribbean dance and modern experimental movement in Puerto Rico and New York City and throughout Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Sterling-Duprey attended the Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Diseño, San Juan; the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras; and earned an MFA from Pratt Institute, New York. She is a founding member of Pisotón, the experimental dance collective that transformed Puerto Rico’s dance and performance scene in the 1980s. She is a recipient of numerous fellowships and artist residencies, including a USA Fellowship in Choreography (2010), Tree of Life grant (2019), Mass MoCA residency (2022), Rauschenberg Residency (2022), and Joan Mitchell Fellowship (2022). Her work, *Blindfolded*, an ongoing performance in

which the artist draws blindfolded while listening to recorded excerpts of straight-ahead jazz improvisation, was featured in the 2022 Whitney Biennial.

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## PRESS CONTACT

For press materials and image requests, please visit our press site at [whitney.org/press](https://whitney.org/press) or contact:

**Ashley Reese, Director of Communications**

Whitney Museum of American Art

(212) 671-1846

[Ashley\\_Reese@whitney.org](mailto:Ashley_Reese@whitney.org)

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## EXHIBITION SUPPORT

Leadership support for *no existe un mundo poshuracán: Puerto Rican Art in the Wake of Hurricane Maria* is provided by David Cancel and the Mellon Foundation.

The exhibition is part of the Whitney's emerging artists program, sponsored by

## NORDSTROM

Generous support is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Judy Hart Angelo, the Elaine Graham Weitzen Foundation for Fine Arts, and the Whitney's National Committee.

Significant support is provided by Further Forward Foundation, the Kapadia Equity Fund, and The Keith Haring Foundation Exhibition Fund.

Additional support is provided by Furthermore: a program of the J. M. Kaplan Fund.

Curatorial research and travel for this exhibition were funded by an endowment established by Rosina Lee Yue and Bert A. Lies, Jr., MD.



The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts

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## ABOUT THE WHITNEY

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for ninety years. The core of the Whitney’s mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

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## VISITOR INFORMATION

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Public hours are: Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10:30 am–6 pm; Friday, 10:30 am–10 pm; and Saturday and Sunday, 11 am–6 pm. Closed Tuesday. Member-only hours are: Saturday and Sunday, 10:30–11 am. Visitors eighteen years and under and Whitney members: FREE. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 7–10 pm. COVID-19 vaccination and face coverings are not required but strongly recommended. We encourage all visitors to wear face coverings that cover the nose and mouth throughout their visit.

**Image caption:**

Awilda Sterling-Duprey, *Lacks Criticality*, 2018. Performance view, Conwell Hall, Temple University, September 21, 2018. Courtesy the artist and Temple University. © 2018 Awilda Sterling-Duprey. Photograph by Brian Mengini

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