

ISSUE PROJECT ROOM

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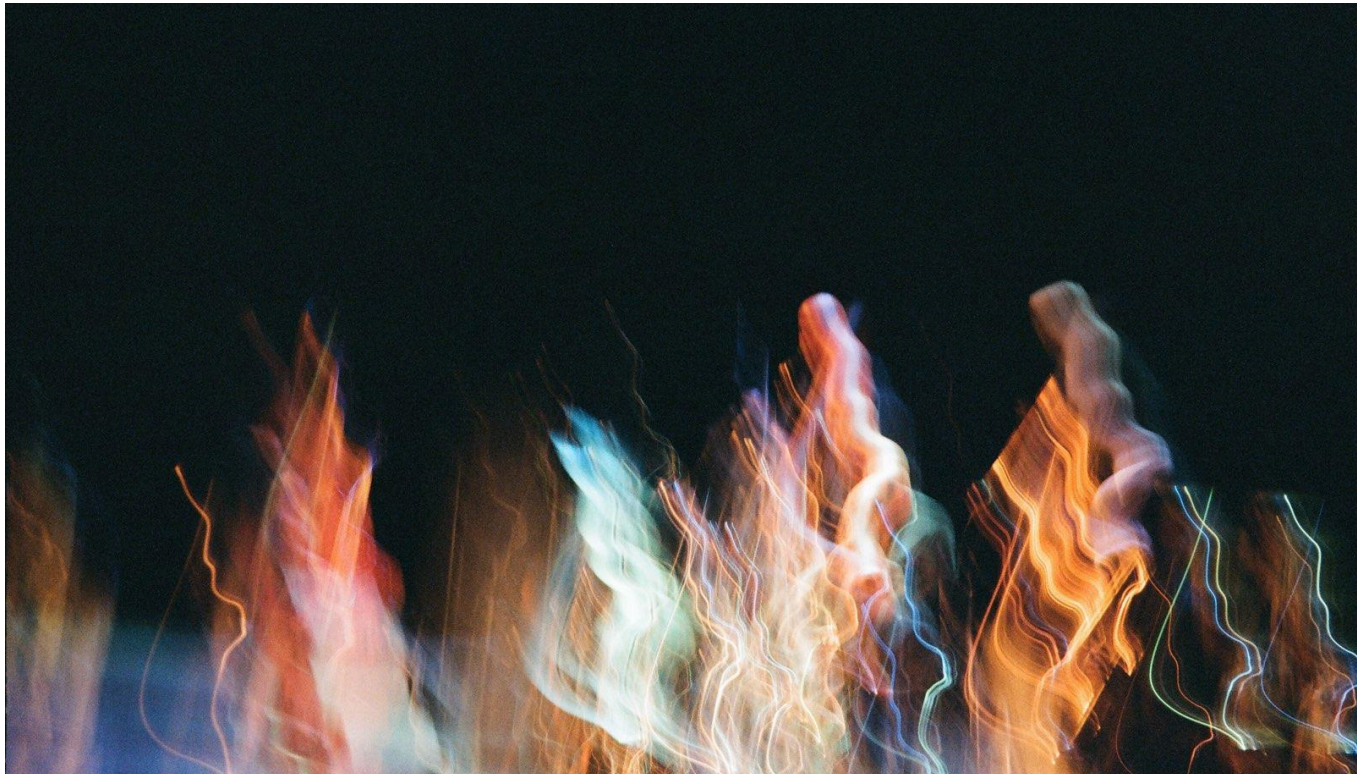
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TO BREATHE IS TRIUMPH: Irreversible Entanglements / Shara Lunon

Saturday, July 20th, 2024 - Doors 7:30pm / Event 8pm

ISSUE Project Room presenting at First Unitarian Congregational Society
119 Pierrepont St, Brooklyn, NY 11201

\$25 Advance / \$10 ISSUE Members / Limited \$30 Door pending availability
Limited Free Advanced tickets for Staten Island residents



Saturday, July 20th at 8pm, ISSUE Project Room, in partnership with Brooklyn Arts Council and First Unitarian Congregational Society in Brooklyn, presents *TO BREATHE IS TRIUMPH*. Commemorating 10 years since the murder of Eric Garner in Staten Island, NY, ISSUE participates in a series of community activations happening across NYC sparked by [The Ritual of Breath Is the Rite to Resist](#) to contend with an important question: what does it mean to support Black life through embodied ritual? To honor this memorial anniversary in the last of its

Photo by Ariella Villefranche

summer season programs, ISSUE joins these collective healing rituals by welcoming liberation-oriented free-jazz collective **Irreversible Entanglements** and afrofuturistic vocalist and improviser, **Shara Lunon** to First Unitarian in Brooklyn Heights.

The Ritual of Breath was born as an act of creative resistance. Originally commissioned and produced by Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth in 2022, the opera arrives in New York this year for Lincoln Center's Summer for the City festival. *TO BREATHE IS TRIUMPH* is named after the final healing ritual tied to the themes and seven movements of the opera. These rituals are intended as offerings, adapted to each community where the work is shared. In Brooklyn, ISSUE invites Irreversible Entanglements and Lunon as members of our experimental music community to gather in civic partnership with *The Ritual of Breath* team "as co-conspirers—to breathe and keep breathing any way we can" in an aim to address the ongoing loss of Black life at the hands of the State.

Both upholding and defying a tradition of improvisation, the Irreversible Entanglements (IE) quintet featuring **Camae Ayewa (Moor Mother)**, **Luke Stewart**, **Aquiles Navarro**, **Keir Neuringer**, and **Tcheser Holmes**, came together in April of 2015 at "Musicians Against Police Brutality," a day of protest sound and discussion in Brooklyn. Uniquely exploring free jazz with voice—an uncommon approach in the modern day landscape of the genre—the band reflects a central tenet of the sound as it was founded: to be a vehicle for Black liberation. Amid performances across the US, UK, Germany, the Netherlands, and more, the five players synthesize echoes from ancestral pasts to connect us to our bodies, find healing communion, and build new worlds. While several IE artists have presented work with ISSUE in the past, we are pleased to welcome the full quintet for this special occasion.

Another artist guided by a philosophy of congregation and community is Shara Lunon, whose generative and improvisatory process emerges from the unpredictable landscape of being Black in America. Opening the evening with a ceremonial ode to inhalation and exhalation, Lunon's "11x7" beckons us to disrupt the mundane, and draw our attention to the dance of sound and silence. Within this immersive performance, Lunon delves deep into the chasm of white noise, grappling with the weight of stone and stillness, seeking to transform them into a sanctuary of renewal. Led by scores of sound poetry and projected video art featuring **Synead Nichols**, Lunon, joined by flutist **justine lee hooper**, will use voice and electronics to find peace with a ritual of breath. For the first time at ISSUE, Lunon's "11x7" becomes a pilgrimage of the soul, and a journey towards communion with the primal essence of existence, breath.

In recognition of the Staten Island community, ISSUE will be offering free advanced tickets for Staten Island residents. For more information, please contact sylver@issueprojectroom.org for limited free ticket access (with proof of residence) no later than July 15th.

The full series of city-wide activations spans from June 15th through July 20th. More on the *Ritual of Breath* civic partners and the calendar of events can be found [here](#).

Irreversible Entanglements is a free-jazz quintet with an experimental punk mentality, that consists of poet/vocalist Camae Ayewa (Moor Mother), bassist Luke Stewart, trumpeter Aquiles Navarro, saxophonist Keir Neuringer, and drummer Tcheser Holmes. It is a community band playing deeply improvised, rhythm music full of love and social commitment. Founded in 2015, all were artists and activists of varying degrees: Philadelphia-based Ayewa and Neuringer, and D.C.-based Stewart as veterans of the Mid-Atlantic noisehardcore-experimental scene, while Holmes and Navarro as recent New England Conservatory grads. Each of the studio albums that followed—2020's *Who Sent You?* and 2021's *Open The Gates*—developed this legend further. In 2023, IE signed to the fabled Impulse! Records, and released its most accomplished work to date, *Protect Your Light*, on September 8, 2023, primarily recorded at New Jersey's historic Van Gelder Studios.

Drawing upon the breath and beat of flute and body, **justine lee hooper** exhales sentiments of past, present, and future by accessing defining nuances of human emotion. justine composes for New York City's only queer and trans salsa band, Las Mariquitas, which is "reimagining salsa and challenging the patriarchy" (Rolling Stone). justine is on the Jazz Committee of the National Flute Association, and they are an artist for CloudVocal wireless audio technology. They have performed for the United Nations and have been acknowledged by The New York Times and Playbill. justine has collaborated with artists such as duendita, Joy Guidry, Key Glock, and Solange.

Shara Lunon is the product of the evolution of Black American musical traditions. As a transdisciplinary artist, her art finds the ethereal in the chaotic. With voice and electronics as the foundation, Lunon's art is a synthesis of text, sound, objects, and the underground. Her goal is to challenge lassitude and in its place, instill hope. Lunon's work has been featured in The Gothamist, commissioned by Metropolis Ensemble, MATA Festival, and has won residencies with OneBeat Fellowship, Papillion Farm, and Audiofemme. Lunon has collaborated with artists including Fay Victor, Ches Smith, Shahzad Ismaily, Darius Jones, Chris Williams, Lesley Mok, and Luke Stewart. Currently, she is working on releasing projects with her quartet History Dog and punk band Blasé.

Synead Sidney Nichols is a poly-disciplinary performance artist whose work is rooted in her quest for collective healing, self-awareness, and the freedom and advancement of queer, black and indigenous people of color. She utilizes conversation, performance, movement-based practices & healing modalities to dismantle fear-based thinking around our identities in order to actualize our deepest creative desires.

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Founded in 2003, **ISSUE Project Room** is a pioneering nonprofit performance center, presenting projects by interdisciplinary artists that expand the boundaries of artistic practice and stimulate critical dialogue in the broader community. ISSUE serves as a leading cultural incubator, facilitating the commission and premiere of innovative new works.

For visitors requiring accessible access for performance, The Sanctuary of the First Unitarian Congregational Society in Brooklyn is ADA accessible by chair lift. There are three all-gender restrooms located on the lower level that are not ADA accessible.

ISSUE Project Room programs are supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

Additional support for ISSUE Project Room's 2024 season is provided by Metabolic Studio.

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