Artist Projects

Contemporary Arts Museum Houston and Radom Capital announce curatorial and programming partnership to support artists-in-residence at new development Montrose Collective

HOUSTON, TX (January 3, 2022)—Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH) and Radom Capital are excited to announce a new partnership that will directly support artists through an innovative residency embedded within the Montrose Collective development. A project of Radom Capital, Montrose Collective brings together 25 unique merchants, chefs, and wellness concepts to Houston in addition to multiple creative office tenants and the future home of the Freed-Montrose Neighborhood Library. As part of the creative vision for Montrose Collective, Radom Capital invited CAMH to expand its ongoing artist-in-residence program, CAMHLAB, which grants Houston-based contemporary artists in all media the space and support to develop new works and engage the public. The four artists and artist collectives selected for this inaugural iteration of CAMHLAB at Montrose Collective are Eepi Chaad, Two Star Symphony, Frame Dance, and Dana Caldera. The partnership seeks to celebrate the energy and dynamism of Montrose as an artistic
neighborhood, and provides a unique platform for artist-driven experiences within a civic-scale development.

CAMH launched the CAMHLAB initiative in the Fall of 2020 in response to the ongoing effects of COVID-19 on artists in Houston, particularly the loss of performance and rehearsal space. Through both short-term and long-term residencies, CAMHLAB aims to safely connect artists and audiences, and to support the realization of new and timely works. These projects come at a time when artists are looking to connect, to gather safely, and share their work with the public. CAMH and Montrose Collective’s partnership provides a new opportunity for unexpected creative experiences and community engagement. CAMHLAB artist-in-residence Eepi Chaad says, “We are living through wild times and the world is a strange place these days. CAMHLAB is making space for artists to process and interpret. Each residency is like a capsule of a moment during an extraordinary period of acceleration in the human timeline.”

Steve Radom, managing principal of Radom Capital, shares, “We created Montrose Collective as an expressive addition to Montrose, Houston’s most culture-rich, inclusive, and soulful neighborhood. Walking though Montrose inspires curiosity, wonder, and discovery. In the spirit of our neighborhood, we are honored to announce our curatorial and programming partnership with CAMH at the newly created CAMHLAB within Montrose Collective. CAMHLAB x MC is a light-filled gallery providing neighbors and visitors with access to an exciting and eclectic lineup of local artists curated by CAMH. The gallery is family-friendly and always free to the public. We hope you will come visit and support our local artists!”

“CAMH is thrilled to partner with Montrose Collective and Radom Capital to expand the CAMHLAB residency program,” said CAMH Executive Director Hesse McGraw. “This is an opportunity for artists to move not just beyond the walls of the Museum, but to directly share their creative process with the public. We are excited to support these exceptional artists-in-residence and look forward to welcoming visitors to Montrose Collective—a public space that trusts artists!”

The program at Montrose Collective commenced in mid-December with artist Eepi Chaad’s project, Soft Space, an installation that celebrates the soft surfaces we associate with our homes. Much like a home, the space changes with each visitor’s energy. Visitors are invited to learn about surface design, take part in the process of making, and engage with the transformed space created out of the textile squares we are all familiar with—handkerchiefs, bandanas, scarfs, afghans, throws, and security blankets. Soft Space provides a safe and welcoming space for visitors to create, heal, and connect with one another through a communal project.
During the months of February and March, the artist collective Two Star Symphony will utilize the space to create new performance and sound works. The group is often inspired by the movement of dancers, silent film, and other visual mediums. Named one of the 15 Reasons to Visit Houston by the Houston Visitors and Convention Bureau, Two Star Symphony will offer regular open studio hours to genuinely connect with their audience and make their process visible. Future plans include a collaboration with puppeteer Afsaneh Aayani and composing new scores to short films from the seminal box set of early avant-garde American film, Unseen Cinema.

The third group of artists-in-residence—Frame Dance—will present a project titled, The Family Mantra, an installation-based participatory performance that explores generational psychological shifts in the Houston community. The group aims to create an environment that will invite interaction with marbles, toy tops, pathways on the floor, pipe cleaner dolls to manipulate, and puppets. Frame Dance will host family dance parties with the goal of building bonding and creative expression. The Frame Dance MultiGen Ensemble—an all ages/all abilities group—will activate the space as well as their professional dance company. One of Frame Dance’s first performances took place at CAMH nearly ten years ago. Frame Dance believes that movement is a powerful pathway for healing. This residency will allow many families in Houston to express, share, and connect with each other in healthy and joyful ways.

The final project in this inaugural round of Montrose Collective CAMHLAB residencies comes from artist Dana Caldera and is titled From Paper to Fabric. With this project, Caldera will expand on her layered, collage-based artwork by removing the constraints of a traditional stretched canvas, wooden board, or paper backing to explore the intersection of quilt and collage. An important component of this work is a community sewing circle event, which aims to offer a place for community, organizing for political or social causes, and education that is open to everyone. Caldera’s residency embraces the artist/caretaker role in order to model a family-friendly environment that welcomes children and ensures they are safely included in all events.

Visit CAMH.ORG/CAMHLAB for more information regarding these artists, their process, and in-person and/or virtual programs for each of these CAMHLAB projects over the next several weeks.
Press Release

Schedule of CAMHLAB Artist-In-Residence Program at Montrose Collective

Eepi Chaad | December 15, 2021–January 30, 2022
Two Star Symphony | February 2–March 27, 2022
Frame Dance | March 30–May 25, 2022
Dana Caldera | June 1–30, 2022
Press Release

About Contemporary Arts Museum Houston

Contemporary Arts Museum Houston (CAMH) presents extraordinary, thought-provoking arts programming and exhibitions to educate and inspire audiences nationally and internationally. Established in 1948, CAMH is one of the oldest non-collecting contemporary art museums in the country, and is internationally known for presenting pivotal and landmark work by artists recognized as the most important of the 20th and 21st centuries. CAMH’s mandate is to be present, to connect artists and audiences through the urgent issues of our time, and to adventurously promote the catalytic possibilities of contemporary art. CAMH’s programming, both in and beyond the Museum, is presented free to the public, and advocates for artists’ essential role in society.

About CAMHLAB

CAMHLAB is an ongoing artist-in-residence initiative that gives the Museum to artists and supports them working within, and in partnership with, CAMH to develop new work and ideas. Through both short-term residencies and long-term collaborations with artists, CAMHLAB offers critical and early-stage direct support of artists’ process and production of new work. CAMHLAB residencies seek to directly connect artists and audiences through unexpected and unforgettable experiences of contemporary art.

About Radom Capital

Radom Capital is a diversified, award-winning real estate development and investment firm based in Houston, Texas. Radom Capital aspires to combine community, culture, and commerce in all of their projects. Their work is differentiated by enduring spaces, long-term relationships, and solving complex real estate problems in an effort to catalyze economic revitalization and growth in each of the communities they work in.

About Montrose Collective

Montrose has been the artistic heartbeat of Houston for the last century and Montrose Collective has been created to embrace that energy and inclusiveness. With several public seating vignettes, it invites its neighbors to be embraced by lush patio landscaping woven throughout the center of the project. Montrose Collective brings together 25 unique merchants, chefs and wellness concepts to Houston, in addition to multiple creative office tenants and the future home of the Freed-Montrose Neighborhood Library.
About the Artists

Eepi Chaad
Eepi Chaad is a practicing multidisciplinary artist, advocate, and environmentalist who tells stories using textiles, fibers, metals, places, and people. Chaad’s work studies humanity’s evolving relationship to both natural and built environments.

Chaad was selected as one of the first resident artists for the City of Houston by the Mayor’s Office of Cultural Affairs while working with an eco-art coastal preservation non-profit in Galveston, Texas. After taking a sabbatical for the residency with the City, Chaad took her current role as Director of Community Engagement at Art League Houston. Additionally, Chaad currently serves as part of the team of facilitators for the Artist INC Houston program, on the board of PrintMatters, and on committees with the Houston Museum Educators Roundtable and Arts Connect Houston. Eepi believes art is for every community and creativity is in every human.

Two Star Symphony
Two Star Symphony is Houston’s “most unusual music ensemble.” Composing and performing all-original music in quartet, quintet, and octet configurations, Two Star brings modern instrumental music to a wide range of audiences, from classical music enthusiasts to first-time listeners.

Two Star Symphony’s dark, distinctive sound is inspired by their influences, which include: Danny Elfman, Dr. Dre, Tom Waits, cartoons, hauntings, skulls, graveyards, black cats, and Dominic Walsh. The band works differently than most classical ensembles in that every member is also a composer. Songs are written and arranged collaboratively as a group, with each player responsible for their own parts. By the time the songs are finished, the music is memorized. Two Star Symphony does not create sheet music, so the player is free to focus on listening rather than reading. This allows them to score silent film by reacting to the screen rather than having their eyes focused on a music stand. Two Star Symphony has released six albums, created multiple scores for film and various projects.

Two Star Symphony has a history of collaborating with other artists and a variety of media. Two Star Symphony has created original works with: American Ballet Theatre Studio Company, Dominic Walsh Dance Theatre, Whim W'Him Dance Company, Bobbindoctorin Puppet Theater, The Museum of Fine Arts Houston, and The University of Houston School of Theatre and Dance.

Frame Dance
For over ten years, Frame Dance has brought radically inclusive and deeply personal contemporary dance to Houston. Led by Founder and Creative Director Lydia Hance, whom Dance Magazine calls “the city’s reigning guru of dance in public places,” the professional company is made up of six acclaimed co-creators committed to collaboration. Frame Dance has created over 50 unique site-specific performances and nine dances for the camera screened in festivals all over the United States and Europe. With an unrelenting drive to make dance in relationship to environment, Frame Dance has created dance works for and with METRO, Houston Museum of Natural Sciences, Houston Parks Board, Plant It Forward Farms, CORE Dance, Rice University, Houston Ballet, 14 Pews, Aurora Picture Show, and Contemporary Arts Museum Houston. Frame Dance’s productions were described by Arts + Culture Texas Editor-in-Chief Nancy Wozny as “some of the most compelling and entertaining work in Houston.” Lydia Hance is a champion of living composers and is dedicated to work exclusively with new music.
Frame x Frame Film Fest, Houston’s dance-for-camera festival, was founded in 2018 by Frame Dance Productions and has expanded into a multi-week festival of the best of international dance film and a screen dance education curriculum within the Houston Independent School District (HISD). By curating programs of films, they consider the student, the armchair traveler, the passionate dance and film patron, the iPhone videographer, and the simply curious. Frame x Frame Film Fest has been in partnership with the Houston Ballet since its founding. Frame Dance is on the forefront of creating, curating, and presenting this work in Houston.

**Dana Caldera**

Dana Caldera is a mixed-media visual artist, living and working in Houston, Texas. Her pieces combine found collage material, handmade paper, textiles, painting, and drawing into intricately layered compositions.

Caldera’s artwork has been selected for numerous juried shows in Texas, including the 2017 Texas National Show at Cole Art Center in Nacogdoches, the 2018 and 2017 Assistance League of Houston Celebrates Texas Art Show at Williams Tower Gallery, and the 2016 and 2017 Rising Eyes of Texas Shows at Rockport Art Center. Notable jurors that have selected her work include Benito Huerta, Clint Willour, D.M. Allison, and Jose Esparza Chong Cuy.

In 2019, her work was in the group exhibition, Concrete & Adrift: On the Poverty Line, at The Alexandria Museum of Art. In 2021, *Are These Portraits?*, a solo show of new work, was on view at Gallery 100 at The Silos at Sawyer Yards. Caldera continues to create mixed media artwork in her studio and show nationally. Caldera’s most current work is built using found paper, textiles, and objects layered with handmade paper.

Caldera earned her MFA in Studio Art in 2017 and currently teaches art at two local colleges. She is also a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Team member at CAMH.

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**Press Contacts**

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