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Dr. Ntozake Shange. Photo credit: Adger Cowans.

CELEBRITY STAR POWER TO SPARKLE AT NEWARK'S OPEN DOORS CITYWIDE ARTS FESTIVAL

Dr. Ntozake Shange, Danny Simmons, Marco Hall, Willie Cole and more!

Newark, NJ – September 25, 2017 – Newark Arts' annual [Open Doors Citywide Arts Festival](#) (Open Doors) will feature some of the biggest names in the art world. From October 11-15, this celebration of groundbreaking artistry will invite Newarkers and visitors into the exciting world of over 200 happenings at cultural institutions, artist studios, pop up exhibits, and nightly gallery crawls.



Marco Hall and one of his designs. Photos courtesy of artist and marcohall.net

A sneak festival preview for Media and Art Buyers launches on Wednesday, October 11, 2017, with an exclusive tour and fashion reception at [the Newark Museum](#) with Mayor Ras J. Baraka and Newark-based designer [Marco Hall](#). Mr. Hall's designs have graced New York Fashion Week, Cannes Film Festival, and A-list celebs such as Jill Scott, Whoopi Goldberg, Rihanna, and Newark's own Lauryn Hill. Press and media are invited to join art buyers at the private tour and reception by emailing lauren.craig@newarkarts.org. Art Buyers seeking more information regarding access to private preview tour, please email opendoors@newarkarts.org.

The official opening night kicks off Thursday, October 12, 2017 with a solo exhibit by internationally renowned abstract expressionist, Danny Simmons, at Fownders Gallery in the Newark's University Heights district. The brains behind Def Poetry Jam, Simmons is the older brother of mogul Russell Simmons and hip hop icon, Rev. Run of Run DMC. Simmons has established popular galleries in Brooklyn and Philadelphia. He is the co-founder and Chairman of Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation.



Willie Cole's Man Spirit Mask. Courtesy of metmuseum.org

Thursday's opening night festivities also include *Willie Cole: Made in Newark*, a solo show at CoAD Gallery at NJIT, featuring new and retrospective works by Cole, a Newark native and internationally acclaimed visual artist. A conceptual artist, Cole is known for his innovative merging of common everyday objects—shoes, hairdryers, ironing boards--and African-inspired motifs. Cole's works are at major galleries and museums across the globe, from the Newark Museum to the Metropolitan Museum.

On Saturday, October 14, 2017 at City Without Walls, celebrated playwright Dr. Ntozake Shange's famous choreopoem, *for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf*, will be the inspiration for curator Peter (Souleo) Wright's exhibition "*i found god in myself: a celebration of Dr. Ntozake Shange's, for colored girls.*"

The exhibit, which debuted in 2014 at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Long Gallery Harlem and La Maison d'Art, honors Dr. Shange through 10 commissioned artworks by nationally acclaimed artists. Each work highlights issues impacting the lives of women of color, touching on themes in Dr. Shange's poems like sexuality, race, sisterhood,

violence and self-love. Dr. Shange, an acclaimed writer, educator and performer/director, will appear at the Saturday opening.



,Anthony Delgado, Chief Technology Officer, Fownders. Courtesy of linkedin.com.

Finally, on Sunday, October 15th, 2017, the festival culminates with "Newark Arts presents A Conversation With...", a curated conversation moderated by Sharnita Johnson, Arts Program Director at the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. Noted panelists including Dr. Ntozake Shange, Danny Simmons, audience diversification expert, Donna Walker-Kuhne and Chief Technology Officer of Fownders, Anthony Delgado, will discuss the relationship between art and social impact. Scheduled to take place at Gateway Project Spaces downtown, the panel will be followed by the annual self-guided Open Studio Tours around the city.

Visit newarkarts.org/opendoors for all festival details. Open Doors is your passport to Newark Arts!

About Open Doors Citywide Arts Festival (Open Doors): Newark Arts' signature celebration of the arts, Open Doors 16th season is October 12-15, 2017 in Newark, New Jersey. Over four inspiring days, the city's bustling arts scene will explode with an awe-inspiring array of exhibits, screenings, workshops, artist talks, performances, open studios and more! Visit newarkarts.org/opendoors for a complete schedule of events and follow Newark Arts at: Facebook.com/newarkarts, Twitter: @newark_arts and IG: @newarkarts.

About Newark Arts (formerly Newark Arts Council): Newark Arts' mission is to power the arts to transform the lives of those who work, live and play in the great city of Newark, New Jersey. Established in 1981, Newark Arts advances and expands the resources and offerings of arts and cultural organizations in the great city of Newark, New Jersey. Newark Arts provides leadership, direction, and technical assistance through partnerships with artists, arts administrators, community organizations, community development corporations, planning groups, economic development agencies, and government agencies as well as the general public. For more information, visit www.newarkarts.org.

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