



LEAP  
BEFORE YOU  
LOOK  
**BLACK  
MOUNTAIN  
COLLEGE**

1933–1957

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PERFORMANCES  
+ PROGRAMS

Black Mountain College was an incubator for experimental music and dance in America. Students studied dance with Merce Cunningham and Katherine Litz, learned music composition from Heinrich Jalowetz, John Cage, Stefan Wolpe, and Lou Harrison, and presented numerous plays. They practiced during the day and put on recitals in the evening, making performance an integral part of life and education at the college. *Leap Before You Look: Black Mountain College 1933–1957* brings live performance into the galleries, offering visitors a full experience of artistic creation at the college. On the grand piano and sprung dance floor, dancers, musicians, and local students learn and perform works by the many choreographers and composers who taught at the college. The ICA has also invited contemporary artists to reimagine key moments of Black Mountain College's history, to bring the college's experimental and interdisciplinary pedagogy into dialogue with art, life, and learning today.

## ★ DANCE

**KATHERINE LITZ**  
Polly Motley performs *The Glyph*  
Dancer and choreographer Polly Motley performs *The Glyph*, a whimsical work choreographed by dance teacher Katherine Litz at Black Mountain College in 1951. Reconstructed under the direction of Richard Colton, *The Glyph* is performed for the first time since the 1970s.

**MERCE CUNNINGHAM**  
Silas Riener performs *Changeling*  
Former Cunningham dancer Silas Riener performs *Changeling*, an early Merce Cunningham solo choreographed using chance procedures. Reconstructed under the direction of Jean Freebury, *Changeling* had its premiere in 1957 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music and was last performed in Tokyo in 1964.

**Boston Conservatory students perform excerpts from early Cunningham dances**  
Under the direction of Silas Riener, Boston Conservatory students perform excerpts from early Cunningham dances, including *Dime-a-Dance*, *Springweather and People*, *Septet*, *Nocturnes*, and *Minutiae*.

**Harvard students experiment with Cunningham choreographic ideas**  
Working with Silas Riener and Jill Johnson, Harvard Dance Project students perform their own work based upon experimentation with Cunningham's ideas, strategies, and movement.

## ▲ MUSIC

Pianists Stephen Drury and Yukiko Tagaki perform works by John Cage, Lou Harrison, and Christian Wolff to accompany the dance performances.

**Chamber Music**  
Local musicians rehearse and perform John Cage's *String Quartet in Four Parts*, which premiered at the college in 1950.

**John Cage and Pierre Boulez: Correspondence**  
Soloists from the Paris-based Ensemble Intercontemporain perform works by Cage and Boulez; Damon Krukowski reads excerpts from their 1949–1954 correspondence. (\$15–25)

**John Cage's Prepared Piano**  
Elaine Rombola prepares a piano to Cage's specifications—by inserting screws, erasers, paperclips, and other objects into the strings—and performs selections from Cage's famous *Sanatas and Interludes*.

KEY	
★	DANCE
▲	MUSIC
◆	PERFORMANCE
●	TALKS + TOURS (see back for details)
#	Museum Closed

All events take place in the galleries and are FREE with admission (except where noted).

OCTOBER	
10	● 11 AM Intro Tour   ★ 2 + 4 PM Cunningham Excerpts
11	● 11 AM Intro Tour   ★ 2 + 4 PM Cunningham Excerpts
12	
13	★ 4 PM Cunningham Experiments
14	
15	★ 4 PM Cunningham Experiments   ◆ 6:30 PM Music Listens Back
16	◆ 6 PM T.P.1 Revisited
17	● 1 PM ARE   ★ 2 + 4 PM The Glyph   ◆ 3 PM Poets in Ekphrasis
18	● 1 PM ICA Forum   ★ 2 + 4 PM The Glyph
19	
20	
21	◆ 11 AM Performance Art Workshop
22	◆ 6 PM Passing Time
23	
24	◆ 12 PM Performance Art Workshop   ◆ 3 PM T.P.1 Revisited
25	◆ 3 PM Music Listens Back
26	
27	◆ 11 AM Performance Art Workshop
28	◆ 3 PM Passing Time
29	◆ 6 PM Poets in Ekphrasis   ● 7 PM The Artist's Voice
30	
31	

NOVEMBER	
1	◆ 3 PM Performance Art Workshop
2	
3	
4	◆ 11 AM Performance Art Workshop
5	● 7 PM The Artist's Voice
6	◆ 1 PM Passing Time   ◆ 6 PM T.P.1 Revisited
7	▲ 2 + 3:30 PM Prepared Piano
8	▲ 2 + 3:30 PM Prepared Piano
9	
10	
11	◆ 11 AM Performance Art Workshop
12	★ 6:30 + 7:30 PM Changeling + Cunningham Excerpts
13	◆ 6:30 PM Music Listens Back
14	★ 2 + 4 PM Changeling + Cunningham Excerpts
15	★ 2 + 4 PM Changeling + Cunningham Excerpts   ▲ 3 PM Cage & Boulez
16	
17	◆ 2:30 PM Poets in Ekphrasis
18	◆ 11 AM Performance Art Workshop
19	◆ 7 PM Performance Art Workshop
20	● 6 PM Gallery Talks with MSA
21	★ 2 + 4 PM The Glyph   ◆ 3 PM Poets in Ekphrasis
22	★ 2 + 4 PM The Glyph
23	
24	◆ 3 PM Passing Time
25	
26	THANKSGIVING DAY
27	
28	
29	
30	

DECEMBER	
1	◆ 3 PM Performance Art Workshop
2	
3	◆ 6 PM Perf. Art Wksp   ◆ 6 PM Poets in Ekphrasis   ● 7 PM ICA Forum
4	
5	◆ 3 PM Music Listens Back
6	◆ 3 PM Music Listens Back
7	
8	
9	
10	★ 6:30 + 7:30 PM Changeling + Cunningham Excerpts
11	◆ 6 PM Passing Time
12	★ 2 + 4 PM Changeling + Cunningham Excerpts
13	★ 2 + 4 PM Changeling + Cunningham Excerpts   ◆ 3 PM Poets in Ekphrasis
14	
15	
16	◆ 2:30 PM Music Listens Back
17	◆ 6 PM T.P.1 Revisited
18	◆ 6 PM Music Listens Back
19	◆ 3 PM Passing Time
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	CHRISTMAS DAY
26	
27	
28	
29	● 11–4 PM Vacation Week Family Activities
30	● 11–4 PM Vacation Week Family Activities
31	● 11–4 PM Vacation Week Family Activities

JANUARY	
1	NEW YEAR'S DAY
2	● 11–4 PM Vacation Week Family Activities   ▲ 2 PM Chamber Music
3	▲ 2 PM Chamber Music
4	
5	
6	
7	◆ 6 PM T.P.1 Revisited
8	
9	▲ 2 + 3:30 PM Prepared Piano
10	▲ 2 + 3:30 PM Prepared Piano
11	
12	
13	
14	◆ 6 PM Passing Time
15	◆ 6:30 PM Music Listens Back
16	★ 2 + 4 PM The Glyph
17	★ 2 + 4 PM The Glyph
18	◆ 3 PM Poets in Ekphrasis
19	
20	
21	★ 6:30 + 7:30 PM Changeling + Cunningham Excerpts
22	◆ 6 PM Poets in Ekphrasis
23	★ 2 + 4 PM Changeling + Cunningham Excerpts
24	● 1 PM ICA Forum   ★ 2 + 4 PM Changeling + Cunningham Excerpts

## RECURRING EVENTS

**Public Tours:** Free guided tours of the exhibition offered Thursdays at 7 PM, and Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30 PM (except holiday weeks).

**Pop-Up Talks:** ICA Visitor Assistants lead 15-minute discussions on artworks every Friday evening.

**Learning by Doing:** Massachusetts College of Art & Design students host weekend activities on color in the galleries and Bank of America Art Lab.

## ◆ PERFORMANCE

**THEATER PIECE NO. 1 X 50**  
Declared the first Happening and later named "Theater Piece No. 1," an unnamed performance took place in August 1952 at Black Mountain College that would become one of the most famous events in the college's history. The ICA has invited five Boston-based artists to reimagine *Theater Piece No. 1* by proposing a series of actions that will take place in the ICA galleries and throughout the museum.

**Passing Time:** Jonathan Calm integrates archival images, texts, and sounds in a slideshow and performance that uncovers forgotten moments and memories in the communal legacy of Black Mountain College.

**Poets in Ekphrasis:** Danielle Legros Georges draws on the rich history of avant-garde poetry at Black Mountain College and invites several noted poets to read verse inspired by artworks in the exhibition.

**Theater Piece No. 1 Revisited:** Damon Krukowski employs the same five simultaneous but uncoordinated actions used in the original performance at Black Mountain College: prose, poetry, recorded music, live music, and dance.

**Music Listens Back:** Timothy McCormack explores current experimental developments in contemporary composition through a series of gallery performances inspired by the radical reimagining of musical thought by John Cage.

**Performance Art Workshop:** Kelly Nipper invites her MIT class to develop a set of actions inspired by their own experimental artistic community, with its unique rituals, missions, ethics, and aesthetics.

**Play Dates:** Special family activities offered on the last Saturday of every month (except Dec.). Free admission for up to 2 adults per family accompanied by children ages 12 and under.

**Teen Nights:** Teen-driven events featuring teen-led art tours, art-making activities, and youth performances. Free admission for all teens.

## TALKS + TOURS

### CURATORIAL DEPARTMENT TOURS

OCT 10, 11 AM

OCT 11, 11 AM

Members of the ICA's Curatorial Department introduce visitors to *Leap Before You Look: Black Mountain College 1933–1957* through informative tours of the exhibition.

### ARTIST RESPONSE: ARE

OCT 17, 1 PM

Artists Helen Miller and Joshua Hart of ARE (Aesthetic Relational Exercises) lead visitors through simple artistic exercises in response to art found in *Leap Before You Look*. For information on registration, please visit [icaboston.org](http://icaboston.org).

### ICA FORUM: On Immigration and Black Mountain College

OCT 18, 1 PM

Brenda Danilowitz, Chief Curator of the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation, discusses the Albers' Bauhaus émigré experience and subsequent U.S. influence. Moderated by Laura Muir, Harvard Art Museums.

### THE ARTIST'S VOICE: Sara VanDerBeek on Stanley VanDerBeek

OCT 29, 7 PM

American photographer Sara VanDerBeek explores the many artistic contributions of her father, Stan VanDerBeek, Black Mountain College student from 1949 to 1951.

### THE ARTIST'S VOICE:

Theater Piece No. 1 x 50

NOV 5, 7 PM

Artists Jonathan Calm, Danielle Legros Georges, Damon Krukowski, Timothy McCormack, and Kelly Nipper discuss their intensive participation in *Theater Piece No. 1 x 50*, a distinctive project addressing the legacy of Black Mountain College.

### ICA FORUM: On Education and Black Mountain College

DEC 3, 7 PM

Artist Danielle Abrams presents a new 20-minute performance that explores the topics of progressive education and racial integration as experienced at Black Mountain College. Moderated by Steve Seidel, Harvard University.

### ICA FORUM: On Sexuality and Black Mountain College

JAN 24, 1 PM

Author and scholar Jonathan Katz of the University at Buffalo, SUNY, addresses issues of sexuality and its importance to the history of midcentury American art. Moderated by Ruth Erickson, ICA/Boston.



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Cover: Hazel Larsen Archer, *Moira Cunningham Dancing*, detail, ca. 1952–58, gelatin silver print, 8 3/4 x 6 7/8 inches. Estate of Hazel Larsen Archer and Black Mountain College Museum and Arts Center.

Inset: Harriet Sommers Zwerling, *The Studies Building and Lake Eden, Black Mountain College*, ca. 1940. Courtesy of the Black Mountain College Museum and Arts Center.

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