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or [codayton.org/about-the-co/media-center-access/](https://codayton.org/about-the-co/media-center-access/)  
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**The Contemporary Dayton  
presents**

**CONVERSATIONS**

**A new lecture series featuring some of the most incisive people  
and perspectives for our time.**

DAYTON (February 13, 2023) – The Contemporary Dayton (The Co) continues to expand its programming with the establishment of a new lecture series featuring some of the most incisive people and perspectives for our time. CONVERSATIONS will take place in The Tank at the Dayton Arcade. Events are free with prior registration at <https://codayton.org/conversations>. Doors open at 6 p.m. Reception with cash bar will take place from 6-7 p.m. CONVERSATIONS will begin at 7 p.m. Book-signings and gatherings in the Co's galleries will take place after each lecture.

The 2023 Season will feature three diverse programs from literary and performance thought-leaders from across the country and within the Miami Valley.

**March 2, 2023 | HANIF ABDURRAQIB**

**In conversation with Cameron Granger, Columbus-based filmmaker**

*Limited copies of A Little Devil in America will be available at the event for purchase for \$20 + tax (credit cards only). Opportunities for the speaker to sign purchased books will take place immediately after the talk.*

Hanif Abdurraqib is an award-winning poet, essayist, and cultural critic from Columbus, Ohio. His newest release, *A Little Devil In America* (Random House, 2021) was a winner of the Andrew Carnegie Medal and the Gordon Burn Prize. His essays and music criticism have been published in *The FADER*, *Pitchfork*, *The New Yorker*, and *The New York Times*. His first full length poetry collection, *The Crown Ain't Worth Much*, was released in June 2016 from Button Poetry. It was named a finalist for the Eric Hoffer Book Prize, and was nominated for a Hurston-Wright Legacy Award.

His first collection of essays, *They Can't Kill Us Until They Kill Us*, was released in winter 2017 by Two Dollar Radio and was named a book of the year by *Buzzfeed*, *Esquire*, *NPR*, *Oprah Magazine*, *Paste*, *CBC*, *The Los Angeles Review*, *Pitchfork*, and *The Chicago Tribune*, among others. He released *Go Ahead In The Rain: Notes To A Tribe Called Quest* with University of Texas press in February 2019. The book became a New York Times Bestseller, was a finalist for the Kirkus Prize, and was longlisted for the National Book Award. His second collection of poems, *A Fortune for Your Disaster*, was released in 2019 by Tin House, and won the 2020 Lenore Marshall Prize. In 2021, Abdurraqib was named a MacArthur Fellow.

Books by Hanif Abdurraqib for purchase in the CoSHOP: *A Little Devil in America*, (Random House, 2021) \$20 + tax; *Go Ahead in The Rain: Notes To A Tribe Called Quest*, (University of Texas Press, 2019) \$15 + tax; and *A Fortune for Your Disaster* (W.W. Norton, 2019) \$18 + tax.

#### **April 13, 2023 | SAEED JONES**

**In conversation with Dionne Custer Edwards, Director of Learning & Public Practice, Wexner Center for the Arts**  
*Limited copies of *Alive at The End of the World* will be available at the event for purchase for \$20 + tax (credit cards only). Opportunities for the speaker to sign purchased books will take place immediately after the talk.*

Saeed Jones was born in Memphis, Tennessee, and grew up in Lewisville, Texas. His debut poetry collection, *Prelude to Bruise*, was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award and was awarded the 2015 PEN/Joyce Osterweil Award for Poetry. The collection also received a starred review in Publishers Weekly, which described the book as, “a fever dream, something akin to magic.” NPR described *Prelude* as a “book seamed in smoke; it is a dance that invites you to admire the supple twist of its narrative spine; it is hard and glaring and brilliant.” In 2019, Saeed released his highly anticipated memoir, *How We Fight for Our Lives*. As the *New Yorker* observed “his title carries an edge of social critique. To be black, gay, an American, the book suggests, is to fight for one’s life.” NPR raved “Jones’s voice and sensibility are so distinct that he turns one of the oldest of literary genres inside out and upside down.” The memoir won the 2019 Kirkus Prize for Nonfiction, a 2020 Lambda Literary Award, as well as a 2020 Stonewall Book Award.

Books by Saeed Jones available for purchase in the CoSHOP: *Alive at The End of the World* (Coffee House Press, 2022) \$20 + tax.

#### **May 11, 2023 | DEBBIE BLUNDEN-DIGGS with COUNTESS WINFREY AND KEVIN WARD OF DAYTON CONTEMPORARY DANCE COMPANY (DCDC)**

DEBBIE BLUNDEN-DIGGS became Artistic Director for Dayton Contemporary Dance Company (DCDC) in 2007. In 2019, she was named Chief Artistic & Producing Director. For over 20 years she performed with the company, appearing in most of the company’s repertoire. Before becoming Artistic Director, she served as the company’s Associate Artistic Director, Deputy Director for Arts and Operations, and Resident Choreographer. In addition to her choreographic and artistic leadership, Blunden-Diggs is the Executive Director of Jeraldyné’s School of the Dance, the cornerstone to Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, and she works closely with DCDC’s pre-professional company, DCDC<sub>2</sub>. She has created works for the company, which have become part of the company’s artistic blueprint. Her notable works include *Configurations*, *Kaleidoscope*, *Fragments*, *In My Father’s House*, and *Traffic*. Her first piece, *Variations in Blue*, composed when she was 17, was submitted as an entry in the Young Choreographers Showcase and selected for inclusion in the National Choreographic Plan. She has contributed an impressive body of work, including *No Room, No Place, No Where*, for which she received a Monticello Award in 1982."

COUNTESS WINFREY joined the company in 2014. She began her dance training at Dance with Stacy Dance Studio, attended Wharton Arts Magnet School where she majored in dance and art, and continued her training at Nashville School of the Arts. Attending college at the University of Memphis, Countess graduated magna cum laude with a BS degree in health and human performance and with a minor in dance in 2011.

Countess joined DCDC<sub>2</sub> in 2012, where she danced for two years while having the opportunity to perform with the first company in her second year. She has performed works by Paul Taylor, David Dorfman, Rodney A. Brown, Rob Priore, William B. McClellan Jr., and many other choreographers.

KEVIN WARD joined DCDC in 1980 as a teacher, dancer and choreographer, following work with the Cincinnati Ballet Company and Dance Theatre of Harlem. In 1990 Mr. Ward began to serve as DCDC Associate Artistic Director, and from 1999 to his retirement in 2007 as Artistic Director. Mr. Ward is the recipient of three Ohio Arts Council Fellowships, 1983, 1984, 1997, and three Arts Project Grants, including his work with video artist Jud Yalkut, a Master Artist Fellowship from the Montgomery County Cultural Arts District, the Ohio Dance Award, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Masters of African American Choreography Medal. He currently serves as the manager of DCDC's Dance Affinity Group.

CONVERSATIONS is free and open to all. Registration is required to attend at <https://codayton.org/conversations/>

Conversations will take place inside The Tank at the Dayton Arcade (35 W 4th St, downtown Dayton). Metered street parking is free after 6 pm, or guests may park in the Reibold Garage. Use the subway entrance on 4th street to enter The Tank. The Co galleries and CoSHOP will remain open til 9 pm.

## SPONSORS

Presenting Partner: The University of Dayton, Department of Art and Design  
Creative Partner: Mitosis  
Media Partner: Dayton Daily News  
Hospitality Partner: Heidelberg Distributing

## ANNUAL OPERATING SUPPORT

AES Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Art, Culture Works, The Dayton Foundation, The Montgomery County Arts & Cultural District, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Ohio Arts Council, The Virginia W. Kettering Foundation, and Members.

## ON VIEW / January 13-March 26, 2023

*Becky Suss: Home*

*Carmen Winant: The neighbor, the friend, the lover*

*Yael Bartana: The Undertaker*

## GALLERY HOURS

Wednesday–Saturday 11 a.m.–6 p.m.

Sunday 11 a.m.–4 p.m.

Closed Monday and Tuesday

ALWAYS FREE

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## ABOUT THE CONTEMPORARY DAYTON

Mission: To provide art for the community and a community for artists.

Overview: The Contemporary Dayton (The Co) is the region's contemporary art center. Established in 1991 as The Dayton Visual Arts Center, a 501c3, The Co produces and presents original exhibitions and educational programs, events, community partnerships, and artist opportunities. Exhibitions and education programs feature the most exciting and meaningful work of our time created by artists living and working today, with an emphasis on the artists of Ohio, women artists, and artists of color.

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