

# REDCAT

ROY AND EDNA DISNEY/CALARTS THEATER

**NEWS RELEASE**

Media Contact:  
Diana Wyenn, REDCAT  
[dwyenn@calarts.edu](mailto:dwyenn@calarts.edu), 213 237-2873

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"Works this good—this *necessary*—  
don't come around very often."  
—*The New York Times*

REDCAT PRESENTS THE WEST COAST PREMIERE  
OF A SEMINAL DANCE THEATER WORK BY  
COMPOSER CHRIS COCHRANE, AUTHOR DENNIS COOPER  
AND CHOREOGRAPHER ISHMAEL HOUSTON-JONES

## ***THEM***

November 15–18, 2012



"Unabashedly gay and gritty... A cathartic restaging."

LOS ANGELES, CA—REDCAT, CalArts' downtown center for contemporary arts, presents *THEM*, a powerful restaging of an incendiary work of dance theater that first premiered in 1986 during the escalating AIDS crisis in the U.S. Conceived and directed by choreographer Ishmael Houston-Jones with writer Dennis Cooper and composer Chris Cochrane, *THEM* takes an unblinking look at the lives of young gay men in a harrowing, uncertain time. The West Coast premiere of *THEM* is presented as part of the Sharon Disney Lund Dance Series at the Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater, with performances Thursday, November 15, 2012 through Sunday November 18, 2012.

The original collaborators—choreographer Ishmael Houston-Jones, writer Dennis Cooper and composer Chris Cochrane—each return to perform in the work and are joined onstage by seven young male performers. Their presence amplifies the work's themes of youth and survival, while transmitting a legacy of loss with ferocious energy and unforgettable imagery. Propelled by Cochrane's hard-driving live score and Cooper's haunting texts, these dancers take to the action with menacing force.

Of the premiere in 1986, the *Village Voice* wrote, "*THEM* isn't a piece about AIDS, but AIDS constricts its view and casts a considerable pall." Twenty-five years later, this vital remounting was awarded a coveted New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award (2011) for "bringing an intensely visceral exploration of male identity in the time of AIDS to life with beauty, power, conviction and passion." In presenting the award, the committee stated, "this groundbreaking piece is back and investigating its continuing relevance to dance and to social discourse today." Click [here](#) to read full statement from Bessie Award committee.

Theater critic Don Shewey reflected on the dynamics inherent in the process of remounting the work, noting, "The re-creation of *THEM* is, among other things, a beautiful and powerful act of cultural transmission. Three older gay male artists look back at a creatively turbulent era of embattled sexuality, while a freshly energized band of younger men attest to the vitality of these images. And both pay tribute, silently, to the men who didn't survive."

[Watch a trailer for THEM](#)

[Download THEM Press Kit + texts by Dennis Cooper](#)

[Visit event webpage on REDCAT.ORG](#)

The artists are available for interview. To request press accommodations, interviews, additional information, media or images, please contact Diana Wyenn at 213 237-2873 or [dwyenn@calarts.edu](mailto:dwyenn@calarts.edu).

*The performances at REDCAT are funded in part with generous support from the National Performance Network (NPN) Performance Residency Program ([www.npnweb.org](http://www.npnweb.org)).*

## TICKETS & INFORMATION

### ***THEM***

Date(s)/Time(s):

Thursday, November 15 at 8:30 pm

Friday, November 16 at 8:30 pm

Saturday, November 17 at 8:30 pm

Sunday, November 18 at 7:00 pm

Ticketing:

\$20–25 general (\$16–20 students & members)

Seating is general admission and tickets are available for purchase in-person at REDCAT Box Office, by phone at 213 237-2800, or online at [www.redcat.org](http://www.redcat.org).

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### BIOGRAPHIES

**Chris Cochrane** is a guitarist who has been composing and playing music in NYC for 29 years. Chris has played with Zeena Parkins, John Zorn, Marc Ribot, Eszter Balint, Thurston Moore, Mike Patton, Henry Kaiser, Andrea Centazzo, Annie Gosfield, Tim Hodgkinson, Miguel Frascioni, Richard Buckner, Davey Williams, Ladonna Smith, Jim Pugliese, Dudley Saunders, Chris Rael, Mbiranyc, Manhattan Samba and many others. He has composed music for John Jasperse, Neil Greenberg, Nayland Blake, Ishmael Houston-Jones, Jennifer Monson, Circus Amok and others. He was in the bands No Safety and Curlew.

**Dennis Cooper** is a novelist, poet, critic, curator, and an ongoing collaborator with the French theater director and artist Gisele Vienne. Vienne and Cooper's latest work *Last Spring, a Prequel* was included in the 2012 Whitney Biennial. The duo recently co-curated *Teenage Hallucination*, a three week-long festival of art, performance, music, and lectures for the Centre Pompidou. Cooper's eleven published novels include "The George Miles Cycle," an interconnected sequence of five novels (*Closer, Frisk, Try, Guide, Period*), *My Loose Thread, God Jr., The Sluts* (winner of the Prix Sade and the Lambda Literary Award), and, most recently, *The Marbled Swarm* (2011). His books have been translated into nineteen languages. He divides his time between Paris and Los Angeles.

**Ishmael Houston-Jones** is a choreographer, author, performer, teacher, and arts activist. His improvised dance and text work has been performed in New York City, across the United States, in Europe, Canada, Australia and Latin America. Houston-Jones' *Nowhere, Now Here* was commissioned for Mordine and Company in Chicago in spring 2001 and *Specimens* was commissioned for Headlong Dance Theater in Philadelphia in 1998. In 1997 he was the choreographer for Nayland Blake's *Hare Follies* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. From 1995-2000 he was part of the improvised trio *Unsafe/ Unsited* with Keith Hennessy and Patrick Scully. In 1990 he and writer Dennis Cooper presented *The Undead* at the Los Angeles Festival of the Arts. In 1989 he collaborated with filmmaker Julie Dash on

the video *Relatives*, which was aired nationally on the PBS series *Alive From Off-Center* (Alive TV). In 1984 Houston-Jones and Fred Holland shared a New York Dance and Performance "Bessie Award" for their *Cowboys, Dreams and Ladders*. In 2010 Performance Space 122 and the New Museum supported the reconstruction of Houston-Jones' 1985/86 collaboration with Dennis Cooper and Chris Cochrane, *THEM*. The piece has since been presented at the American Realness festival (New York, NY), Springdance (Utrecht, NL), Centre Pompidou (Paris, France), and TanzImAugust (Berlin, Germany). The reconstruction of *THEM* received a New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" award in 2011.

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## **ABOUT REDCAT | THE ROY AND EDNA DISNEY/CALARTS THEATER**

REDCAT, CalArts' downtown center for contemporary arts, presents a dynamic and international mix of innovative visual, performing and media arts year round. Located inside the iconic Walt Disney Concert Hall complex in downtown Los Angeles, REDCAT houses a modular theater, a 3,000-square-foot gallery space and a lounge. Through performances, exhibitions, screenings, and literary events, REDCAT introduces diverse audiences, students and artists to the most influential developments in the arts from around the world, and gives artists in this region the creative support they need to achieve national and international stature. REDCAT continues the tradition of the California Institute of the Arts, its parent organization, by encouraging experimentation, discovery and lively civic discourse.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

For current program and exhibition information call 213 237-2800 or visit [www.redcat.org](http://www.redcat.org).

**Location/Parking:** REDCAT is located in downtown Los Angeles inside the Walt Disney Concert Hall complex with a separate entrance at the corner of West 2nd and Hope Streets. Parking is available in the Walt Disney Concert Hall parking structure. \$9 event rate or \$5 for vehicles entering after 8:00 pm on weekdays.

**Street Address:** 631 West 2nd Street, Los Angeles CA 90012

**THE LOUNGE** | Open to the public six days a week, the Lounge is a great place to spend an afternoon or grab a drink pre- and post-performance.

Lounge Hours:

Tuesdays–Fridays from 9am until 8 pm or post-show;

Saturdays from noon until 8 pm or post-show;

Sundays from noon until 6pm or post-show

**THE GALLERY** | REDCAT's Gallery presents 5 major exhibitions each year, and publishes artist books and catalogues. Admission to the Gallery is FREE.

Gallery Hours:

Tuesdays–Sundays from noon until 6 pm or through intermission

**THE THEATER** | Tickets for programs held in the theater are available through the REDCAT Box Office, by phone 213 237-2800 or online at [www.redcat.org](http://www.redcat.org). Group, member, student and CalArts faculty/staff discounts available.

Box Office Hours:  
Tuesdays–Saturday from noon until 6 pm or two hour prior to curtain

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MEDIA CONTACT

Diana Wyenn  
Media Relations and Promotions Manager, REDCAT  
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[dwyenn@calarts.edu](mailto:dwyenn@calarts.edu)

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Image caption: Photo by Ian Douglas.