

The *International Human Rights Art Festival* presents an ongoing series of art-advocacy events, festivals, workshops and community programs at the intersection of art, spirituality and society. We open up space to hear different points of view, and to listen to unique stories and perspectives. We believe that beauty, sincerity, vulnerability and engagement are the most powerful tools in the activist's toolbox. We offer open-hearted creativity and discourse with politicians, social leaders and others as partners, not adversaries.

### Honorary Co-Sponsors

Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
*United States Senator, NY*

Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand  
*United States Senator, NY*

Honorable Benjamin Cardin  
*United States Senator, MD*

Honorable Bernie Sanders  
*United States Senator, VT*

Honorable Alexandria Ocasio Cortez  
*U.S. House of Representatives, NY*

Honorable Keith Ellison  
*Attorney General, MN*

Honorable Chris Van Hollen  
*United States Senator, MD*

Mr. Norman Lear  
*National Medal of Arts*

Ms. Kathleen Turner  
*Actress*

Ms. Barbra Streisand  
*Actress/Singer*

Ms. Amy Poehler  
*Actress*

Honorable John Lewis  
*U.S. House of Representatives, GA*

Honorable Nydia Velazquez  
*U.S. House of Representatives, NY*

Honorable Jamie Raskin  
*U.S. House of Representatives, MD*

Honorable Jim McGovern  
*U.S. House of Representatives, MA*

Honorable Jan Schakowsky  
*U.S. House of Representatives, IL*

Honorable Ted Lieu  
*U.S. House of Representatives, CA*

Honorable Norma Torres  
*U.S. House of Representatives, CA*

Mr. Wei Jingsheng  
*Chinese Democracy Activist*



## *A (Re)Quest for Freedom*

*Curated by IHRAF Dance Curators*

Oxana Chi  
Layla Zami

*Produced by IHRAF Founder*

Tom Block

May 12, 2019

7:30-9:00 pm

**Media Partner**



TADA! Theater  
15 West 28th Street  
New York, NY 10001



## *A (Re)Quest for Freedom*

The *International Human Rights Art Festival* presents an evening of dance and music. Artists from Europe and the USA search for possibilities to be free, in their movements, their sounds, in community, in society, individually and together. The evening presents a wide scope of artistic forms including contemporary dance, African global theatre and compositional improvisation. A poetic call for equal rights and an uplifting invitation to celebrate the living body!

**OXANA CHI DANCE ART** presents *I Step On Air*, a dance-music-theater piece dedicated to artist-activist May Ayim (1960-1996), also known as the “Afro-German Audre Lorde.” Originally commissioned by Humboldt-University in Berlin, Germany for the May Ayim Seminar, the piece toured from Turkey to Ghana and was a keynote performance at the BGHRA 2018 Conference, University of Toronto. Conceived, choreographed and interpreted by Oxana Chi, accompanied by Layla Zami (live-music, theater). Oxana Chi is an internationally praised dancer, choreographer, curator, festival organizer, filmmaker and author. Her work received support from the Berlin City Council for the Arts, Foundation FMS Paris, Abrons Arts Center. She performed at NYU, MR@Judson Church, Dixon Place, CUNY, HAU Theater, SIPA Festival. Chi was honored as an Ambassador of Peace (DOSHIMA, Jakarta 2016). Dr. Layla Zami is an interdisciplinary artist and academic, Visiting Assistant Professor in the Performance and Performance Studies MFA at Pratt Institute. [oxanachi.de](http://oxanachi.de) [laylazami.net](http://laylazami.net)

**MARA ROSENBLIOM:** Pianist, composer, & bandleader Mara Rosenbloom has been called “a whole hearted poet of the piano,” – she is a builder & a synthesist; a fiercely lyrical composer & improviser (All About Jazz). New York Music Daily described her album *Prairie Burn* as her “quantum leap into greatness. An absolutely feral, largely improvisational suite...unbridled ferocity and a remarkable chemistry...one of the ten best jazz albums of the year.” Performance history includes Jazz at Lincoln Center, Dizzy’s Jazz Club Coca-Cola and New York City’s Winter Jazzfest.

Rosenbloom has spent the past decade in New York City, creating a distinctive body of work and establishing herself as a vibrant and respected part of the NYC’s network of jazz & improvised music communities. [mararosenbloom.com](http://mararosenbloom.com)

**GWEN RAKOTOVAO COMPANY:** In her solo excerpt *Fitia-vana* (Esperanto), Rakotovao investigates how to keep building social cohesion when the words, the traditions and cultural codes we share keep dividing us. The group work *Douce*, currently in development at the New York University Performance Studies Department, is the exploration of the movement of standing up. What does it mean to keep rising?

Dancers: Gwen Rakotovao, Melissa Boode, Dimara Coulouras, Abigail Dias, Tyra Els, Yuki Fukui, Jennifer Jackson, Joan Liu, Hannah McClean, Irene Paci, Emma Sniegowski

Gwen Rakotovao is an award-winning dancer/choreographer and a TEDx speaker. Dances by Gwen Rakotovao are inspired by her multi-cultural background and aim to use dance as a media to encourage the growth of peace. [gwenrakotovaocompany.org](http://gwenrakotovaocompany.org)

**THE LOVELIES** are a compositional improvisation dance company. They laugh, they laugh so hard they cry, and they do it in the moment. They practice telling the truth in the midst of the awkward, the dramatic, the comical and the gems it all reveals. They have had the honor of being presented at Judson Church, Triskelion Arts, The Tank, Brooklyn Arts Exchange, Shapeshifter Lab, and many other theaters and site-specific locations. The Lovelies teach compositional improvisation at Mark Morris Dance Center and the Joffrey Ballet School. [thelovelies.com](http://thelovelies.com)

Dancers: Joanna Futral, Katie Vason, Lena Lauer

Cello: Kirin McElwain [kirinmcelwain.com](http://kirinmcelwain.com)