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GRACE FARMS FOUNDATION'S PRACTICING SERIES
TO CULMINATE WITH EXPLORATION OF JOY

Practicing Joy Brings Together Leading Artists and Scholars for Workshops, Projects,
and Public Programming Featuring Poetry, Installation, Music, and Dance

May 2018–March 2019



Photos (L to R): *Practicing Silence* performance at Grace Farms featuring dancers from New York City Ballet, with choreography by Silas Farley; Alternate view of *Practicing Silence* performance; *Practicing Awe* performance at Grace Farms featuring Gallim Dance. All photos © Dean Kaufman.

NEW CANAAN, Conn., May 9 –

Grace Farms Foundation—supporting initiatives in the areas of nature, arts, justice, community, and faith—announces the culmination of *Practicing*, its signature Arts Initiative program, with a year-long exploration of joy.

Starting in May 2018, the Foundation will bring together collaborators including: installation artist **Julianne Swartz**; poets **Ross Gay**, **Nicole Sealey**, and **Christian Wiman**; composers and performers **Molly Joyce** and **Caroline Shaw**; choreographer **Camille A. Brown** with dancers **Maleek Washington** and **Timothy Edwards** and drummer **Atiba Morales**; essayist **Garnette Cadogan**; theologian **Maria Fee**; and notable humorists to be announced.

Practicing Joy will result in a series of public programs at Grace Farms in New Canaan, Connecticut, spearheaded by Arts Initiative Director **Kenyon Victor Adams** and Arts Initiative Curator **Pamela Ruggio**.

“Interweaving Grace Farms’ porous architecture, vast natural landscape, and serene environment, the Foundation’s Arts Initiative is developing a place-based, interdisciplinary way of working with artists and practitioners,” said Sharon Prince, Grace Farms Foundation President. “It is our hope that this approach will introduce new perspectives and build relationships leading to the creation of significant new works shared with the public.”

“We are delighted to convene an extraordinary cohort of collaborators to investigate the nature, agency, and tendency of joy: to discover together its adjacent conditions, intricate facets, and surprising applications,” said Adams.

Practicing Joy will feature a new, collaborative, site-responsive installation from leading artist **Julianne Swartz**. Located in the award-winning, SANAA-designed River building, two related works will synthesize the interdisciplinary exploration into a multisensory record of the group's discoveries. The newly commissioned project will open to the public on September 8, with an artist talk and reception, and remain on view through March 2019.

The Foundation will also present a suite of public programs, including discussions, a performance, and ongoing *Practicing Joy*-inspired family programming:

On **Friday, May 18**, critically acclaimed poet Christian Wiman will read from his recently published anthology *Joy: 100 Poems*. On **Friday, November 16**, a meditation on joy, resistance, and survival will feature a conversation with essayist **Garnette Cadogan** and a performance from choreographer **Camille A. Brown** with dancers **Maleek Washington** and **Timothy Edwards** and drummer **Atiba Morales**.

On Wednesdays from **June 6** to **August 29**, the Foundation will present the David Rockwell designed *Imagination Playground*—an innovative system of large-scale, light-weight blocks, as a way for young audiences to understand joy through unstructured play. For families with children ages 3-10, this program is free and open to the public on Wednesdays from 10:30 am-2:30 pm between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Children must be accompanied by an adult guardian.

The *Practicing Joy* programming will also feature the continuation of Grace Farms Foundation's ongoing *Open Art Studio for Families* program. Children ages 3-10 with their adult guardians will have an opportunity to explore joy through a series of facilitated workshops and self-guided activities inspired by the contributing artists on Saturdays starting **October 5**.

Additional Arts Initiative programming for 2019 will be announced at a later date: gracefarms.org/arts.

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About Grace Farms Foundation

Grace Farms Foundation was established in 2009 as a private operating foundation with 501c3 status in New Canaan, Connecticut. The Foundation supports initiatives in the areas of nature, arts, justice, community, and faith, and encourages participation on a local, national, and global level. Grace Farms Foundation carries out its work principally through the publicly available facilities and integrated programs of Grace Farms, an 80-acre property owned and operated by the Foundation, where individuals and not-for-profit organizations can come together to advance good in the world.

About Grace Farms Foundation's Arts Initiative

Grace Farms Foundation believes that art has the capacity to provoke curiosity, generate new perspectives, and create the potential for individual and social transformation. Art at Grace Farms demonstrates the Foundation's integrative vision and a dynamic interplay between people, architecture, and landscape. We develop, present, and support new, collaborative, site-responsive works at the intersection of the visual, literary, and performing arts.

The signature program of the Foundation's Arts Initiative, *Practicing* is led by Kenyon Victor Adams, Arts Initiative Director and a multidisciplinary artist, director, and poet. *Practicing* brings together artists and other practitioners with a range of perspectives to examine four complex subjects: empathy, awe,

silence, and joy. New, collaborative, site-responsive works—intersecting visual, literary, and performing arts—are developed and shared with the public following extended workshops at Grace Farms. Practicing began in February of 2016 with *Practicing Empathy* featuring **Bill T. Jones**, followed by *Practicing Awe* featuring **Andrea Miller** of Callim in July. In 2017, *Practicing Silence* featured dancers from New York City Ballet, with choreography by **Silas Farley**, as well as poet and Guggenheim Fellow, **Ilya Kaminsky**, whose manuscript *Deaf Republic* inspired several new works. Each of these workshops has produced new projects and dozens of program offerings, including a full ballet, two participatory art experiences, three musical scores, and weekly family programs.

Dovetailing with *Practicing*, the Arts Initiative curates workshops and residencies that offer distinguished artists opportunities to further their work, collaborate across disciplines, and explore creative processes in a distinct environment. Key examples include *Arts & Mars*, which brought together leading NASA scientists and 70 American artists and designers; and a work-in-progress residency with acclaimed composer and vocalist **Meredith Monk**, to develop her most recent work *Cellular Songs*.

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