

Studio Residency: Jonathan Berger

“Diasporism says we make home where we are,” wrote American activist, essayist, and poet Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz in 2007. Kaye/Kantrowitz developed the concept of “radical diasporism” to describe a non-national form of Jewish identity, embracing dispersion and celebrating multicultural complexity. Through an experiment in collaboration, Jonathan Berger attempts to make home locally: Over the course of a three-week residency, the artist and a community of craftspeople with whom he often works will use the Kravis Studio to construct a scale model of Kaunas, Lithuania, circa 1941. The model is based on the research of self-taught cartographer Marija Oniščik and depicts the city just before it came under Nazi occupation.

Berger often uses archives to construct experimental portraits at the center of large-scale, time-based exhibitions. His residency is the first chapter of a project that will weave together political and personal histories. It is informed by the story of his mother, who as a Jewish child was hidden by a Christian family in Kaunas during World War II, and by Berger’s involvement as a teenager with Jews for Racial and Economic Justice, where Kaye/Kantrowitz served as the organization’s first Executive Director. Working collectively, Berger and his collaborators create an occasion to consider stateless forms of belonging and solidarity across different times, places, and communities.

The residency includes a day of public programs on Saturday, August 23, 2025.



Scan the QR code for tickets and the artist’s acknowledgments and contributors list.

Organized by Thomas Lax, Curator, with May Makki, former Curatorial Assistant, and Cam McEwen, Fellow, Department of Media and Performance. Produced by Lizzie Gorfaine, Director of Performance and Live Art, with Aminah Ibrahim, Assistant Performance Coordinator, Performance and Live Art.

RICHARD MILLE

Media and Performance at MoMA are presented through a partnership with Richard Mille.

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