

# LOWER MANHATTAN CULTURAL COUNCIL (LMCC) PRESENTS RIVER TO RIVER 2020: FOUR VOICES JULY 9–AUGUST 30

ALL EVENTS FREE, PROGRAM INCLUDES:

MONA CHALABI: *100 NEW YORKERS*  
MUNA MALIK: *BLESSING OF THE BOATS: RIVER TO RIVER*  
JEAN SHIN: *FLOATING MAIZE + THE LAST STRAW*  
ASIYA WADUD: *ECHO EXHIBIT*

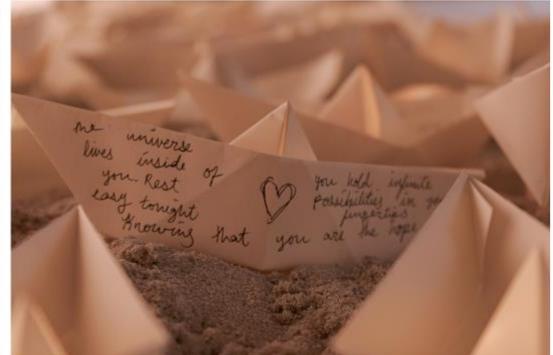


Photo credit (Top row L-R): Courtesy of Asiya Wadud; Muna Malik, *Blessing of The Boats*, courtesy of the artist;  
(Bottom row L-R): Mona Chalabi, *100 New Yorkers*, courtesy of the artist;  
Jean Shin, *Floating MAiZE*, courtesy of the artist.

July 9, 2020—Beginning **July 9** and running through August 30, the **Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC)** presents **River To River 2020: Four Voices**, featuring the work of artists **Mona Chalabi**, **Muna Malik**, **Jean Shin** and **Asiya Wadud**. Responding to the present moment, LMCC and the founding partners of the annual River To River Festival have come together and reimagined it this year as River To River 2020: Four Voices, inviting four singular artists to create new works to offer New Yorkers during these unprecedented times. All projects have been configured with an eye toward meaningful connection with wide-ranging audiences through public artworks that can be witnessed safely and appropriately in open spaces over time, as well as projects that start with virtual connection and lead to moments of physical presence:

**Asiya Wadud** invites participants to create a collection of poems reflecting on current times, which artist **Shannon Finnegan** will then bring to the city's windows;

**Jean Shin** asks viewers to consider our collective use of plastic and its catastrophic effects on our world;

**Muna Malik** welcomes us to imagine what new society we want to build and what actions can help us make this reality;

**Mona Chalabi** creates an ode to New York City that visualizes the diversity of people that form the heart and soul of the city we know and love.

## See below for full details on all projects.

This year's program is co-curated by **Lili Chopra**, LMCC's Executive Director of Artistic Programs, and **Nanette Nelms**, a NYC-based filmmaker with roots in performance from her previous training and career as a contemporary dancer.

Nelms notes, "Across all four projects, the artists explore personal and structural vulnerability within the systems that connect us all, while creating space for contemplation, reflection and participation. The projects embrace the power of the individual within the larger community, not as an ideal, but as a vehicle of thought and action."

"This year, the program and artists featured in River To River: Four Voices present a polyphony of voices and creative movements toward a just, equitable and sustainable future," adds Chopra.

**Diego S. Segalini**, LMCC's Executive Director of Finance & Administration remarks, "LMCC's River To River projects bring the best of public art and performance every summer to NYC audiences in surprising and unexpected open spaces. The 2020 summer program comes at a pivotal moment for the City's reopening, and with the continued support of our founding partners downtown, I am proud that River To River 2020 will greet New Yorkers as we return to Lower Manhattan through these powerful public artworks. LMCC remains a champion of artistic voices that bring our communities together."

## RIVER TO RIVER 2020: FOUR VOICES FULL SCHEDULE

Dates, times and locations subject to change. Visit [lmcc.net/R2R](http://lmcc.net/R2R) for up-to-date information. All events are free.

### ASIYA WADUD ECHO EXHIBIT

Begins July 9

Various locations throughout the Seaport District

In conceiving *ECHO EXHIBIT*, Asiya Wadud invited poets from her vast network of fellow writers to engage in one-on-one telephone conversations with the general public and local community members of the Seaport District, crafting poems based on the words, themes and tone of each conversation. Participating writers include **Lara Atallah**, **Sevinç Çalhanoglu**, **Chia-Lun Chang**, **Alisha Mascarenhas**, **Madison McCartha**, **Rebekah Smith** and Wadud herself. Conversations have been held with participants in a host of languages including English, American Sign Language, Spanish, French, Arabic, Taiwanese, Mandarin, Russian and Turkish.

Beginning July 9, a collection of the poems will be gradually revealed in public spaces throughout Lower Manhattan's Seaport District in the form of vinyl window posters designed by New York-based visual artist and accessibility activist **Shannon Finnegan**. These poems offer a beautiful acknowledgement of current individual experiences, including both difficulties and levities, as well as comfort in our collective resilience.

Wadud is the author of *Crosslight for Youngbird* (Nightboat Books, 2018), a finalist for the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award in Poetry. Her other collections include *day pulls down the sky / a filament in gold leaf*, written collaboratively with Okwui Okpokwasili (Belladonna/Danspace Project, 2019) and *Syncope* (Ugly Duckling Presse, 2019). *No Knowledge Is Complete Until It Passes Through My Body* is forthcoming from Nightboat Books. Wadud teaches poetry at Saint Ann's School and occasionally leads an English conversation group for new immigrants at the Brooklyn Public Library. A member of the Belladonna Collaborative, Wadud has been supported by the Foundation Jan Michalski, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Danspace Project, Brooklyn Poets, Dickinson House, Mount Tremper Arts, and the New York Public Library, among others. Recent work appears in *e-flux journal*, *BOMB Magazine*, *Chicago Review*, *Social Text Journal* and elsewhere.

Co-presented with Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC), The Seaport District and The Howard Hughes Corporation as part of River To River 2020: Four Voices.

## **JEAN SHIN**

### **THE LAST STRAW**

Begins July 9

Winter Garden at Brookfield Place

### **FLOATING MAIZE**

Begins July 13

Winter Garden at Brookfield Place

Known for her inventive works that transform cast-off materials into elegant expressions of place and identity, Jean Shin's art and practice is ingrained with the idea of sustainability. Starting July 13, Shin's installation, *Floating MAiZE*, and her vinyl artwork, *The Last Straw*, will be displayed in the Winter Garden at Brookfield Place. Both pieces enable viewers to see themselves within the context of the artwork and consider sustainability in everyday practices as well as within the global ecosystem.

*Floating MAiZE* engages its audience in a conversation about plastic waste, dietary choices and environmental stewardship. The installation consists of recyclable green plastic soft drink bottles suspended above the grand staircase in the Winter Garden at Brookfield Place. The elevated plastic cornfield will give viewers the experience of being transported to the center of this artificial landscape.

*The Last Straw* presents three macro and micro views of plastic waste, featuring different configurations and perspectives of colorful straws and reflective material. A poignant part of the installation includes scattered piles of straws in the distance, which map the flow of plastic debris from our coastlines into the gigantic concentration of garbage floating in the ocean. Both works encourage viewers to contemplate their own plastic consumption and question the ecological impact of consumer behavior in contributing to plastic pollution.

*Floating MAiZE* and *The Last Straw* are curated by Kendal Henry for Arts Brookfield. Henry is an artist and curator who has specialized in the field of public art for nearly thirty years, and the Director of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs Percent for Art Program.

Co-presented with Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC) and Arts Brookfield as part of River To River 2020: Four Voices.

## **MUNA MALIK**

### **BLESSING OF THE BOATS: RIVER TO RIVER**

Begins July 9 online

Belvedere Plaza, Battery Park City, August 15-18

Beginning July 9, *Blessing of The Boats: River To River* asks participants online to imagine what societies they want to build and articulate what actions can help make their visions a reality. Participants are instructed to fold and write messages on origami boats. From August 15-18, members of the public are invited to meet Muna Malik at the shore of the Hudson River in Battery Park City's Belvedere Plaza and see Malik's 20-foot long sculptural boat filled with messages. Members of the public will receive supplies to make paper boats and write messages and add them to the artist's collaborative installation. The river's edge installation site was offered by Battery Park City Authority in view of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, global symbols of hope and new beginnings, to resonate with Malik's *Blessing of The Boats: River To River*.

Previous iterations of *Blessing of The Boats* have reflected Malik's interest in refugee communities. Reimagined for NYC audiences, the 2020 edition of *Blessing of The Boats: River To River* speaks to our expressions and desires for better futures and our roles as individuals within our greater communities.

Malik's art practice is grounded in a pursuit to create cultural awareness and understanding through the medium of art. Her current work focuses on capturing poetic imagery and narratives of women of color and refugees. Her work has been exhibited at Northern Spark Arts Festival, MCAD, Artworks Chicago and The University of Minnesota—Humphrey School of Public Affairs. She was the billboard artist for North Carolina for the "For Freedoms 50 State Initiative." She recently completed exhibitions at the Band of Vices Gallery LA, Annenberg Space for Photography LA with Photoville and the International Center for Photography with "For Freedoms." She currently has work at the Somaal House of Art in Minneapolis, MN for the *Ilaaa Shalay/Since Yesterday* exhibition. Her latest collage series was featured on [vogue.com](http://vogue.com) and *i-D Magazine*.

Co-presented with Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC) and Battery Park City Authority as part of River To River 2020: Four Voices.

## **MONA CHALABI**

### **100 NEW YORKERS**

Begins August 20

22 screens across the Westfield World Trade Center campus

By using hard data as the foundation of her art, multidisciplinary artist Mona Chalabi reconstitutes information that is often decontextualized and dehumanized, transforming numbers, charts and statistics into readable, digestible and understandable visual narratives. Her work lays

bare the multi-layered and intertwined nature of the systems and structures that we live within and the indisputable effect that these unseen conditions have when they play out across our society.

*100 New Yorkers* visualizes what the city's population would look like if it were distilled from its ungraspable millions to a more relatable 100 individuals. Using census data, Chalabi has created 100 characters that, as accurately as possible, visualize the racial, economic and social realities of the city's population. By framing these characters through various statistical lenses, Chalabi relays a multitude of nonfiction narratives that tell the story of the New York public, and how environment, health, wealth, physical ability and education affect how the diverse population lives, dies and exists in between.

For this iteration of *100 New Yorkers*, presented in and around the Oculus on screens and vinyl in the lead-up to the U.S. 2020 presidential election, Chalabi will activate her characters through representation and voter participation statistics. Chalabi's animations empower viewers by grounding them within a larger community and providing them with tools for informed action.

In conjunction with the *100 New Yorkers* installation, Absolut Art will be the exclusive partner for artist prints. These prints will be available for sale on the Absolut website:

<https://www.absolutart.com/>

Chalabi's writing has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *The New York Review of Books*, *New York Magazine*, *The Guardian* and many more. Her artwork has been featured at several galleries, including Tate Gallery and the Design Museum, London. As a producer and presenter, Chalabi is one half of the team that created the Emmy-nominated video series, *Vagina Dispatches*.

Presented by Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC) in partnership with Westfield World Trade Center, with support from The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey as part of River To River 2020: Four Voices. Exclusive print partner: Absolut Art.

## **ABOUT RIVER TO RIVER**

River To River, LMCC's annual summer festival, was created in the aftermath of 9/11 with the intention to heal and celebrate New Yorkers' resiliency through the power of art. Since 2002, River To River has remained free and open to all, showcasing artistic and creative diversity across disciplines through the presentation of art and installation in public spaces and in partnership with leading institutions in Lower Manhattan.

## **RIVER TO RIVER FOUNDING PARTNERS**

River To River was founded in 2002 by American Express, The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, the Alliance for Downtown New York, Brookfield Place, Battery Park City Authority, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and South Street Seaport.

## **RIVER TO RIVER 2020 PRESENTING PARTNERS**

Battery Park City Authority

Brookfield Place

The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey

The Howard Hughes Corporation



The Seaport District  
Westfield World Trade Center

## **RIVER TO RIVER 2020 EXCLUSIVE PRINT PARTNER**

Absolut Art

## **RIVER TO RIVER 2020 SUPPORT**

Leadership Support provided by: American Express and The Howard Hughes Corporation.

Major Support provided by: Battery Park City Authority, Con Edison, Goldman, Sachs & Co, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The Alliance for Downtown New York, Westfield World Trade Center.

River To River: Four Voices is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

River To River: Four Voices is also made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

## **ABOUT LOWER MANHATTAN CULTURAL COUNCIL (LMCC)**

Founded as Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC), LMCC serves, connects and makes space for artists and community.

LMCC Serves Artists through:

- Residencies that enable artists to experiment and develop their work and ideas, with professional development, financial training and networking opportunities
- Grant funding to artists that support local/neighborhood projects
- Presentation opportunities that allow artists to share their work and creative process with the public

LMCC Serves Community through:

- Free public programs in Lower Manhattan that activate neighborhoods and bring people together through performances and rich artistic experiences
- Access to artists and the artmaking process to build connections and dialogue between artists and audiences
- Grant funding for neighborhood arts and community-based organizations

Since 1973, LMCC has been the champion of independent artists in New York City and the cultural life force of Lower Manhattan.

[www.LMCC.net/R2R](http://www.LMCC.net/R2R)

#R2R20

**For more information please contact Chris Schimpf, Zoe Sonnenberg  
or Carla Sacks at Sacks & Co., 212.741.1000, [chris.schimpf@sacksco.com](mailto:chris.schimpf@sacksco.com),  
[zoe.sonnenberg@sacksco.com](mailto:zoe.sonnenberg@sacksco.com) or [carla@sacksco.com](mailto:carla@sacksco.com).**