



Leah Solomon and Qur'an Shaheed

• **JIGNA**

Film/Video

November 18

8 PM

REDCAT

Roy and Edna Disney CalArts Theater

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ABOUT THE WORK

A four-chapter immersive film, *Jigna* joins dreams, spirits, and memories inspired by *Les Guérillères* by Monique Wittig—a seminal feminist novel in which a lesbian society battles patriarchal order. The film reimagines and gives homage to Wittig’s poetry through lucid soundscapes, myths, and movement. The experimental filmmaker and multidisciplinary artist Leah Solomon uses abstraction, oral histories, and material ecologies to create new sonic and visual landscapes. The screening will be followed by a live musical performance by Solomon and local pianist, poet, and singer Qur’an Shaheed with bassist and composer Tate Egon Chavez. The performance, *Cup of Storm*, is a culmination of an original collaborative project between Shaheed, Solomon, and Chavez, commissioned for REDCAT.

Runtime: Approx. 50 minutes, with intermission

JIGNA (Leah Solomon, 2024), 20 min.

JIGNA is a kaleidoscope of dreams, spirits, and memories inspired by the book, *Les Guérillères*, by Monique Wittig. Set in four chapters, the film reimagines Wittig's poetry through lucid soundscapes, myths, and movement. Inspired by the director's encounter with the text, *JIGNA* is an experimental homage extending further the energetic mythos of Wittig's book. A ceaseless constellation of sound, poetics, and cinematic invention unfolding in four immersive chapters. *JIGNA* is a swelling incantation, communicating through futurism and faith.

Presented in English with subtitles.

The program includes a conversation with Leah Solomon and Qur'an Shaheed, moderated by film programmer Jheanelle Brown.

The Jack H. Skirball Series is organized by Jheanelle Brown.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Leah Solomon is an Eritrean-American, moving-image, and sound artist (born 1995) , completing her BFA at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Solomon's work ventures into the realm of expanded cinema, examining black diasporic perspectives through auto-biographical, personal, and abstracted geographies. She has developed a polyphonic vocabulary, spanning fiction and documentary through her poetic and lyrical approaches. Solomon's work demands a mediation of transnational migrant experiences concerning exile, censorship, and belonging.

Qur'an Shaheed is a 28 year-old pianist, poet, singer and songwriter from Pasadena, California. She began playing piano at the age of 4 under the teachings of her mother, Sharon Shaheed and grandmother Monique Simpson. Her father is Nolan Shaheed (previously Nolan Smith), a decorated session trumpeter who was Marvin

Gaye's bandleader for some time in the 70's. In 2017 Qur'an met Los Angeles producer and keyboardist Jesse Justice. The two clicked and got to work quickly. This freshman release from Qur'an is a culmination of personal growth and discovery, almost three years in the making. Throughout, they explore their own musical limits by pushing themselves and each other, resulting in a unique and honest project. The musicians who appear on this album are young and incredibly talented artists from LA including: Mekala Session, Devin Daniels, and Aaron & Lawrence Shaw (Black Nile) and more. Qur'an has collaborated with Koreatown Oddity & The Pan Afrikan Peoples Arkestra (of which her father Nolan Shaheed is also a member). She is also the keyboardist for Jimetta Rose's gospel choir „The Voices of Creation“. Her focus now is collaborating with various artists and releasing music in the spirit of uplifting and uniting people.

Tate Egon Chavez is a bassist and composer whose exploratory approach to expanding the sonics of his instrument is inspired by his work with Los Angeles based arts organizations Living Earth and Leaving Records. With a BA in Music and Economics from UC Berkeley, his soundscapes have featured in multimedia art festivals such as Ars Electronica Festival and Singapore Inside Out: Tokyo, as well as numerous film festivals. He is co-director of events at dublab.

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