



# Keepers of the Fire

## AIR

**October 19, 2023 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.**

In Western astrology, the classical elements impart core characteristics across the Zodiac's sky. Air signs – Gemini, Libra, Aquarius – embody breath and carry our voices, acting like great transmitters in everyday life. Air presides over broadcasts, gossip, and information; it signals to a recipient and permits a response. This invisible element also marks one, as your speech remains indelibly your own – a signature, what the French theorist Roland Barthes dubbed “the grain of the voice”: “the body in the voice as it sings.” Air speaks to self-expression (*your song*) and to relays of desire (*who hears it*), but its atmospheric (*just talk*) demands that we seize the moment to be heard. Think of Vaslav Nijinsky's great leaps, gravity-defying feats suspending the revolutionary dancer in space – floating, flying – only to land him in a riot. This evening's screening program looks to Air's flourish of signs; to a provocation or invitation acknowledged; and to the dynamic uncertainty of every response.

**Frank Smigiel** is the Director of Arts Programming & Partnerships at the Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture (FMCAC) in San Francisco.

*Keepers of the Fire* is a program of cultural events by five Bay Area curators responding to the five elements: earth, fire, water, air, and ether. These intimate, twilight gatherings bring together artists and public audiences to commune around fire pits for curated films, conversations, and live performances inside the bastions of Fort Point.



**Frédéric Moffet, *Goddess of Speed*, 8:05 (2023)**

Fred Herko famously leapt to his death out of a Greenwich Village apartment in October 1964. Herko co-founded Judson Dance Theater; he also appeared in Andy Warhol's films, including the lost *Dance Movie* (aka *Rollerskate*) (1963). Moffet's new work imagines Herko's last days.

**robbinschilds + A.L. Steiner, *C.L.U.E.***

**(color location ultimate experience), Part 1, 10:47 (2007)**

robbinschilds (Layla Childs and Sonya Robbins) join Seattle noise band Kinski, A.L. Steiner, and AJ Blandford to create this duet for landscapes both natural and architectural.

**Roberto Fatal, Snowflake Arizmendi-Calvert, and XAV S-F, *Chaac + Yum*, 12:00 (2022)**

An encounter in a queer bar echoes the sacred relationship between Chaac, the Mayan deity of Rain, and Yum, the Mayan deity of corn. Roberto Fatal (they/them/ellos) is a Two-Spirit, Non-binary filmmaker from Raramuri, Tewa Pueblo, and Spanish heritage. Snowflake Arizmendi-Calvert (she/her) is a Two-Spirit performance artist of Tzotzil, Yaqui, and Raramuri heritage. XAV S-F (she/her), of Piru & Tigua heritage, is a dancer, performer, and producer.

**Brontez Purnell Dance Company, *Free Jazz*, 23:50 (2013)**

With founding member Sophia Wang, the company builds works combining punk rock subversion, free jazz improvisation, and avant-garde surprise. Director Brontez Purnell is a writer, filmmaker, musician, dancer, and visual artist. He lives in Oakland.

**Cauleen Smith, *H-E-L-L-O*, 11:00 (2014)**

Cauleen Smith's film takes the famous five-note musical motif from Stephen Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* into greetings across post-hurricane-Katrina New Orleans. Her *Shiny Things for My Quartermaster: Seven Swallowtail Flags* (2023) is on view at FMCAC.

**Cliff Hengst, *I Can Feel it Coming* (2023)**

Cliff Hengst is a San Francisco-based visual and performance artist. He has shown work at SFMOMA, Berkeley Art Museum, ICA Philadelphia, among many others.

*Keepers of the Fire* is presented by FOR-SITE in partnership with the National Park Service and the Golden Gate National Park Conservancy. *Keepers of the Fire* is made possible thanks to generous support from Joanna Drake & Christopher Smith, Tad J. Freese & Brook Hartzell, Peter & Beverly Lipman, Robert Joseph Louie Memorial Fund, and Claire & Holden Spaht.