



**World Theatre Day
International Theater Institute
ITI U.S. Center**

Written by Caitlin Nasema Cassidy

Hi. My name is Caitlin Nasema Cassidy. I'm an actor, director, and producer.

I live in New York City, and I make work within and about our climate and ecological emergencies. As a storyteller, I am working to connect climate science to history to the lifecycle of a firefly, for example. Within my theater company LubDub, we often say: When it's all very big, it helps to go small.

This is an offering in honor of World Theatre Day 2024.

Beat.

Lorca was a first love.

I read his lectures and his plays
mourned his brutal death

Learned from his desire to suggest

Not delineate

To animate

In Madrid 1928, he wrote:

“Wherever there is a dark corner, I wish to direct toward it light.”

This winter, I learned that fireflies, or lightning bugs, are neither flies
nor bugs

They are beetles

And they live a good portion of their life underground

Before they can direct their light, they spend a lot of time in dark
corners

There are a lot of those these days

I’m afraid to name everything the last year has taken

Holding my breath, haunted by ghosts of displacement

I’m reading the IPCC report like, “How many more statements?”

Crying on the B train ‘cause this morning my dad texted: Ivory Billed
Woodpecker Extinct

Wondering what the Wall Street Journal thinks

Do they know most wasps are peaceful creatures, who do not sting?

And

In a small rehearsal room here in the city

We dance across worn wooden floorboards

Let deep breath in

Marvel that our diaphragms can move like this

We practice patience and consent

We brace for what's next
With gentleness
We keep the magic in our fingertips

In an auditorium in Dearborn,
We're studying how our ancestors shook their hips
Building process around relationship
We're singing to the mountains
Conducting research on the sea
From an office in Marseille, Uncle Ramzi says:
"That's your job as artists. You imagine what could be."

In a theater in Stockholm
We are synchronizing our heartbeats with strangers
We are practicing the broad, sustained awareness our screens have
endangered
We are turning over the soil
And this not a rehearsal
It is life

Along a river in DC
We're choreographing burlesque with biologists
Telling tales to honor the return of the shad fish
Leaning into silliness

On Zoom
We're telling stories that recall our vital connections to earth
Celebrating grandmothers, goddesses, and birth

In a garden in Tangiers
In a skatepark in Brooklyn
In a dance studio in Tunis
In a gymnasium in San Juan
In a black box in Jenin
In a classroom in Franklin
In a community center in Istanbul
At a top golf in Virginia
In a rehearsal room in New York City

We are writing new worlds
With our bodies and our words
Building cultures of care
On a budget
Crafting cardboard castles
Making the best of plastic chairs
We are (re)storying the future

Like lightning bugs and Lorca
The theater and its artists
Are directing our light toward the darkest corners.