

# Convergence

HEALTH EQUITY IN A CHANGING CLIMATE



## What is the number one predictor of health in the United States? Your zip code.

Across our nation, how long you live is determined by where you live. Our health is shaped by our environment, our ability to access nature, and the systems that support our communities.

*Convergence* brings this story to the stage, inspired by the data of Brushwood Center's recent findings on health, equity, and nature in Lake County, Illinois, published report, *Health, Equity, and Nature: A Changing Climate in Lake County, Illinois*.



ROUND

GURNEE

WAUKEGAN

# The Health, Equity and Nature Report

**Clean air, water, and access to the outdoors are vital to human health. This report outlines key findings and recommendations for improving wellbeing in Lake County, Illinois, by addressing systemic inequities at the intersection of environment and health.**

This report is a project of Brushwood Center's Health, Equity, and Nature Accelerator which was born in response to growing community demand and momentum for systemic changes to address racial and ethnic inequities at the intersection of health, climate, and nature.

## **History has set the stage.**

Like many communities in the United States, Lake County's history of housing discrimination and industrial development continue to drive systemic inequities at the root of environmental and health injustices.

## **Northeastern Lake County is most overburdened by environmental and health inequities.**

Environment and human health do not exist in isolation; they are deeply interconnected.

## **Community is leading the fight for environmental justice.**

Community members and organizations in Lake County fighting for environmental justice are in a position of strength with recent successes, including the 2022 closure of the coal-fired power plant in Waukegan. Yet, many toxic challenges remain.

## **Nature abounds, yet access does not.**

Lake County is home to beautiful green and blue spaces including Lake Michigan, park districts, county forest preserves, state parks, rivers, and spaces created by grassroots groups. Yet, despite this natural abundance, there are barriers to accessing the outdoors.

## **A warmer, wetter climate is here, and it is impacting health.**

The already changing climate compounds existing community health risks.

## **Nature is a source of healing.**

Interviews with community members revealed a dominant theme of "transformative experiences pertaining to nature." In the wake of the pandemic, many people recognize the mental and physical health benefits of spending time outside.

The goal of this 92 page, 30 figure report is to serve as a tool for community members, organizations, and decision-makers to improve health and wellbeing in Lake County, Illinois. 2,000 copies of The Report have been distributed. 3,000 civic leaders, community organizations, advocacy groups, community members, and funders have engaged with the report findings

The report's mixed methods approach is rooted in community assets and combines existing data, mapping, qualitative data, and art. Brushwood Center began this project in response to growing community demand and momentum for systemic changes to address racial and ethnic inequities at the intersection of health, climate, and the environment.

Learn more! Scan this QR code or visit [brushwoodcenter.org/theHENreport](https://brushwoodcenter.org/theHENreport) to access the full report, available in English and Spanish, or to request printed copies.

Follow @BrushwoodCenter on social media to stay up to speed on this work!



## About Brushwood Center

Brushwood Center works collaboratively with community partners, artists, health care providers, and scientists to improve health equity and access to nature in Lake County, Illinois, and the Chicago region. We engage people with the outdoors through the arts, environmental education, and community action. Brushwood Center's programs focus on youth, families, Military Veterans, and those facing racial and economic injustices.



# The Performance | Program Notes

## Black Moon

Marc Mellits (b. 1966)

*Commissioned by Brushwood Center & Black Moon Trio*

- I. New Moon
- II. Selene & Cynthia
- III. Blue Moon
- IV. Eos
- V. Supermoon
- VI. Dark Moon
- VII. Red Moon

“Black Moon” is a lunar infused dream in seven movements, each movement illuminating a vision of lunar inspiration. The name Black Moon itself comes from the horn trio the music was written for but also from a month with two new moons, among other meanings. Some of the movements are rooted in Greek mythology, for example Selene, sometimes called Cynthia, the goddess of the Moon, or her sister, Eos, the goddess of dawn. Other movements draw inspiration from natural lunar phenomena, like a Supermoon, when our moon seems so large it could fall out of the night sky, or the rarely seen Blue Moon. Dark Moon is a story of forbidden love that can only hide on the dark side of the moon. The final movement, Red Moon, occurring during a total lunar eclipse, is a glimpse into the militaristic underworld looming within the shadow of the moon.

## Tochchi’na

Jerod Impichchaachaaha’ Tate (b. 1968)

*Commissioned by Brushwood Center & Black Moon Trio*

“Tochchi’na” is the Chickasaw word for the number three in honor of the trio of musicians the music is set for. This piece is an arrangement of an existing work by Tate for solo violin entitled, “Oshta”, the Chickasaw word for the number four. The work is loosely based upon a Choctaw church hymn that was composed in the 1800’s. One very unique artistic result of European contact is the American Indian church hymn. As missionaries fanned out across Indian Country they became the first to document our Native languages and create translations of The Bible and other Christian texts, including church hymns. This led to a new series of hybrid music, composed by tribal citizens.

For Southeast American Indians (Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek and Seminole) this hybrid style of music is now over 200 years old and contains a vast repertoire. The music is unmistakably Native and added a third category of traditional music alongside stomp dancing music and our old folk songs. “Oshta” presents the Choctaw Hymn 53 as the centerpiece and is embedded within my abstractions and feelings of the ancient time in which it was composed.

## Trio for Violin, Horn, and Piano

Eric Ewazen (b. 1954)

- I. Andante teneramente
- II. Allegro vivace (Scherzo)
- III. Andante grazioso
- IV. Maestoso - Allegro energico

This piece represents an homage to one of Ewazen’s favorite chamber pieces of all time, the “Trio for Horn, Violin and Piano” by Brahms. The four movements are modeled after the Brahms, with a slow-fast-slow-fast scheme to the entire work. A gentle, somewhat mysterious first movement accumulates depth and momentum as it proceeds, only to return to the gentle world of the opening. The second movement is a rip-roaring scherzo, a true energetic dance with melodies tossed back and forth from the violin to the horn, while the piano provides a resonant accompaniment, inserting its own lively melodies as counterpoint to the violin and horn. The third movement is filled with melancholy, with long lyric melodies appearing sometimes as solos, sometimes as duets, and sometimes as a chorale with all three instruments singing their soulful songs. The final movement, following an austere, dramatic introduction, turns into a grand fugue, with a jumping fugue theme full of life and excitement, culminating in the themes heard in augmentation, strong and bold.

## Horn Trio

Jonathan Leshnoff (b. 1973)

Baltimore-based Jonathan Leshnoff is among the most-performed of recent American composers, his prolific output gaining a reputation for its concentrated expression and lyricism. Working within tonal confines, Leshnoff has also explored the expressive potential of chamber music through works for mixed instruments and four published string quartets.

Leshnoff’s Horn Trio makes a clear progression from darkness to light. Its Pensive first movement is initially led by fulsome phrases from the violin, supported by softer thoughts from horn and piano. The horn rises from its slumber, however, in striking high register phrases looking to raise the music’s energy.

## Drifter

TJ Cole (b. 1993)

This piece was inspired by a woodblock print called “Drifter” by artist Rockwell Kent. The print depicts a figure sitting in a small boat looking up at a night sky with wonder as he drifts in the water.

## The Artists

### Natashna Anderson

Natashna Anderson (natashNa A.) is a Designer, Illustrator and Bookmaker. A Brooklyn native, she considers herself a creative in all aspects. Her work constantly reimagines itself as murals, board games, and more recently, as patterns. She received her BFA in Visual Communications at School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The city of Chicago is where she currently lives and works. Her work explores and interprets the idea of narrative within black portrayal, typography, and fairytales.

### Kelley Clink

Kelley Clink is an author, illustrator, artist, and suicide prevention/mental health advocate. Over the years her writing has appeared in numerous magazines and literary journals, including Gettysburg Review, Colorado Review, Shambhala Sun, Woman's Day, and The Huffington Post. She's spoken about her lived experience as a suicide attempt and loss survivor to crowds as big as 4,000 and books clubs as small as 6. In 2014, she won the Beacon Street Prize in Nonfiction, and was nominated for the Pushcart Prize. In 2015 her memoir, A Different Kin of Same, was published, and was named Book of the Year by the Chicago Writers Association.

Her artwork has recently appeared in Photo Trouvee Magazine (issues 7 and 10), the Making Space show at the Lill Street Art Center, This is Your Allowance at Positive Space Studios, Tiny Works at the Fulton Street Collective, the 2023 Terrain Biennial, the Angelica Kauffmann Gallery, and more. She is currently working on a young adult novel and several picture books.

### Laura Horan

Laura is a freelance illustrator working in the Chicagoland area. She graduated in 2016 from the University of Illinois at Chicago with a BFA in Fine Art, and has since been pursuing her passion for vibrant and inventive illustration. Her work is heavily influenced by cartoons, impressionism, and the crazy cast of characters that is her pets. She loves cooking up silly ideas and scenarios, and creating bright and warm illustrations that bring out the childish side in all of us.

### Lokosh

Lokosh (Joshua D. Hinson) is a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation. A fluent speaker of the Chickasaw language and an award-winning artist, he holds a Bachelors of Fine Arts degree in Painting from Abilene Christian University, a master's degree in Native American Art History from the University of New Mexico, and a PhD in Native Language Revitalization from the University of Oklahoma. He makes art on the Chickasaw Nation Reservation, Ada, Oklahoma. Hinson, whose Chickasaw name Lokosh translates as "Gourd," is of the Imatapo (Their Lean-to People) house group and Kowishto' (Panther) clan.

### Naimah Thomas

Naimah Thomas is a registered and board-certified art therapist (ATR-BC), and a licensed professional counselor (LPC) in Illinois, with a Master of Arts in art therapy. Naimah graduated from Columbia College Chicago with a Bachelor of Arts, with a focus in graphic design. She is committed to providing a person-centered approach to healing with a focus on intergenerational cultural trauma that acknowledges the multiple systems of oppression.

### About Black Moon Trio

Black Moon Trio is committed to collaboratively affecting positive change in communities through chamber music. They reimagine the breadth of a horn, violin, and piano trio by showcasing underrepresented voices in their artistic programming and original commissions, inspiring young musicians and non-musicians alike through captivating educational programs, and connecting community members through the arts. Black Moon Trio is ensemble-in-residence at Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods.



## Learn More and Get Involved

### Glossary

**Coal Ash** - What is left behind when power plants burn coal for energy; it is a toxic mix of carcinogens, neurotoxins, and other hazardous pollutants.

**Envirojustice** - The idea that everyone deserves to live with clean air, water, and soil, and should be included in making decisions about things that could cause changes in their community's environment.

**Ethylene Oxide** - A flammable, colorless gas used to sterilize equipment and plastic devices. Ethylene oxide was reclassified as a human carcinogen by the EPA in 2016. **Climate Change** - Long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns.

**Health Equity** - Everyone has a fair and just opportunity to access their full health potential.

**Nature / Green Space / Blue Space** - An area where one can recreate or enjoy green (e.g., parks, gardens, backyards, preserves, etc.) and blue (e.g., lakes, ponds, oceans, rivers, etc.) spaces in whatever way is accessible to the individual.

**Nature-Based Solutions** - Employing nature at a meaningful scale for multiple benefits.

**Superfund Sites** - Locations polluted with hazardous materials. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has the responsibility to conduct removal actions to protect public health and environment, ensure community involvement, and enforce against responsible parties.

### Follow-Up Discussion Questions

- What initial thoughts come to mind when you think about Health Equity?
- How did this performance change the way you think about Health Equity?
- What are some of the systemic factors you have observed that contribute to health inequities in your community? Did you learn about any additional systemic factors that you previously weren't aware of?
- What are some of the consequences of mainstream environmental movements failing to acknowledge the contributions of historically marginalized communities to environmental activism?
- How can we ensure that future environmental movements adopt a more intersectional approach that centers the voices and experiences of marginalized communities?

### Additional Online for Learning about Health Equity Online

**Health, Equity, and Nature: A Changing Climate in Lake County, Illinois**

<https://brushwoodcenter.org/impact/health-equity-and-nature-report/>

**Intersectional Environmentalist Toolkits**

<https://intersectionalenvironmentalist.com/toolkits>

**Environmental Justice; Why We Should Teach It and How to Get Started from the National Educational Association**

<https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/environmental-justice-why-we-should-teach-it-and-how-get-started>



**Thank You!**

**Performers**

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Kelsey Minden, and Paige Lind

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Krystal Erdman

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