

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation



Photo: Lynn Brooks

Fowl Play at the Gershman Y

by tD writers and friends

tD writers and friends respond to a reinvention of Allan Kaprow's Chicken, presented at the site of the original 1962 "[Happening](#)"—the 2020 version by Alex da Corte with choreography by Kate Watson Wallace.

Circus barkers barking at the moon
Moonbeam-illuminated eggshells
And not a chicken in sight.

- Jonathan Stein

A thick crowd clusters around *Chicken's* carnival attractions, slowly shuffling, cautious and confused.
The lights cut off and the room fills with a red glow, echoing the blood-curdling screams of the performers.
In a room filled with chaos, I find comfort in the egg-shaped artist who sits, caged, with their face buried in a newspaper. One aspect of calm.

- Preeti Pathak



When did it happen for you?

When the table broke at Broad and Pine when the blue night light music was cut with the yellow spotlight smoke — say *chicken*, say *uncle*, say *call your mother*, or stay open ended like the moment when nobody called your name; they didn't have to.

- **Thomas Devaney**

The audience shuffles between performers elevated on mini stages around the theater. The performers take turns giving impassioned sales pitches for products. It's like a trade show—only the products are pieces of the moon and eggs, appearing everywhere.

- **Kristi Yeung**



A happening? – Rather, a highly-choreographed lunacy of coordinated costumes, turn-taking acts, too-long carny pitches. An elaborate pink frou-frou alchemist mixes up the COVID vaccine we've been waiting for. Wishful thinking. That geometrically red space-queen is trying too hard, unleashing mob chaos upon one innocent individual.

- **Lynn Matluck Brooks**

From different stations, people loudly sell the moon as a cure-all. Lightbulbs, eggs, and dinner rolls get smashed. A riot erupts; the moon sales-people grab me and scream "back up!"

- **Leslie Bush**

I stood, shoulder to shoulder with strangers, as the woman on the platform blew sparkling pixie dust and disc-shaped confetti over my head. It billowed all around, and for a moment I felt out of this world—like being surrounded by falling snow on a dark night. It was intoxicating. And after that moment, as I stood in the large crowd, often unable to see, I hoped that it was happening to others.

- **Kristen Shahverdian**



[Allan Kaprow's "Chicken" \(1962\), reinvented by Alex da Corte](#), Gershman Hall, University of the Arts, March 5.

By Jonathan Stein

March 15, 2020