

# BEMIS X CENTER



Sound artist-in-residence Evicshen performs at LOW END on June 15, 2023. Photo by Ben Semisch.

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **LOW END Celebrates Five Years in Omaha's Downtown**

*Part of Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, the Nonprofit Venue Will Honor This Milestone With a Vinyl Release and Special Performance Season*

Omaha, Neb. (July 26, 2024) — One of the only nonprofit venues in North America dedicated to experimental music turns five years old this fall. LOW END, located on the south end of Bemis Center's campus (724 S. 12th St.), opened its doors on October 25, 2019 with an inaugural performance by indie rock/experimental pop band Deerhoof. The venue has since welcomed more than 4,600 in-person attendees and more than 20,000 digital viewers to experience 90 performances. To celebrate this milestone, Bemis Center will present a concert series reprising some of the program's earliest performers and release a limited-pressing vinyl record highlighting select artists, titled *5 Years @ LOW END*.

Upcoming performances reflect some of the most notable artists in the sound art and experimental music genre: poet and soundscape creator **Moor Mother** on September 7, violinist and composer **Laura Ortman** on September 12, modular synthesist and singer **Arushi Jain** on October 3, Pulitzer Prize-winning sound artist **Raven Chacon** on October 17, and composer and digital looping pioneer **Pamela Z** on November 14. All performances in this series begin at 8 p.m. and admission to the venue is free. Ticket reservations are encouraged at [bemiscenter.org/events](https://bemiscenter.org/events).

The vision for LOW END as a venue was born in tandem with Bemis Center's [Sound Art + Experimental Music program](#), which also launched in 2019 with major support from the Mellon Foundation. With the goal of creating a truly unique environment to elevate the

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underrecognized field of sound art and experimental music, 149 musicians have visited the stage at LOW END, including 18 from outside of the United States. The results have been “phenomenally received” by audience members who have visited the space, according to Bemis Center Executive Director Chris Cook.

“Over the past five years, we have witnessed a distinct and steadily growing community of visitors and supporters embracing this space and the nontraditional performances happening in it,” Cook said. “Patrons of music and art come to discover the convergence of multiple forms of media, while the artists who have performed here have broadly leveraged their experiences at LOW END as sounding boards for new work, launch pads for new projects, and anchor points for national and global tours. Bemis Center is honored to exist among our peers carrying out this work.”

A limited-pressing vinyl record, *5 Years @ LOW END*, will be released this September. The double-album compilation features tracks by 13 artists representing the overall breadth of experimental music presented at LOW END since its opening, including the late jaimie branch — for whom the album is partly dedicated — and others. Available for purchase at performances this fall and free for Bemis Members at the Axial level and above, this vinyl was created with support from the 2023–2024 New Music USA Organization Fund and the Mammel Family Foundation.

Anniversary celebrations also include a craft beer collaboration with Nebraska brewery Zipline Brewing Co. In what will be the second creative partnership with Bemis Center, Zipline will brew a recipe inspired by the music and atmosphere of LOW END and the work of featured artist Laura Ortman. The beer will be available at the venue during the fall performances and at Zipline’s Downtown Omaha Taproom (721 N. 14th St.).

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### **Moor Mother (Philadelphia, PA)**

**Saturday, September 7 at 8 p.m.**

Camae Ayewa ([Moor Mother](#)) is a national and international touring musician, poet, visual artist, and Professor of Composition at the USC Thornton School of Music. Her work speaks to many genres from electronic to free jazz and classical music. Ayewa’s work has been featured at the Guggenheim Museum, The Met, Carnegie Mellon, Carnegie Hall, Documenta 15, the Berlin Jazz Festival, and the Glastonbury Festival. *Moor Mother performed as part of the Virtual @ LOW END series in 2020.*

### **Laura Ortman (Brooklyn, NY)**

**Thursday, September 12 at 8 p.m.**

A soloist musician, composer and vibrant collaborator, [Laura Ortman](#) (White Mountain Apache) creates across multiple platforms, including recorded albums, live performances, and filmic and artistic soundtracks. She has collaborated with artists such as Tony Conrad, Jock Soto, Raven Chacon, Nanobah Becker, Okkyung Lee, Martin Bisi, Jeffrey Gibson, Caroline Monnet, Tanya Lukin Linklater, Martha Colburn, New Red Order, and as part of the trio, In Defense of Memory. An inquisitive and exquisite violinist, Ortman is versed in Apache violin, piano, electric guitar, keyboards, and amplified violin, and often sings through a megaphone. She is a producer of capacious field recordings. *Laura Ortman first performed at LOW END in 2019.*

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## **Arushi Jain (San Francisco, CA)**

**Thursday, October 3 at 8 p.m.**

[Arushi Jain](#) is a modular synthesist, singer, producer, radio host, and engineer with an unorthodox vision of a centuries-old tradition — one that's electronic and resolutely DIY. Her compositions are inspired by Hindustani classical ragas, explored in an aesthetic that is contemporary and current. Her music is a unique reinterpretation of her two contrasting worlds colliding. *Arushi Jain performed as part of the Virtual @ LOW END series in 2021.*

## **Raven Chacon (Albuquerque, NM and Red Hook, NY)**

**Thursday, October 17 at 8 p.m.**

[Raven Chacon](#) is a composer, performer, and installation artist born at Fort Defiance, Navajo Nation. A recording artist over the span of 22 years, Chacon has appeared on over eighty releases on national and international labels. He has exhibited, performed, or had works performed at LACMA, the Whitney Biennial, Borealis Festival, SITE Santa Fe, the Kennedy Center, and more. *Raven Chacon was Bemis Center's inaugural Sound Art + Experimental Music Artist-in-Residence in Summer 2019 and serves on the program's advisory committee.*

## **Pamela Z (San Francisco, CA)**

**Thursday, November 14 at 8 p.m.**

[Pamela Z](#) is a composer/performer and media artist working with voice, live electronic processing, sampled sound, and video. A pioneer of live digital looping techniques, she processes her voice in real time to create dense, complex sonic layers. Her solo works combine experimental extended vocal techniques, operatic bel canto, found objects, text, and sampled concrete sounds. She uses MAX MSP and Isadora software on a MacBook Pro along with custom MIDI controllers that allow her to manipulate sound and image with physical gestures. Her performances range in scale from small concerts in galleries to large-scale multimedia works in theaters and concert halls. In addition to her performances, she has a growing body of installation works using multi-channel sound and video. *Pamela Z performed as part of the Virtual @ LOW END series in 2021.*

## **ABOUT LOW END**

LOW END is Bemis Center's music venue and an integral part of the Sound Art + Experimental Music Program, which also includes short-term and 12-week sound artist residencies. The unique artist-designed space located in Bemis's lower level includes custom seating, theatrical lighting, an anamorphic perspective stage, and industrial-grade audio equipment. LOW END features free live shows by local, national, and international sound artists, composers, and experimental musicians. These performances aim to not only build new audiences and a greater appreciation for nontraditional forms of music but also to liberate artists to take risks and present truly avant-garde work.

LOW END is curated by Bemis Center's Chief Curator + Director of Programs Rachel Adams, in consultation with Keith Rodger, Sound Program Technician, and the Sound Art + Experimental Music Program Advisory Committee. Committee members included Raven Chacon, Ami Dang, Marcus Fischer, Regina Greene, Molly Joyce, Robert Aiki Aubrey Lowe, and Juanjose Rivas, along with Bemis's Rachel Adams, Chris Cook, and Keith Rodger.

LOW END performances and Bemis Center's Sound Art + Experimental Music Program are made possible by the Mellon Foundation.

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## ABOUT BEMIS CENTER

Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts facilitates the creation, presentation, and understanding of contemporary art through an international residency program, exhibitions, and educational programs to inspire an open and diverse dialogue on the critical issues that give shape and meaning to the human condition.

Learn more at [bemiscenter.org](http://bemiscenter.org).

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Media Kit, includes photos, logos, graphics, and playlist: [bemiscenter.org/media/pdfs/Press-Kit-5-Years-at-LOW-END.pdf](http://bemiscenter.org/media/pdfs/Press-Kit-5-Years-at-LOW-END.pdf)

Website: [bemiscenter.org/LOW-END](http://bemiscenter.org/LOW-END)

Instagram: [@bemiscenter](https://www.instagram.com/bemiscenter)

Facebook: [@bemiscenter](https://www.facebook.com/bemiscenter)

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*In the lead-up to LOW END's fall 2019 opening, graduate students participating in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's design-build program, FACT (Fabrication and Construction Team), worked in close collaboration with Jeff Day, UNL professor and architect with Actual Architecture, artist and carpenter Sean Ward, musicians, sound engineers, mechanical experts, and Bemis staff to envision the new facilities. Photos by Colin Conces.*

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