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HIGH CONCEPT LABS ANNOUNCES DEPARTURE OF ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

CHICAGO, IL—High Concept Labs (HCL) announces today the upcoming departure of its Artistic Director, Yolanda Cesta Cursach Montilla.

Since assuming the role in 2019, following the successes of previous Artistic Director Billie Howard, Cursach Montilla has brought extensive experience as a performing arts curator as well as a robust global network of creative partners to the benefit of HCL. She also brought many new developments to the organization, including significant revisions of HCL's flagship residency program, including the addition of a formalized year-long post-residency fellowship opportunity, providing additional studio access as well as a continuation of curatorial and production support.

Cursach Montilla also initiated HCL's LabX and LabE programs. LabX is a curated residency that promotes new work development through international exchange. LabE is an ongoing program designed to enable a vibrant disabled artist ecosystem and address the needs and interests of disabled artists through regular gatherings including community-building events and in-progress showings.

During her tenure as Artistic Director, Cursach Montilla played an important role in the emergence of new partnerships for HCL with a variety of organizations and supporters, and in the evolution of pre-existing ones. She has also sought to improve and expand access to HCL's services.

Kevin Simmons, who founded High Concept Labs nearly fifteen years ago with friend and Founding Artistic Director, Molly Feingold, said: "Yolanda cares holistically about not just the artists' work, but about their well-being, broadly defined. Her big heart, sharp mind, and deeply informed intuition have led to structures and strategies for HCL to maximize its impact on the city's creative ecology, especially to the benefit of artists who may otherwise encounter systemic challenges to the development of their networks and practices. We thank her for her work and wish her well."

Cursach Montilla's last day as Artistic Director of High Concept Labs will be June 28th. The Board of Directors will commence its search for a new Artistic Director, to serve as Co-Director in partnership with Managing Director Angee Lennard, in early July.

About High Concept Laboratories NFP

High Concept Labs (HCL) strengthens the creative sector by providing accessible flexible residencies for artists across disciplines interested in experimentation, discovery, exchange, and risk. HCL meets artists where they are with programming that raises visibility and provides critical investment across every stage in the development of new work. HCL's core activity is its multifaceted residency program. Artists receive studio space, administrative and production assistance, equipment access, curatorial consultation, and documentation services.

HCL is supported in part by The MacArthur Funds for Arts and Culture at The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, the Walder Foundation, Ruth Arts Foundation, Illinois Arts Council Agency, The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, The Martha Strughers Farley and Donald C. Farley, Jr. Family Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, The National Performance Network Creation & Development Fund, and individual donors. HCL's venue and programming partners include Monira Foundation, Experimental Station, Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Chicago Dancemakers Forum, Bodies of Work, and more.

For more information, visit highconceptlabs.org.

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