

EDGY OFFERINGS *at* MITCHELL CENTER'S COUNTERCURRENT

This spring's **CounterCurrent** festival addresses social justice, history, memory, diversity in our city, and the refugee experience. However, not all the 10 happenings over six days — Tuesday through Sunday, April 18 through 23 — are geopolitical. Artist **Suzanne Bocanegra** looks back on a strange rural childhood living across from the Chicken Ranch brothel in La Grange. The great art critic **Raphael Rubinstein**, a visiting professor at University of Houston, collaborates with **Heather Bause** on 50 site-specific installations on the UH Central campus. Houston dance critic **Nancy Wozny** co-curates *Ten Tiny Dances* for a miniscule stage, sited within the cavernous former Barbara Jordan Post Office downtown. And late American literary master **Donald Barthelme's** *Snow White* (not the Disney version) is performed by

The Catastrophic Theatre. The free festival is produced and underwritten by the **University of Houston Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts**, in collaboration with at least half a dozen presenting partners, including **Project Row Houses**, where **Kevin Beasley** creates a light-and-sound work for the Third Ward music mecca **Eldorado Ballroom**. Mitchell Center program director **Pia Agrawal** curates year four of this immersive performing arts platform, founded by Mitchell director **Karen Farber**. *Gratis, but space is limited; event reservations required via countercurrentfestival.org*. Catherine D. Ansporn



DARBY PHOTO CREATIVE



ALAN OKEN

LIGHT UP THE WORLD

We tend to take light for granted. For those who live in the world's affluent countries, it's always there at the flick of a switch or the touch of a smartphone. But for much of the world, light's power is a miracle maker.



Have a steady source of it, and your world changes. It makes the future seem a lot less dark, too.

In the developing world, 1.5 billion people still eagerly await such a moment. That's the number of people on earth who live without electricity. It's a staggering number, one that becomes even more stark when you realize how dangerous that makes everyday activities. All of which makes *PaperCity's* choice for this year's Corporate Outreach Initiative an easy one. We're adopting Direct Energy's Luci Lights for 2017. The energy giant provides MPOWERD's innovative Luci Lights to homes in the developing world — inflatable solar lights that are waterproof and last up to 12 hours on one solar charge. Put them in the sun, and you'll have both a lantern and emergency

light at night.

From the Luci Lights campaign to the \$5 million donation made to Texas Children's Hospital — the largest corporate gift ever to a Texas Children's campaign — Direct Energy has proven to be a company that cares. Charity is part of its corporate culture, with more than 6,000 Direct Energy employees supporting causes and charities, using their free time to make a difference. That fits the city. Charity Navigator — an independent charity-monitoring service — ranked Houston the most charitable city in America in 2016.

PaperCity hosts an event next month to promote the Luci Lights program. But one way to contribute is to sign up for Direct Energy's Give Brighter 12 plan. When you do, you'll receive one Luci Light, and another will be sent to someone across the globe to light their way. directenergy.com/givebrighter. Chris Baldwin

MENIL 30TH ANNIVERSARY BALL

Save the Date
Saturday,
December 2, 2017

THE MENIL COLLECTION

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