Lewis Center for the Arts presents *Excess*
*A performance work by senior Alex Quetell that builds and deconstructs a party*

**Photo caption:** Items that will be part of Alex Quetell’s performance work *Excess*
**Photo credit:** Alex Quetell

**What:** *Excess*, a new, interactive performance work that builds and deconstructs a party to reveal the dissonances propagated in the human pursuit of technology and progress. Themes of nature, classism, and oppression bubble up from chthonic depths like champagne in this multimedia production

**Who:** Choreographed and directed by Alex Quetell, a senior in the Programs in Dance and Visual Arts, along with the performers

**When:** April 27 and 28 at 8:30 p.m. and April 29 at 8:00 and 10:30 p.m.

**Where:** Patricia and Ward Hagan ’48 Dance Studio at 185 Nassau St., Princeton

**Free and open to the public,** however participation at each performance is limited and reservations are recommended at [arts.princeton.edu/excess](http://arts.princeton.edu/excess)
(Princeton, NJ) The Lewis Center for the Arts’ Programs in Dance and Visual Arts at Princeton University will present a multimedia, interactive performance work conceived by senior Alex Quetell that builds and deconstructs a party to reveal the dissonances propagated in the human pursuit of technology and progress. Performances will be held April 27 and 28 at 8:30 p.m. and April 29 at 8:00 and 10:30 p.m. at the Patricia and Ward Hagan’48 Dance Studio at 185 Nassau Street. The performances are free and open to the public, however participation at each performance is limited and reservations are recommended at arts.princeton.edu/excess.

Quetell is majoring in visual arts through a collaborative program between the Department of Art and Archaeology and the Program in Visual Arts at Princeton, as well as pursuing a certificate in the Program in Dance. Excess is his senior thesis project that brings both areas of study together.

As an artist, Quetell has been exploring immersive theater, a participatory experience where the audience moves beyond being observers to become co-actors and co-creators of the storytelling process usually in a nontraditional performance space. Excess was inspired in part by Punchdrunk Theater’s Sleep No More, a staging of Macbeth. The production has been running since 2011 in a formerly abandoned club in the Chelsea neighborhood of New York City renamed the McKittrick Hotel. This past summer with funding through the Lewis Center, Quetell studied intensively with the choreographer for Sleep No More. Last spring he took a Princeton Atelier course, “Waking the Dead” co-taught by graphic novelist Kevin Pyle and Jennine Willett, Co-Artistic Director of Third Rail Projects, a dance theater company known for site-specific and immersive works. The course culminated in a production titled The Last Boat, an original immersive theater experience of movement, installation, images, and text inspired by cultural meditations on mortality presented in the basement of a building on campus. Quetell has also been a featured dancer in Lewis Center productions, performing works by Francesca Harper, John Jasperse, Stephen Petronio, and Jodi Gates, and in musical productions including Singin’ in the Rain and Hero.
Quetell’s concept for *Excess* arose in summer 2015 at ImPulsTanz - Vienna International Dance Festival, where Quetell attended several semi-formal artist parties and receptions. He observed that artists in all genres participate in post-show “schmoozing” as a means of generating networks and connections within their communities. In order to continue producing their work, he notes artists are obliged to participate in this party world within a precarious structure of patronage and funding. This year at Princeton Quetell notes that he attended similar upperclassman nights that were intended—at least for the students pursuing prestigious scholarships—as opportunities to cultivate career skills in cocktail party small talk. He felt these events fostered an environment centered on exclusivity and raised questions about classism and oppression. Quetell notes the production also explores themes of nature versus technology, stimulated by the dematerialization effect of digital culture and its potential consequences on human physicality.

At the performance the audience will be welcomed and directed to one of two areas of the performance space – one representing an elite party and the other a dystopian environment. As the evening unfolds the barrier between the two settings and groups breaks down and conflict ensues.

The all-student cast includes Elena Anamos ’19, Caroline Bailey’20, Erin Berl ’17, Clark Griffin ’18, Jhor van der Horst ’19 and Mica O'Brien ’17.

Lighting for the production is by Kate Ashton, a New York City-based designer, with music and sound design by Princeton student David Sahar ’17.

To learn more about this event, the Programs in Dance and Visual Arts, and the more than 100 other performances, exhibitions, readings, screenings, concerts and lectures presented each year at the Lewis Center, most of them free, visit arts.princeton.edu.

###