

# SWELL



13 JULY 2019 • 8:30 PM • HERE ARTS CENTER  
14 JULY 2019 • 4:00 PM • HERE ARTS CENTER

# SUBLET SERIES @HERE 2018-19 SEASON

#HERE  
@HEREARTS

## Welcome!

Thank you for coming to *SWELL*, a SubletSeries Co-Op presentation. This program provides artists with discounted space and equipment, as well as technical support.

HERE also supports the work of artists at all stages in their careers through our HERE Artist Residency Program (HARP), which develops and produces the work of our 10-13 resident artists, and Visiting Artist presentations for adult and family audiences. Please check out our other performances and events at [HERE.org](http://HERE.org).

Like all the work at HERE, this SubletSeries Co-Op presentation was curated based on the strength and uniqueness of the artist's vision.

We hope to see you HERE again soon.

Best,

*Kristin*

**KRISTIN MARTING**  
Founding Artistic Director

## SUBLETSERIES CO-OP

Check out the [full line-up](#):  
NOW - SEP 1

### HERE SUPPORT

HERE is extremely grateful for the support and encouragement of an important group of Foundations, Corporations, Government Agencies, Elected Officials, and dedicated individuals. We would not be HERE without them.

### GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

HERE'S programming is made possible with Public Funds from: National Endowment for the Arts; New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, Office of the Mayor of New York, and Speaker Corey Johnson; The Office of Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer; and New York State Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick. We are extremely grateful for the support and advocacy of all of our dedicated elected officials: Senator Charles E. Schumer, Senator Kirsten R. Gillibrand, Representative Jerrold L. Nadler, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, Mayor Bill de Blasio, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer and the Cultural Affairs Committee of the City Council, and State Senator Brad M. Hoylman.

### PRIVATE AND CORPORATE SUPPORT PROVIDED BY

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HERE, in partnership with Resident Playwright Taylor Mac, is a participant in the Mellon Foundation's National Playwright Residency Program administered in partnership with HowlRound. HERE is a proud member of the Hudson Sq Connection & Lower Manhattan Arts League & The National Opera America Center & TCG.

**“Walking in Circles: A Diary”**

*Music: Joshua Cerdania, Lyrics: Joshua Cerdania & Melisa Tien*

*Soprano: Jasmine Muhammad, Countertenor: Jonathan May, Tenor: Kannan Vasudevan, Piano: Mila Henry*

Sunday - Manhattan from the air. In Tagalog: *kilig*.

(Home. Landed around 6:30. The view of Manhattan from the air was breathtaking. I lament that there is no equivalent in the English language of the Tagalog word *kilig*—that is how I feel about this city.)

Tuesday - Strange dream. Filipinos getting ambush-interviewed about Bernstein.

(Overslept. Strange dream: On TV, common Filipinos getting ambush-interviewed about Leonard Bernstein. The hell would they know about Leonard Bernstein?)

Saturday - “Pinoy pride” boggles me.

(The idea that I ought to be proud about an accident of birth.)

Thursday - When I compose...

(I wish to beat these Americans at their own game.)

Sunday.

(I won’t give in to anyone else’s idea of what Filipino music ought to sound like.)

Wednesday - Central Park covered in snow.

(Today Central Park is covered in snow. I love this city.)

Saturday - Oh, oh.

(I cannot relate to Filipinos. Provincial life, soap operas.)

Friday, Friday.

(Flushing Meadows-Corona Park. Warm and sunny and lonely so deep in Queens.)

Friday.

(I can always count on Bryant Park. The city keeps you moving.)

Monday - Five months. Disbelief.

Thursday.

(I could have been a good lawyer. I would have been pretty miserable.)

Thursday.

(Consumed by the desire to create. There’s music to be written.)

Saturday.

(Some people don’t wanna live this way. I do, even when I say I don’t.)

Wednesday.

(The pointlessness of living. Sometimes you feel like shit.)

Sunday.

(I wish we had a real leader. I wish I were a part of that...)

Sunday.

(Central Park. Walking in circles.)

Wednesday.

(For the first time, I consider a life outside New York.)

Monday.

(I've been toying...I've been homesick.)

Monday.

(As of today I'm legally authorized to work in the US. But what does work mean for a composer?)

Thursday.

(I've been in New York two years, the longest time I've ever spent without seeing home. The real beginning.)

### **"A Friend and a Zorro"**

*Music: Kamala Sankaram, Lyrics: Melisa Tien (based on an interview with Dr. R. Sankaram)*

*Tenor: Kannan Vasudevan, Cello: Jennifer Shaw, Piano: Mila Henry*

As a boy I could see myself on a movie screen:  
Pretty places, pretty people, fancy clothes, fancy  
words.  
I believed in make-believe.  
I believed.  
It did not believe in me.

As a man, nephrology was my occupation,  
setting in motion a journey from Andhra Pradesh to  
California.  
But I still believed in make-believe.  
I believed.  
It still did not believe in me.

One day I drove from home to Hollywood to see  
Pretty places, pretty people, fancy clothes, fancy  
words.  
They were all artificial: merely  
Sets, actors, costumes, and scripts.  
Was this what I once believed?

In my field, there is only truth--in life, in death, in pain.  
In my field I must be true to my patients  
and tell them what is happening.

I believe in them.  
I believe.  
And they believe in me.

In my field I must be true to my patients,  
but once, I dressed as Zorro.  
Once I dressed as Zorro for them to make them smile.  
Pants, cape, shirt and mask.  
They forgot where they were  
and asked me for my autograph.  
I've been a friend to them.  
A friend and a Zorro.  
I've been a friend and Zorro.

Movies may be bright and synthetic.  
Technicolor dreams fade slow into reality.  
But saving life is a kind of art.  
Saving life.  
Saving life is a kind of art.  
Saving life is a kind, a kind of art.  
A kind of art. Of art.  
Of art.



**“Homebound”**

*Music: Polina Nazaykinskaya, Lyrics: Konstantin Soukhovetski  
Countertenor: Jonathan May, Piano: Mila Henry*

Trav'ling, trav'ling....  
searching alone  
For a home of my own

Trav'ling, trav'ling....  
W'thout courage or fear  
Beyond horizon or near

For the wind is my true home  
As I gate-check my life  
And it comforts me while I roam  
Through the night and sunrise

I once lived in The North  
Where mountains and sea  
Were so vast....and the earth  
Under ice you won't see

I once lived in The East  
In the sunrise' abode  
Where blossoms on trees  
Were so white... like it's snowed

I once lived in The West  
With its forests and reefs  
Yet I was but a guest  
Wand'ring towards the cliffs

But I long for The South  
Where the warmth of the sun  
Is eternal... Then search for my home  
will be done

## **"Gypsy Cab"**

*Music: Jorge Sosa, Lyrics: Melisa Tien*

*Tenor: Kannan Vasudevan, Cello: Jennifer Shaw, Violin: Naomi Florin, Piano: Mila Henry*

I have a story for you.  
What a story I have.  
A story of what happened to me when I first landed in this "Sleepless City"  
Are you sitting down?

The moment I landed,  
My heart was racing!  
American soil!  
I'll always,  
always remember  
those three looming letters:  
JFK.

Here comes my bag,  
Here's all I have,  
All I own falling  
with a thump,  
rolling by.  
I hoist it from the side.  
Ear to ear I smile  
toward this new New York.  
New York, New York.

Something is beginning--I feel it deep in my chest  
Faint and barely stirring, but unmistakable.  
Have I changed, stepping off the plane?  
Have I left another self behind?  
What else am I leaving?  
Where to from here?

'Hey, primo!  
Primo!  
A man calls softly,  
A man at my elbow.  
Interrupting my day dream  
Hey Primo  
Are you lost?  
'What are you looking for?'  
He asks.

I'm looking for the M-one-sixteen bus  
to First and Paladino,  
where my aunt is waiting.  
'Where are you from?'

You sound like my son.  
Come. I'll take you there.'

We are both from the coast of Oaxaca.  
We have the same blood.  
Could that be true?  
We laugh. We cry.  
American soil!  
We are both from the coast of Oaxaca.  
He talks. He drives.  
He used to be a farmer.  
Now a cab driver!  
Could this be true?  
American soil!

Primo, Listen', he says  
Fourteen years ago  
I came to New York to make some money to help my mother--  
she needed an operation.  
I never returned.  
And here I am, young again;  
You are me, young again.  
Sangre de mi sangre,  
blood of my blood!  
Blood of my blood!  
Blood of my blood!

How I wish I could feel the ocean breeze  
upon my face,  
upon my face.  
What I would give to feel the soft sand  
beneath my feet,  
beneath my feet.  
You carry the sun and the sea with you,  
the sun and the sea with you  
from our homeland.  
From our home.  
How can I thank you for taking me back?  
For taking me home?

Primo, Listen, I want to help you  
do you have what you need?  
Social security number,  
An American phone number,  
Do you need a job?'

What do I do with a number  
when I don't have a phone!

Why do I need a Social Security Number if I'm not planning to retire here?

But I need a job

I would work hard for you

I would work hard for you

Listen primo:

'Meserole Avenue in Brooklyn.

You'll go to any hair salon

where they sound like us,

they'll sell you a phone

unblocked, prepaid in cash,

no questions asked.'

And for a social security number?

'You'll go to Roosevelt Avenue

I know a guy.

They look like

the real thing.'

And 'If you want a job,

A job,

my cousin works in construction,

He needs men like you

he pays in cash, no questions asked

here's his number.'

I shake his hand,

I hug him tight.

I hug him

'One more thing, primo he says

You owe two hundred dollars

for this ride.'

Two hundred dollars?

How can that be?

He cites a boss he needs to pay,

tolls along the way,

says I'll make it up in no time

working for his cousin.

I know now, that ride cost no more than sixty.

But he was blood from my blood

Blood from my blood

But he was blood from my blood

Blood from my blood

Welcome to New York!

New York, New York

New York

That's my story

Do you want to hear it again?



## **“Speaking of Water”**

*Music: Carolyn Chen, Lyrics: Melisa Tien*

*Soprano: Jasmine Muhammad, Countertenor: Jonathan May, Cello: Jennifer Shaw, Violin: Naomi Florin, Piano: Mila Henry*

(looking eastward)

An unfinished sea--  
three strokes  
to show  
we are speaking of water,  
two more for  
the beginning of infinity--  
this is what I know.  
This is what I know.

I know nothing  
of where I'm from.  
Where I'm from  
Where I'm from  
I only know where I go.  
The other side  
of the sea,  
a cousin resides.  
Until recently I thought  
that it would be later in life  
that I would get to peer  
into that strange mirror.  
that it would be later in life  
that I would get to peer  
into that strange mirror.

I wonder  
as sky rolls by my window  
rolls by my window  
'What will this week bring?  
Will you know me by looking?  
Who resembles me?  
Who resembles me?  
Who resembles me?  
Who resembles me?  
Is air as rare,  
as preserving,  
as I've heard  
Is air as rare,  
as preserving,

(looking westward)

An unfinished sea--  
three strokes  
to show  
I am thinking of water,  
two more for  
the beginning of infinity--  
this is how I dream.  
This is how I dream.  
This is how I dream.

I know nothing  
of where I'll be.  
Where I'll be.  
I know only where I am.  
The other side  
of the sea,  
a wilderness lies.  
Until recently I thought  
that it would be later in life  
that I would get a glimpse  
of that great expanse.  
that it would be later in life  
that I would get a glimpse  
of that great expanse.

I wonder  
as haze sneaks by my window  
'What will cousin think?  
Will she know this is constant?  
What is life like there?  
What is life like there?  
What is life like there?  
What is life like there?  
What is life like there?  
Is choice as vast,  
as unending,  
Is choice as vast,  
as unending,  
Unending, unending,  
as I've heard it to be?'

as I've heard it to be?  
as I've heard it to be?'

I hear people laughing  
in our common tongue.  
I invent what they say.  
'Here, we're above everything:  
hurt,  
belonging,  
wanting,  
identity.'

Here,  
I am the unfinished sea:  
three strokes  
we are speaking of water speaking  
speaking of water speaking,  
speaking of water speaking,  
speaking of water,  
speaking of water,  
speaking of water speaking,  
two more,  
the beginning of infinity.  
infinity.

I hear people laughing  
in our common tongue.  
I invent what they say.  
'Here, we're above everyone,  
God,  
patrolmen,  
neighbors,  
the government.'

Here,  
I dream of another sea:  
three strokes,  
we are speaking  
Speaking of water speaking  
Speaking of water speaking  
Speaking of water speaking  
Speaking  
Speaking  
Speaking of water  
two more,  
the beginning of infinity.  
infinity.

### **"Don't Start Walking"**

*Music and Lyrics: Or Matias*

*Tenor: Kannan Vasudevan, Cello: Jennifer Shaw, Violin: Naomi Florin, Piano: Mila Henry*

Those eyes are open wide.  
The toothy little screeches,  
As you move side by side  
To find the palm that reaches  
As if you know to trust  
A giant who you just  
Met moments ago

And now the journey's long  
To have them understand you  
And soon they'll all be wrong  
With everything they hand you.  
And I'll be watching too,  
But whatever you do,  
I'm begging you, please

Don't start walking  
Don't start walking without me  
Don't start walking  
Don't start walking without me yet  
I'm on my way, way, way back home.

I'm the first to make you laugh.  
The first to hear your giggle.  
So take your nap and after you wake,  
I'll make you funny faces and wiggle  
Every little toe.  
But in a week, I'll go.  
So promise me you

Won't start walking  
Don't start walking without me  
Don't start walking  
Don't start walking without me yet  
'Cause I know it's my fault  
That I've chosen to live  
In a land with a language  
You can't understand  
But I'm working my way up  
I'm working! Working! Working!  
Working, all the time, it seems.  
So go take your nap,  
And soon I'll drink myself to sleep  
And maybe finally I'll see  
Your first time walking  
In our dreams.

Don't start walking  
Don't start walking without me  
Don't start walking  
Don't start walking without me  
Don't start walking  
Don't start walking without me  
Don't start walking  
Don't start  
Don't start walking  
Don't start  
Don't start walking without me yet  
I'm on my way, way, way,  
I'm on my way, way, way back home.

## **“Copper Rings”**

*Music: Izzi Ramkissoon, Lyrics: Izzi Ramkissoon & Melisa Tien*

*Soprano: Jasmine Muhammad, Cello: Jennifer Shaw*

Copper rings staining the soul  
from brown to green  
metallic surface of  
too thin Liberty  
threading wire  
through a conductor  
flagging the terminal  
-Be ready to transfer-  
one to the next to the  
next to the next light  
from within  
an idea  
two plates  
two separate states  
the gap bridged  
each cell connecting  
two extremes  
things that were owed  
a flickering will  
reacting, attracting, draining.  
The concern of a citizen can kill.  
The lights dim.  
The currents cannot build.

In dark, opposition grows  
In light, everything shows

A graphite outline  
humans intertwined  
generation  
generations  
plus and minus each time  
Coils around grandmother's arms  
pulsing  
amplifying  
her memory of the ground

A nod to a cycle  
An ode to a series  
of connections wet and oxidized  
Resist, remember  
the potential threat  
terminal corrosion  
Forgive, forgive, forgive  
and not forget.

In dark, opposition grows  
In light, everything shows

Con-struction  
Con-cession  
Con-nection  
Con-servation  
Con-clusion  
Con-versation  
Con-solidation  
Con-firmation

Bat-ter-y Batteries Bat-trees Bat-tree

Collectors connecting, all-consuming, progression  
Emitters spitting, ever-changing, regression  
Push, pull. Push, pull. Push, pull.  
Time. Connect. Time. Discharge.

In dark, opposition grows  
In light, everything shows  
In dark, opposition grows  
In light, everything shows



**“What is tea, what is water”**

*Music and lyrics: Deepali Gupta*

*Tenor: Kannan Vasudevan, Cello: Jennifer Shaw, Violin: Naomi Florin*

What is tea?  
What is water?  
Who am I?

main ek machhalee hoon  
I am a fish

What is tea?  
What is water?  
Who am I?

I wish I could say  
anything  
that comes to me

I am someone  
who has lost  
a language.

I swim in words  
and wish  
the language  
lived in me

Someone  
who never had  
the words  
to begin with!

Chaay kya hai?  
Paanee kya.  
Main kaun hoon?

Who doesn't know  
what he's doing!

What is tea?  
What is water?  
Who am I?  
Who am I?  
Who am I?

I'm learning Hindi  
on Duolingo  
I'm learning Hindi  
of all things  
on Duolingo.

Main ek bachha hoon  
Main ek beta hoon  
Main ek chhaatr hoon

And the things  
Duolingo says to me  
are strange.

Merre paas sangeet hai  
Merre paas aandolan hai  
Merre paas sudhaar kee kamara hai  
Merre paas sangeet hai  
Merre paas aandolan hai  
Merre paas sudhaar kee kamara hai

chaay kya hai  
paanee kya hai  
main kaun hoon

I have music.  
I have movement.  
I have room for improvement.  
I have room for improvement.

yah mor chaay  
peeta hai

this peacock  
drinks tea

books are my friends  
kitaaben mere dost hain

**“Sleep, Sleep Nations”**

*Music: Tamar Muskal, Lyrics: Stavit Allweis*

*Countertenor: Jonathan May, Cello: Jennifer Shaw, Violin: Naomi Florin, Piano: Mila Henry*

If  
you up  
and move  
from land  
to land

born in the sky  
is a third eye  
you, who've done it  
will understand.

I still run,  
a child,  
the cool alleys  
to a Thursday market  
awash in sun.

my sense of spice  
my scent of thyme  
Cardamom  
coriander  
my grandmother's tongue  
my grandfather's wine  
the sweet smell  
of greens cooking  
a type  
that here  
cannot be found.

Dried limes  
a sense  
of endless time.

I still  
hear the voices  
unencumbered  
arabesques  
of laughter

fabrics  
hang  
in colors

in front  
of every house.

Sleep  
sleep  
nations,  
as  
the  
crow  
flies.

It's  
only  
seven  
centimeters  
from here  
to  
very far.

Continents  
of clouds  
sweep by  
and beyond them  
continents of sand  
in continents of water  
shifting under hand.

We land where we land  
adrift like mushroom spores  
like dandelion feathers  
in the skies.

To love a home  
is to love a home  
no matter  
where  
it  
lies.

My grandmothers smile  
(Or is it my mother's?)  
the warmth  
of their  
collective hands.

In words made for music  
they still  
lull me to sleep

in  
silent  
sound.

Home is a poem now,  
a childhood museum  
kept sacred  
in fairy tale land.

And you, my new lover  
took my arm so briskly  
nearly pulled it out  
to storm your highways  
grinding our motors,  
spinning time.

I am smitten  
drowned in your accent  
your foreign charm  
the sugar veiled aggression  
as you flight  
aim your plight  
to the top of the beyond.

Home is a poem now.

**“to belong”**

*Music and lyrics: Justine F. Chen*

*Soprano: Jasmine Muhammad, Countertenor: Jonathan May, Tenor: Kannan Vasudevan, Cello: Jennifer Shaw,*

*Violin: Naomi Florin, Piano: Mila Henry*

To be  
To belong  
To have  
To long  
To long to have  
To hope to have  
To hope to be  
To be  
To belong  
Too long  
To long  
To dream  
To hope  
To long  
- to live  
- to hope



# CREATIVE TEAM



MELISA TIEN (Producer/Lyricist) is a New York-based playwright, lyricist, and librettist. She is the author of the plays *Untitled Landscape*, *The Boyd Show*, *Best Life*, *Yellow Card Red Card*, *Familium Vulgare*, and *Refrain*. Her new musical *Mary*, co-written with composer Matt Frey, will have a workshop at New Dramatists in Fall 2019. Her play *Best Life* was selected to participate in the 2018 Bushwick Starr Reading Series and will be part of JACK's inaugural season in its new space in Brooklyn. Her play *Yellow Card Red Card* was presented as part of the Ice Factory Festival in 2017 at the New Ohio Theatre, and prior to that had a workshop production at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in 2016. In addition to being a resident playwright at New Dramatists, Melisa is a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellow in Playwriting/Screenwriting, a Walter E. Dakin Fellow at the Sewanee Writers' Conference, and a recipient of the Theater Masters Visionary Playwright Award. She has been a resident of the MacDowell Colony and the Millay Colony, and was a member of the 2010-2012 Women's Project Lab. She has presented work at the Great Plains Theatre Conference, the Women Playwrights International Conference, and the National Asian American Theatre Conference and Festival. She holds a BA from UCLA, an MFA from Columbia University, and a culinary diploma from the French Culinary Institute.



ELENA ARAOZ (Director) most recently directed the critically acclaimed Off-Broadway world premiere *Original Sound* (Cherry Lane Theatre). Upcoming productions include the world premiere opera *I Am A Dreamer Who No Longer Dreams* (White Snake Productions at The Paramount, Boston) and Migdalia Cruz's *Fur* (New York Theatre Workshop Next Door and Boundless Theatre). Other Recent NYC productions include Mac Wellman's *A Chronicle of the Madness of Small Worlds* (New York Theatre Workshop Next Door), *Kidnap Road* (La MaMa), *Alligator* (New Georges/The Sol Project), Warren Leight's *Union Square Incident* (24 Hour Plays on Broadway, American Airlines Theatre), *Architecture of Becoming* (Women's Project). And with NYC's Boundless Theatre Company: Maria Irene Fornes' plays *The Conduct of Life* and *Mud*, and Octavio Solis' *Prospect*. Most recent regional productions: *The Migration Plays* by Mfoniso Udofia, Martyna Majok, Heather Raffo, Adam Gwon, Karen Zacarias (McCarter Theatre Center), *In Between* (Walnut Street Theatre), *Sweat* (People's Light), *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare Festival St. Louis), *Azaan* (Oregon Symphony). Opera: *La Traviata* (New York City Opera/Gilman Opera House at BAM), *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Opera North), *Falstaff* and *Così fan tutte* (Brooklyn Philharmonic/Gilman Opera House at BAM), *Latin Lovers* (Glimmerglass). Faculty: Princeton University. [www.elenaaraoz.com](http://www.elenaaraoz.com)



MILA HENRY (Music Director/Pianist) is a music director and pianist whose expertise spans rock musicals to folk operas. She has performed at The Apollo and Library of Congress; toured to LA Opera and Dutch National Opera; and recorded *Voices of Women* and *Love & Trouble*. She is a member of the band Opera Cowgirls, and the Artistic Director of American Opera Projects. [milahenry.com](http://milahenry.com)



JEANETTE OI-SUK YEW (Projection Designer) is a multi-faceted NYC based theater designer in both lighting and projection. She has designed for theatre, dance, opera, musical and music performances and installation. NY Times described them as “clever” and “inventive”.



JOSHUA CERDENIA (Composer) is an internationally performed Filipino composer of orchestral, chamber, and vocal music based in New York City. His work embraces a broad range of musical styles and emotional states, from “graceful melancholy” (Star Tribune), to works that unfold “like the nascent radiance of a rising sun” (The Straits Times), as well as music that “pretty much explodes at the end” (The New York Times). An alumnus of The Juilliard School, the Peabody Institute, and the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, he has received commissions from and performances by renowned ensembles including the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, the Manila Symphony Orchestra, and the Juilliard Orchestra, which have been performed in venues such as Lincoln Center’s Alice Tully Hall in New York, Orchestra Hall in Minnesota, and the Max M Fisher Music Center in Detroit. Also active as a collaborative pianist, he has performed in venues such as the Philam Life Auditorium in Manila, the Esplanade and University Cultural Centre in Singapore, the Forbidden City Concert Hall in Beijing, the Philippine Center in New York, and Sidney Harman Hall and the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.





CAROLYN CHEN (Composer) has made music for supermarket, demolition district, and the dark. Her work reconfigures the everyday to retune habits of our ears, through sound, text, light, image, and movement. For over a decade her studies of the guqin, the Chinese 7-string zither traditionally played for private meditation in nature, has informed her thinking on listening in social spaces. Recent projects include a marble chase and commissions for Klangforum Wien and the LA Phil New Music Group. Described by The New York Times as “the evening’s most consistently alluring ... a quiet but lush meditation,” Chen’s work has been supported by the Fulbright Program, Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans, Stanford University Sudler Prize, ASCAP Foundation Fred Ho Award, and commissions from MATA Festival, impuls Festival, and Emory Planetarium. The work has been presented at festivals and exhibitions in 24 countries, at venues including Carnegie Hall and the Kitchen (New York), Disney Hall and the Geffen MOCA (Los Angeles), the Menil Collection (Houston), Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, the Guggenheim Bilbao, CYCLE Festival (Iceland), and the Institute for Provocation (Beijing). She has been fortunate to work with musicians such as SurPlus, Southland, San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Pamplemousse, Mocrepe, Curious Chamber Players, Chamber Cartel, Die Ordnung Der Dinge, orkest de ereprijs, S.E.M., red fish blue fish, Wild Rumpus, and The Syndicate for New Arts.



JUSTINE F. CHEN (Composer) Trained composer, violinist, and ballet dancer Justine F. Chen is a New York native specializing in opera and theatrical collaborations. Her highly-acclaimed collaborations include commissions from and work with such prestigious institutions as New York City Ballet, New York City Opera, JACK Quartet, International Contemporary Ensemble, American Composers Orchestra, Chicago Opera Theater, Juilliard Dance Program, New Juilliard Ensemble, Tapestry New Opera, and the Chants Libres. The New York Times has praised her work as “lyrical, atmospheric... striking... Throughout, Ms. Chen balances despair and humor,” and “blend[ing] popular dance rhythms into the kind of propulsive, emotionally resonant score that choreographers tend to dream of.” She is currently working on a full-length opera on the life of Alan Turing, commissioned by American Lyric Theater. Striving to keep classical music sustainable, education is one of her greatest priorities. To this end, she teaches at Molloy College and Third Street Settlement, and heads the music department at Pierrepont School in Westport, CT. For more information, please visit [www.justinefchen.com](http://www.justinefchen.com)



DEEPAI GUPTA (COMPOSER) is a writer and performer. Her work explores themes of mania and insanity, and their relationship to femininity. She makes work in an attempt to unravel the warped weave of narratives surrounding disorder and neurodivergence. Her music has been heard at venues such as The Public Theater, Joe’s Pub, Ars Nova, Lincoln Center Theater, The Bushwick Starr, and Judson Memorial Church—as well as many backyards and living rooms across the city. Ongoing projects as a performance artist include NO WAY TO SAY GOODBYE, OVER(REVERBERATING), and I LOVE YOU STRANGER (currently in development at Ars Nova). Recent projects as a composer include original music for MADONNA COL BAMBINO (by Sarah Einspanier, dir. Caitlin Sullivan), CUTE ACTIVIST (by Milo Cramer, dir. Morgan Green), SKI END (created by Piehole, dir. Tara Ahmedinejad), and MINOR CHARACTER (created by New Saloon, dir. Morgan Green). Her writing has been published in MOON MISSIVES (an astrology quarterly) and MUSICAL THEATER TODAY. She is an affiliated artist with Ars Nova, The Civilians and Target Margin Theater, as well as a member of the New Georges Jam and the BMI Advanced Musical Theatre Songwriting Workshop. B.A. Brown University (Weston Award, Writing for Performance). M.F.A. Tisch (Musical Theater Writing)



OR MATIAS (Composer) is a composer, lyricist, and music director. Original scores include: *The Wave* (Goodspeed Mercer Colony, Indiana University), *Rising To The Tap* (TriBeCa Performing Arts), *Things that Shape Us* (upcoming, NYC) and 4 other shows which are secretly in development. He is the 2019 Composer in Residence at SPACE on Ryder Farm. As music director: *Great Comet of 1812* (Broadway), *Octet* (Signature Theatre), *First Daughter Suite* (The Public), *Preludes* (LCT3), *Moby Dick* (A.R.T, upcoming), etc. BA: Juilliard & MFA: Tisch.



TAMAR MUSKAL (Composer) Recent and future commissions include a concerto for percussion and digital-interactive work by Daniel Rozin for Steve Schick and the American Composers Orchestra, a concerto for flutist Abigail Dolan and the Symphonova, a duet for clarinet and cello for Jo-Ann Sternberg and Michal Schmidt for the Maine Chamber Music Festival, music for a documentary film about finding a cure for blindness narrated by Robert Redford, a song cycle commissioned by ASCAP for Jo Lawry (also known as Sting's backing singer) and chamber ensemble, music for the historic film "La Venganza de Pancho Villa" for two singers, accordion, string quartet and soundtrack for the National Gallery of Art and a piano piece for pianist and Yamaha artist Gila Goldstein. Ms. Muskal has also served as the Westchester Philharmonic's education composer-in-residence in the years 2001-2004, and in that capacity composed three orchestral pieces based on students' artwork and poetry.

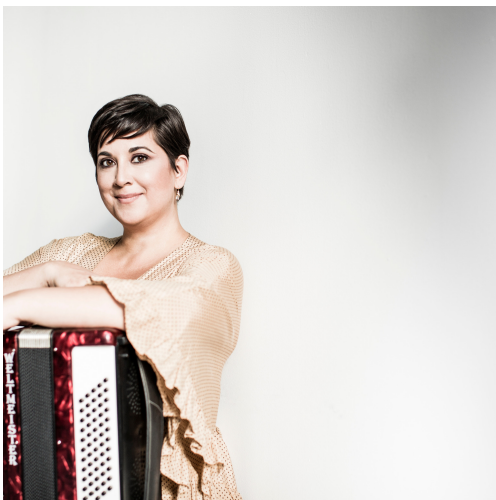


POLINA NAZAYKINSKAYA (Composer) Born in Togliatti, Russia, Polina Nazaykinskaya has been studying music since the age of four, and composed her first large-scale work at 14. She went on to create music for both chamber and full orchestras, as well as art songs, film music, musical theater works, an opera, and, recently, her first symphony "April Song". In June 2018, The RIOULT Dance NY premiered Polina's first ballet, Nostalghia. The premiere took place at The Joyce Theater in New York City. This season The Albany Symphony premiered Polina's new symphonic poem "Fenix". Polina has received many national and international awards, including the Charles Ives Scholarship from The American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowship. Polina's music has been performed and recorded by the Russian National Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, the Yale Philharmonia Orchestra, the US Army Orchestra among others. Polina has collaborated with top conductors, including Osmo Vänskä, Teodor Currentzis, Fabio Mastrangelo, and Hannu Lintu.





IZZIE RAMKISSOON (Composer) is an award-winning electro acoustic multimedia composer, performer, and sound artist. His laptop and bass are the control center of his sound. He has written works for a variety of media including theater, dance, installations, alternative controllers, and interactive multimedia. His compositions deal extensively with the use of technology in composition and have been featured at SEAMUS, NYCEMF, NIME, SPARK, LUMEN, Look and Listen Festival, Black Maria Film + Video Festival, World Maker Faire, MATA and numerous other venues and festivals, both nationally and internationally including Greece, Italy, England, Czech Republic, Norway, and the US. In his work he fuses media, technology, IDM, hardcore, classical, musique concrete and various other resources to perform interactive, improvisatory, and experimental works. Currently, Izzi is on the steering committee for the New York City Electro-acoustic Music Festival (NYCEMF), teaching music technology as an Adjunct Professor at the College of Staten Island CUNY, and is a resident of Staten Island, NYC. For more info visit [www.izzilive.com](http://www.izzilive.com)



KAMALA SANKARAM (Composer) UPCOMING: Opera on Tap/ HERE Arts Center: Looking at You. NEW YORK: PROTOTYPE Festival: Bombay Rickey Meets the Psychology of Desire, Thumbprint; Here Arts Center: Miranda, Sounding; Opera on Tap: The Parkville Murders; American Lyric Theater: Enchantress. REGIONAL: Shakespeare, Theatre Company: The Oresteia; Washington National Opera: Taking Up Serpents; Houston Grand Opera: A Rose, Monkey and Francine in the City of Tigers; Opera Ithaca: The Infinite Energy of Ada Lovelace, Opera Memphis: Formidable, LA Opera: Thumbprint. INTERNATIONAL: Tête-à-Tête Opera (London, England): Bombay Rickey Meets the Psychology of Desire. FILM: Dentist, Five Infomercials for Dentists. AWARDS: Jonathan Larson Award; Innovative Theatre Award: Best Production of a Musical (Miranda); Independent Music Awards: Best Eclectic Album (Bombay Rickey). OTHER: Concert music includes commissions by the Brooklyn Youth Chorus, Forward Music Project, Duo Cortona, Anti-Social Music, and the South Asian Symphony Orchestra, among others. Kamala is also the leader of Bombay Rickey, a critically acclaimed operatic Bollywood surf ensemble. TEACHING: SUNY Purchase: Adjunct Professor of Composition. TRAINING: New School for Social Research: PhD.



JORGE SOSA (Composer) is a Mexican-born composer, and sound artist currently residing in New York. Jorge has been collaborating with librettist Cerise Jacobs and White Snake Projects in developing two new operas: "I Am A Dreamer Who No Longer Dreams" and "Monkey," with premieres scheduled for September 2019, and 2021 in Boston. Excerpts of "Dreamer" were performed by Juventas New Music Ensemble during their "Voices of America" concert in 2019. Jorge was recently commissioned by Albany Symphony to write his work "I Dissent", based on three iconic dissenting opinions by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor. "I Dissent" was premiered in the Albany Symphony "American Music Festival" in 2019. His piece "Punto y Linea" for solo flute was featured in the 2019 London Festival of American Music, and his work "Cells" for ensemble and electronics was recently performed at the Diffrazioni Multimedia Festival in Italy, and in the International Computer Music Conference in New York City. Jorge's work "Sunrise" for orchestra was one of the winning pieces for the Allentown Symphony Orchestra "Pictures at an Exhibition 2018" composition competition. Jorge's first full-length opera, "La Reina," commissioned by American Lyric Theater, was performed in the 2016 "PROTOTYPE" festival in NY. Jorge is an Associate Professor, and Chairperson of the Music Department at Molloy College. Jorge's music is available on all the major music download sites and through the website [www.jorgesosa.com](http://www.jorgesosa.com).

# MUSICIANS



JONATHAN MAY (Countertenor) performs regularly with ensembles such as Early Music New York, Trident Ensemble, Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity, and Mark Morris Dance Group. He most recently appeared with New York City's TENET Vocal Artists in uncondacted performances of Bach's St. Matthew Passion, featuring only twelve singers and the instrumental ensemble The Sebastians. He also appeared as Testo in Academy of Sacred Drama's modern premiere of Vincenzo de Grandis' *Il Nascimento di Mose*. Other season highlights include appearances as alto soloist in C.P.E. Bach's Magnificat with American Classical Orchestra and in Handel's Dixit Dominus with Canticum Scholare; singing the role of Spirit in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* with Mark Morris Dance Group; singing Philip Glass' *Madrigal Opera* at National Sawdust; and performing Tallis' *Spem in alium* with The Tallis Scholars. He holds a degree in music from Dartmouth College.



KANNAN VASUDEVAN (Tenor) has performed in opera and oratorio from the Baroque to contemporary music. Highlights of his stage experience include the title role in *The Play of Daniel*, *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Dance Master), and *The Magic Flute* (Monostatos). He played multiple roles in Kamala Sankaram's *Thumbprint*, which premiered at the Prototype Festival and was remounted at LA Opera. Kannan has also appeared as Jesus in *A Jazz Passion* with its composers, noted jazz musicians Andy Tecson, Bobby Schiff, and Bobby Lewis. As a concert soloist, Kannan has sung the First Elder in Handel's *Susanna*, the Evangelist in Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, Handel's *Messiah*, and David Lang's *Battle Hymns*. His opera company appearances include Beth Morrison Projects, Little Opera Theatre of NY, and American Chamber Opera Company, and such concert groups as the Collegiate Chorale, Hudson Valley Singers, and Cantata Singers.



JASMINE MUHAMMAD (Soprano) is a versatile vocalist, having worked across genres in opera, pop, soul, gospel, etc. After completing a successful three years as a Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist, Ms. Muhammad continues her work as a Manhattan based freelance musician. Credits include Hattie in the Pittsburgh Opera world premiere of *The Summer King*, Rodelinda in Handel's *Rodelinda* and Micaëla in Bizet's *Carmen*, High Priestess in Verdi's *Aida*, First Lady in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Eliza in Muhly's *Dark Sisters* and Mimi in the student matinee production of Puccini's *La Boheme*. Ms. Muhammad has sung background vocals for John Legend and Sharon Jones with the Los Angeles Philharmonic for the Marvin Gaye What's Going On tribute at Hollywood Bowl. She has also performed with Warren Haynes on the Jerry Garcia Symphonic Celebration Tour for two consecutive years. In addition to live performances, she has recorded backing vocals for Karen O, Benjamin Booker, Kanye West, and Kevin Morby. Ms. Muhammad is a 2015-2016 Sullivan Foundation Award winner and 2015 Harlem Opera Theater Vocal Competition - First Place winner, as well as a 2014-2015 Metropolitan Opera National Council District winner. Ms. Muhammad holds a masters degree in Voice from Manhattan School of Music and a bachelors degree in Vocal Performance from the Chicago College of Performing Arts.





NAOMI FLORIN (Violin) Hailed as “strikingly powerful, hypnotic, and expressive,” violinist Naomi Florin is a artistic collaborator with performances that include solo, chamber and orchestral concerts all throughout North America, Canada, and Europe. Naomi made her off-Broadway debut in 2016 as the Musical Director of *The Woodsman Play* and as a solo violinist at New World Stages. She has performed with an array of distinguished music artists such as Frederica Von Stadt, members of the St Lawrence Quartet, Orion and Philharmonia Baroque Ensemble. Building on her classical concertizations, Naomi redefines what it is to be a musician in current times. Since 2017, she has performed as lead violinist of the Deliver Us from Donald series founded by composer Katie Bishop. The ensemble, now known as the katie bishop ensemble, recently debuted their EP, “A Study in Sadism-A Love Letter”. Naomi’s commitment to music education is paramount: she is currently a teacher candidate for NYC Department of Education. As a teaching artist, she is committed to making a difference to high-risk communities in collaboration with After School Rock program where she fosters a positive music education experience for younger generations. (She currently resides in New York City where she enjoys drinking coffee, exploring idiosyncratic places and strolling with her dog goddaughter every weekend.)



JENNIFER SHAW (Cello) is a freelance cellist based in New York, most recently performing with The Chelsea Symphony, NYU Tisch’s annual Composers, Choreographers, and Designers (CC&D) concerts, and at Carnegie Hall with the Classical Saxophone Project. Past engagements include performing in concert with the Dave Brubeck Quartet, the Eagles, and with comedian Eliot Glazer for his “Haunting Renditions” series, as well as recording for the original motion picture soundtracks to *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (2013), *Noah* (2014), and *The Hundred-Foot Journey* (2014). Jennifer received her Master’s degree from New York University, where she was also an adjunct cello instructor, and her Bachelor’s from the University of Notre Dame, where she was a recipient of the Michuda Music Scholarship and the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Grant from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.



STAVIT (aka Stevie) ALLWEIS (Lyricist) is an Israeli born artist, poet and filmmaker living and working in Brooklyn. Her poems in Hebrew have been published in many poetry collections in Israel including *The Most Beautiful Poems in Hebrew/A hundred Years of Israeli Poetry*, a book edited by Menachem Ben and Doron Koren 2013. More recently she has been writing song lyrics to accompany her narrative work. Her first collaboration with Tamar Muskal was *In The Morning Light*, 2016, to be on a flexi record insert in her upcoming, epic graphic novel *Isness*. They have since collaborated on *Love & Sobriety*, a song collection Muskal composed for singer Jo Lawry which was performed at National Sawdust 2016 and *Two Lands*, a song to accompany Shinpai Shinaide - *Don't Worry About Us*, a dance performance by Danish/Israeli choreographer Yael Gaaton which was nominated for the prestigious Danish Reumert Awards 2019. Allweis and Muskal are currently working on the second song of the cycle of eight, for the graphic novel. Allweis' recent short film *Cooking with Connie* won Best Experimental at the Brooklyn Film Festival 2017. Her new film *Execution* is in the final editing stage and will premiere in NYC this fall.

# SWELL STAFF



ADZUA AYANA ASHA AMOA (Stage Manger) is delighted to be apart of such a beautiful project. Some of her recent credits include *Coming Out* (Stage Manager), *What Remains*( Stage Manager), *Three Musketeers* (Assistant Stage Manager), *Clybourne Park* ( Lena / Francine ),*The Crucible* (Tituba), *Orestia* (Orestes) and *A Street Car named Desire* (Negro Woman/Mexican Woman and Strange Woman). She has also participated in the Sibui International Theatre Festival as a stage combat fighter. She has recently finished a semester at the Eugene O'Neill National Theatre Center while holding an A.S in Acting , and a B.A in Acting and Dance Performance . She plans to continue her theatre education and is thrilled to be pursing her M.F.A in Acting at Calarts September of 2019.



## COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

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