SWELL

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

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
“Walking in Circles: A Diary”
Music: Joshua Cerdenia, Lyrics: Joshua Cerdenia & 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.

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?
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

In dark, opposition grows
In light, everything shows
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? main ek machhalee hoon
What is water? I am a fish
Who am I? I wish I could say

What is tea? anything
What is water? that comes to me
Who am I? I swim in words

I am someone and wish
who has lost the language
a language lived in me

Someone
who never had
the words

to begin with!

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

Who doesn’t know Who am I?
what he’s doing!

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 chhaat hoon

And the things
Duolingo says to me
are strange.

chaay kya hai
paanee kya hai
main kaun hoon

Merre paas sangeet hai
Merre paas aandolan hai
Merre paas sudhaar ke kamara hai
Merre paas sangeet hai
Merre paas aandolan hai
Merre paas sudhaar ke kamara hai

yah mor chaay
peeta hai

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

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, Melissa 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 (McCart 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 Cosi fan tutte (Brooklyn Philharmonic/Gilman Opera House at BAM), Latin Lovers (Glimmerglass). Faculty, Princeton University. 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

JEANETTE OH-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, impulsion 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, Pampelousse, Mocreo, 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

DEEPA LI 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 MISSES (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 N ew 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 Dossan 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 NAZYKINSKAYA (Composer) Born in Togliatti, Russia, Polina Nazykinskaya 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, Nostalgia. 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.
IZZI RAMKISSON (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, Izz 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


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 Alabany 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 2018 "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.
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 unconduted performances of Bach’s St. Matthew Passion, featuring only twelve singers and the instrumental ensemble The Sebastians. He also appeared as Testio in Academy of Sacred Drama’s modern premiere of Vincenzo de Grandis’ Il Nascimanto 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 Scholares; 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, Anadne 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 Teeson, 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 Micaela 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 2016-2016 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 Staadt, 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 Michuza 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 Gaathon 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.
ADZUA AYANA ASHA AMOA (Stage Manager) 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), *Orestes* (Orestes) and *A Street Car named Desire* (Negro Woman/Mexican Woman and Strange Woman). She has also participated in the Sibiu 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 pursuing her M.F.A in Acting at Calarts September of 2019.

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