

PROJECT [BLANK] presents:

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JUNE 9 & 10 @ 8 PM
JUNE 11 @ 3 PM

BREAD AND SALT GALLERY
1955 JULIAN AVE., 92113



by ANDY VORES

NO EXIT

A CHAMBER OPERA BY
ANDY VORES

Three strangers, recently deceased, are ushered into a small room by a mysterious valet where they have been sent to await the onset of eternal torture in Hell. But as their tentative conversations gradually give way to petty annoyances, personal attacks, dramatic revelations, seductions and interrogations, it becomes clear that these three have been brought together intentionally, and that the torture has already begun.

CREATIVE TEAM

STAGE DIRECTOR
SCENIC DESIGN
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Robert Castro
Victoria Petrovich
Jonathan Nussman

CAST

JOSEPH GARCIN
INEZ SERRANO
ESTELLE RIGAULT
VALET

Miguel Angel Zazueta, tenor
Leslie Ann Leytham, mezzo-soprano
Mariana Flores-Bucio, soprano
Jonathan Nussman, baritone

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

CELLO
PERCUSSION
SOPRANO SAXOPHONE
VIOLA
REHEARSAL PIANISTS

Robert Bui
Nathan Hubbard
Paul Roth
Batya MacAdam-Somer
Brendan Nguyen &
Justin Hansen



PROGRAM NOTE

A NOTE FROM LESLIE ANN LEYTHAM, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Sixteen years ago, I was finishing up a master’s degree in vocal performance and opera at The Boston Conservatory, and was struggling to figure out what to do next when my friend, soprano Aliana de la Guardia, approached me and asked if I wanted to start an opera company with her. I jumped at the chance!

Led by de la Guardia, we founded Guerilla Opera in the Fall of 2007 with the ambition to commission and premiere two new works of chamber opera each season. NO EXIT was the second opera we commissioned, and we gave its premiere in May of 2008. I’m so thrilled to say that Guerilla is stronger than ever, leading the charge in contemporary opera!

NO EXIT was a turning point for me.

I hadn’t done much new music before joining Guerilla Opera, and was totally ignited by the limitless possibilities. I found boundless freedom in my voice where I had been facing deep frustration. I was feeling restricted in both the types of roles I could play as a lyric mezzo-soprano in grand opera—boys, crones, and whores—and the types of sounds I was allowed to make—only beautiful, never ugly. With chamber opera, however, the intimacy of presentation allows for much smaller gestures for such big feelings, allowing us to telescope further inward to explore all the nuances of a character’s emotional journey. Vores’ score opened up a wider palate of vocal color from the traditionally beautiful

bel canto to the desperate wretchedness of madness contained in the deeply complex and difficult character of Inez.

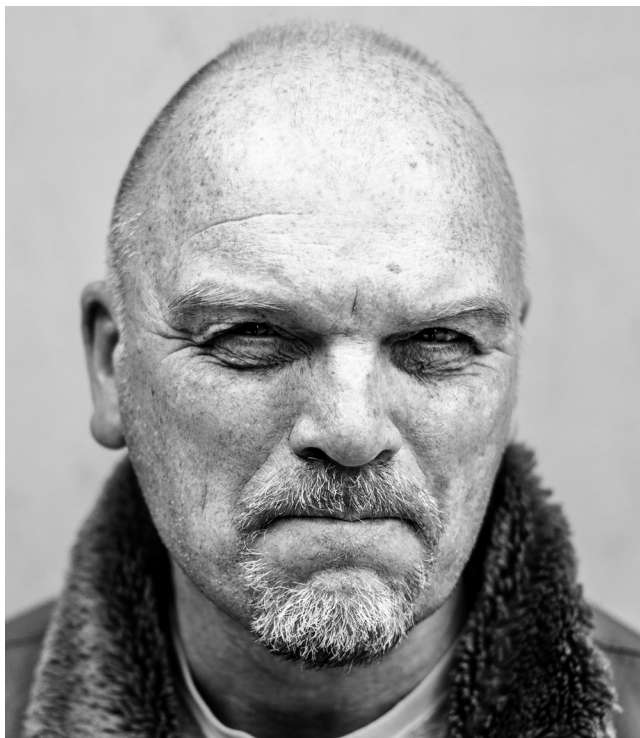
You may be coming into this space with no previous knowledge of the playwright–philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre or his existentialist ideas about the “nausea”—what he describes as an anguish that we feel when confronted with the vast and meaningless universe. Or maybe you’ve never asked the question, “Do I really exist if I can’t see myself?” That’s totally fine! Vores’ opera helps to focus Sartre’s big ideas by combining wickedly inventive orchestration, lyrical singing, and claustrophobic drama into an unforgettable evening of music and theater.

I’m so thrilled to bring to San Diego the West Coast premiere of this powerful work. I hope you enjoy the show!



NO EXIT, 2008 World Premiere
Tenor Michael Rausch
Mezzo-Soprano Leslie Ann Leytham

ANDY VORES
COMPOSER



Andy Vores was born Wales and raised in England. He studied at Lancaster University with Edward Cowie. From 1982 he worked as Composer-in-Residence at The City University, London. In 1986 he was a Fellow in Composition at Tanglewood. He has lived in Boston since 1990.

1999 to 2001 he was Composer-in-Residence to the BankBoston Celebrity Series, and 2002 to 2005 Composer-in-Residence to the New England Philharmonic. From 2001 until 2016 he taught at The Boston Conservatory where he was Chair of Composition, Theory, and Music History.

Commissions include *Freshwater* (The Boston University Opera Institute), *Wetherby Nocturne* for Kathleen Supové (The Barlow Endowment), *Quartet No.3* for The Borromeo String Quartet (Chamber Music America), *World Wheel* for The Cantata Singers, *Umberhulk* for Boston Musica Viva, and *Uncertainty Is Beautiful* for the Boston Modern Orchestra Project.

Awards include a Koussevitsky Fellowship, the Kucyna International Composition Competition, the Scottish National Orchestra Ian Whyte Award, the Tanglewood Prize for Com-

position, the Omaha Symphony Guild New Music Contest, and the Huddersfield Festival. Recent performances include *No Exit* by Florida Grand Opera, *Fabrication 15: Amplification* (Tanglewood Festival of Contemporary Music), *Spencer the Rover* (Chorus Pro Musica), *Drive* (The New England Philharmonic) *Grand Monadnock Measures* (Monadnock Music Festival), and *Chrononhotonthologos* (Guerrilla Opera).

ROBERT CASTRO
STAGE DIRECTOR



Robert Castro is a theater director who directs classics, new works and opera across the U.S. and internationally. Credits include: The Public Theater/NYSF, New York Theatre Workshop, La Jolla Playhouse, Center Theatre Group/LA, Santa Fe Opera, Wiener Festwochen (Austria), Bolshoi Opera (Russia), Teatro Real (Spain). Served as Associate Artist: Mark Taper Forum/Center Theatre Group, Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue at ART/Harvard University, and El Teatro Campesino. Awards include: NEA/TCG Fellowship for Directors, TCG/Doris Duke New Generations Grant, Sherwood Award, Hellman Fellows Program. Member: New York Theatre Workshop and Lincoln Center Theater Directors Lab. Faculty: UCSD Dept. of Theatre & Dance.

VICTORIA PETROVICH

SCENIC DESIGNER



Victoria Petrovich is a theatrical production designer working in scenic, costume and projection design for live performance. She has collaborated with Luís Valdez, Bill Irwin, Ben Krywosz, Anne Bogart, David Schweizer, Tim Dang, Jose Luís Valenzuela, Robert Castro, Karen Saillant, Yolande Snaith, Delicia Turner-Sonnenberg, Culture Clash, Patricia Rincón, Danza Viral, and more.

Her designs have been produced internationally at the Singapore Repertory Theatre, International Opera Theater in Città della Pieve, Italy, Bellas Artes in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, and Festival Im·Pulso/UNAM, Mexico City. Regional work has been produced at The Roundabout Theatre, Music-Theater-Group's St. Clements Church NYC, The Mark Taper Forum, The Santa Monica Museum, The Hammer Museum, Minneapolis Children's Theater, Minnesota Opera, Los Angeles Opera (2 tours), Nautilus Music-Theatre, The Alley Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, South Coast Repertory Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, East West Players, the Denver Center, LATC, San Diego REPeritory Theatre, Lewis Family Theater, Moxie Theater, and Diversionary Theatre.

Awards include the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Awards/Dramalogue Award for Outstanding Set design for the productions of *Passion* (East West Players), *The Women* (San Diego REPeritory) and *Lips Together, Teeth*

Apart (South Coast Repertory), and the Craig Noel San Diego Critics' Award for Outstanding Projection Design for *A Weekend with Pablo Picasso* (San Diego REPeritory). Victoria has also designed multi-site telematic performances in multiple collaborations with composer/bassist Mark Dresser and composer/trombonist Michael Dessen.

JONATHAN NUSSMAN

MUSIC DIRECTOR/BARITONE



Jonathan Nussman is a baritone whose varied interests include opera, theater, and art song, with a special emphasis on music from the 20th and 21st centuries. Appearances include San Diego Opera, Opera Boston, Guerilla Opera, Juventas New Music Ensemble, Cape Cod Opera, the Cambridge Symphony Orchestra, Bodhi Tree Concerts, the La Jolla Symphony and soundSCAPE New Music Festival. As a performer of contemporary and experimental works, he frequently premieres pieces by composers from around the world, as well as his own original compositions.

In addition to originating prominent roles in over twenty world-premiere operas and theatrical works, he has performed extensively in more traditional repertoire, with notable roles including Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Count Almaviva (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Larry Foreman (*The Cradle Will Rock*), and Sid (*Albert Herring*). Jonathan is originally from Charlotte, North Carolina, and currently resides in San

Diego, California. He holds a Doctoral Degree in Contemporary Music Performance from UC San Diego, and Masters Degree in Vocal Performance from the Boston Conservatory at Berklee.

MIGUEL ANGEL ZAZUETA
TENOR



Miguel Angel Zazueta is an interdisciplinary voice artist specialized in contemporary music and opera, from Tijuana, Mexico. He has studied and collaborated with artists like Wilfrido Terrazas, Carmina Escobar, Yuval Sharon, and Meredith Monk, as well as groups like the LA Phil New Music Group, the Orquesta of Baja California, Teatro en el Incendio, Meredith Monk & Ensemble, and the ItaloAmerican Institute of International Cooperation. He obtained his MA in Contemporary Music Performance at UC San Diego, where he is currently pursuing a Doctoral degree under the tutelage of the soprano Susan Narucki. He is the founder and co-director of “Radical Ensemble” one of his main projects, which is an interdisciplinary vocal ensemble with singers from the Baja California Region.

LESLIE ANN LEYTHAM
MEZZO-SOPRANO



Leslie Ann Leytham is a San Diego-based mezzo-soprano who actively commissions and performs new vocal and multimedia works, and frequently collaborates with composers not only as a performer, but as a producer, director and designer as well. She has performed as a featured artist with The Industry Opera Company (Los Angeles), WildUp (LA), the Noon 2 Midnight concert marathon produced by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Monday Evening Concert Series (LA), La Jolla Symphony (San Diego), wasteLAnd concert series (LA), Bodhi Tree Concerts (SD), Bach Collegium San Diego, and Guerilla Opera (Boston).

Leslie has premiered countless roles including Third Frida in *El último sueño de Frida y Diego* by Gabriela Lena Frank, Ruth in *Aftermath* by Nicolas Reveles, Inez in *No Exit* by AnyVores, and Gretchen in *Rumpelstiltskin* by Marti Epstein. Ms. Leytham’s creative work has been featured in installation performances at NOWY Teatr (Warsaw), the Mengi (Reykjavik), Space4Art (SD), and Bread & Salt (SD).

Leslie is co-founder and Artistic Director of Project [BLANK], an interdisciplinary experimental concert series in San Diego. With Project [BLANK], Ms. Leytham curates seasons of chamber music, opera, and experimental music in collaboration with local visual artists, musicians, composers, and designers.

Leslie earned her Doctorate of Musical Arts in Contemporary Music Performance from UC San Diego, a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from The Boston Conservatory, and a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She has studied voice with Carol Kimball, Dr. Rebecca Folsom, and Sarah Agler, and developed her interdisciplinary work under the guidance of the late violinist János Négyesy, composer Anthony Davis, and video artist Tara Knight.

MARIANA FLORES-BUCIO SOPRANO



Mariana Flores-Bucio is a Mexican singer and actress specialized in Contemporary Music and Mexican Vernacular Music.

She has studied and collaborated with artists like Wilfrido Terrazas, Carmina Escobar and artistic groups like the Orquesta of Baja California, Teatro en el Incendio, 9Spiral Project, and the Italo-American Institute of International Cooperation. She has performed leading roles in classical and contemporary operas, premiered several new musical works, and performed on important stages as a vernacular Mexican music singer. She obtained her Bachelor's degree in Music at the Autonomous University of Baja California and her MFA degree in Music Performance at UC San Diego. She is co-director of the vocal ensemble "Radical Ensemble" at Tijuana, B.C. Mex., and she is currently pursuing a DMA in Performance at UC San Diego.

BATYA MACADAM-SOMER VIOLA



Batya MacAdam-Somer is a violinist, violist, and vocalist, based in San Diego, CA. Her work centers around collaboration and experimentation, ranging from classical to avant garde to popular music. She performs regularly as a member of Quartet Nouveau, a non-profit string quartet presenting classical chamber music and educational outreach concerts throughout Southern California. Batya is also a member of Baby Bushka, an eight-piece all-female band celebrating the music of Kate Bush.

Batya grew up in Houston, Texas, where she studied violin with Judy Offman and Fredell Lack, earned a BA from the Manhattan School of Music in 2005 in the studio of Sylvia Rosenberg, and a DMA in contemporary violin performance from the University of California, San Diego working with János Négyesy. She has participated in the Lucerne Festival Academy, Aspen Summer Music Festival, International Festival Institute at Round Top and the Bach Festival of Leipzig, playing under conductors Pierre Boulez, Kurt Masur, Charles Dutoit, and David Robertson. Her involvement with composers and contemporary music has led to work with organizations wasteLAND, Art of Élan, Project [BLANK], San Diego New Music, wildUP, and the Bang on a Can All Stars.

NATHAN HUBBARD
PERCUSSION



Nathan Hubbard's solo music is an amalgam of his work as an improviser, composer and instrument builder. Using acoustic and amplified instruments and a wide range of electronics, Hubbard creates a soundworld of multiple layers, where the music changes definitions of form, shape and outcome. This music has been presented in a wide variety of contexts, from concert halls and festivals to freeway underpasses and desolate mountain roads, and is documented on the recordings *Born On Tuesday* (2004, Circumvention Music), *Blind Orchid* (2007, Accretions Records), as well as a two volume compendium of live performances entitled *Cascadia Calling* (live solo works 2000-2014) Volumes One and Two.

PAUL ROTH
SOPRANO SAXOPHONE



Paul Nicholas Roth is from Buffalo, New York. He plays saxophone, composes music, writes scholarship, teaches, and advocates for community arts. His academic projects are published through Routledge and Indiana University press; recent music is released on earwash records (of which he co-directs—earwash.bandcamp.com). He's currently finishing PhD studies at UCSD's department of music.

ROBERT BUI CELLO



Robert Bui, with equal merit as a composer and performer, creates and challenges new music at both the level of conceptualization and physical embodiment. Beyond music, some of his interests include social reform, his family's cultural history, languages, and photography. He graduated with a Bachelor's in Composition from the New England Conservatory as a Presser Scholar. His primary teachers included composer Stratis Minakakis and cellist Mickey Katz. Between 2018-2021, he served as the leading director of Tuesday Night New Music, a monthly series of student-composed new music concerts hosted at the New England Conservatory. Currently, he is a doctoral student in Contemporary Cello Performance at the University of California San Diego.

As a new music specialist, Bui has premiered numerous pieces by living composers in both solo and chamber settings. He has been a frequent performer in the Tuesday Night New Music Series, nec[shivaree], NEC Contemporary Ensemble, and concerts curated by his ensemble, Alinéa. He has attended institutes and festivals as both composer and performer including Delian Academy, New Music on the Point, Orford Music Academy Contemporary Workshop, Vienna Summer Music Festival+Ensemble PHACE, Boston Conservatory, Boston University Tanglewood Institute, and Idyllwild Arts.

BRENDAN NGUYEN REHEARSAL PIANIST



BRENDAN NGUYEN is a pianist who displays uncommon versatility as a performer, artist and thinker. His bold programming style, infusion of technology and extravagantly produced concert concepts aim to explore new musical territory while casting a contemporary eye on the established canon.

Brendan has performed at prestigious concert halls and concert series including the REDCAT Theater at the Disney Hall in Los Angeles, Zipper Hall, the Monday Evening Concert series, Merkin Hall and The Stone in New York. He is also a former member of the highly acclaimed Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble, Echoi, and Palimpsest ensembles, and has recorded with Carrier Records and Populist Records. Brendan's most recent project *The Seven Tragedies of Space Travel* was conceived as a multi-space, multi-media, opera for solo pianist that mixes western performance tradition with technology, food, and aliens who speak Vietnamese.

He has worked closely and in workshops with composers such as George Crumb, Sir Harrison Birtwistle, and Lewis Nielson. Brendan's enthusiasm for contemporary music has led to a number of premieres and commissions, including works by Wojtek Blecharz, Aaron Helgeson, Nicholas Deyoe, Clint McCallum, Josiah Oberholtzer, and by Pulitzer Prize winning composer Roger Reynolds. He has also

performed with ICE violinist David Bowlin, pianist Aleck Karis, and percussionist Steven Schick.

Brendan performed at the Bowdoin International Music Festival in Maine as a recipient of a Performer's Associate Fellowship. There, he was featured both as soloist and chamber musician on the Upbeat! Concert Series and the Gamper Festival of Contemporary Music alongside esteemed faculty and guest artists. Brendan has also made appearances at the Shanderee International Music Festival in New York as two-time recipient of the C.J. Huang Foundation Scholarship and the Jim Ricketts Foundation Scholarship. In 2004, he was invited to perform again at Shanderee and honored as one of the most outstanding alumni since the festival's foundation.

A graduate of the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music in Ohio (BM, 2005) and UC San Diego (MM, 2010/DMA, 2015), Brendan has also studied at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam in the Netherlands with Jan Wijn. His teachers also include Aleck Karis (UC San Diego), Alvin Chow (Oberlin Conservatory), Yong Hi Moon (Peabody Institute of Music), and the late Earl Wild. He has also studied in master classes with Yoheved Kaplinksy (Juilliard), Martin Canin (Juilliard), Julian Martin (Juilliard), and Craig Sheppard (U of WA). He currently teaches private piano to undergraduate majors and a keyboard skills class at UC San Diego.

JUSTIN HANSEN REHEARSAL PIANIST



Justin Hansen is a pianist, composer, and teacher based in San Diego, CA. He earned his Bachelor's Degree in Piano Performance from Utah Tech University located in his home town, St. George, UT. During his time at UTU he had the honor of touring internationally as a guest soloist in Japan, England, and Norway performing works such as Tchaikovsky's 1st Piano Concerto and Rachmaninoff's 2nd. He was later accepted into the Master's program at Seattle Film Institute and earned his degree in Composition for Film, TV, and Video Games under the direction of Emmy Award-winning composer, Hummie Mann. Justin is currently composing and performing with the Logos Trio and is an accompanist and coach at the San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts.

ABOUT PROJECT [BLANK]

PROJECT [BLANK] is a San Diego-based concert series and presenting organization that produces immersive, multi-disciplinary chamber music and operatic performances. Established in 2018 by pianist **BRENDAN NGUYEN** and mezzo-soprano **LESLIE ANN LEYTHAM**, our programming style explores new musical territory while casting a contemporary eye on the established canon.

By bringing together diverse artistic practices, PROJECT [BLANK] produces novel musical experiences that challenge and reframe the listener's relationship to music. We conceive and produce each of our events in collaboration with visual artists, technologists, musicians, and composers—creators who rethink the myriad connections between music, audience, performer, and space. We strive to build connections between disparate communities in our city, and provide new and exciting creative opportunities for local musicians, artists, and audiences.

The [BLANK] in our name is a manifestation of our belief that a performance is most exciting when it resists a single classification. We produce events that challenge norms of the concert experience, including inventive and imaginative performances of standard repertoire, radical operatic productions, and commissions of revolutionary new works. We are committed to using our platform to explore and engage with urgent contemporary subjects, to advocate for social justice and advance inclusion in the arts, and to break down barriers that exist in the musical world.

ORGANIZATION

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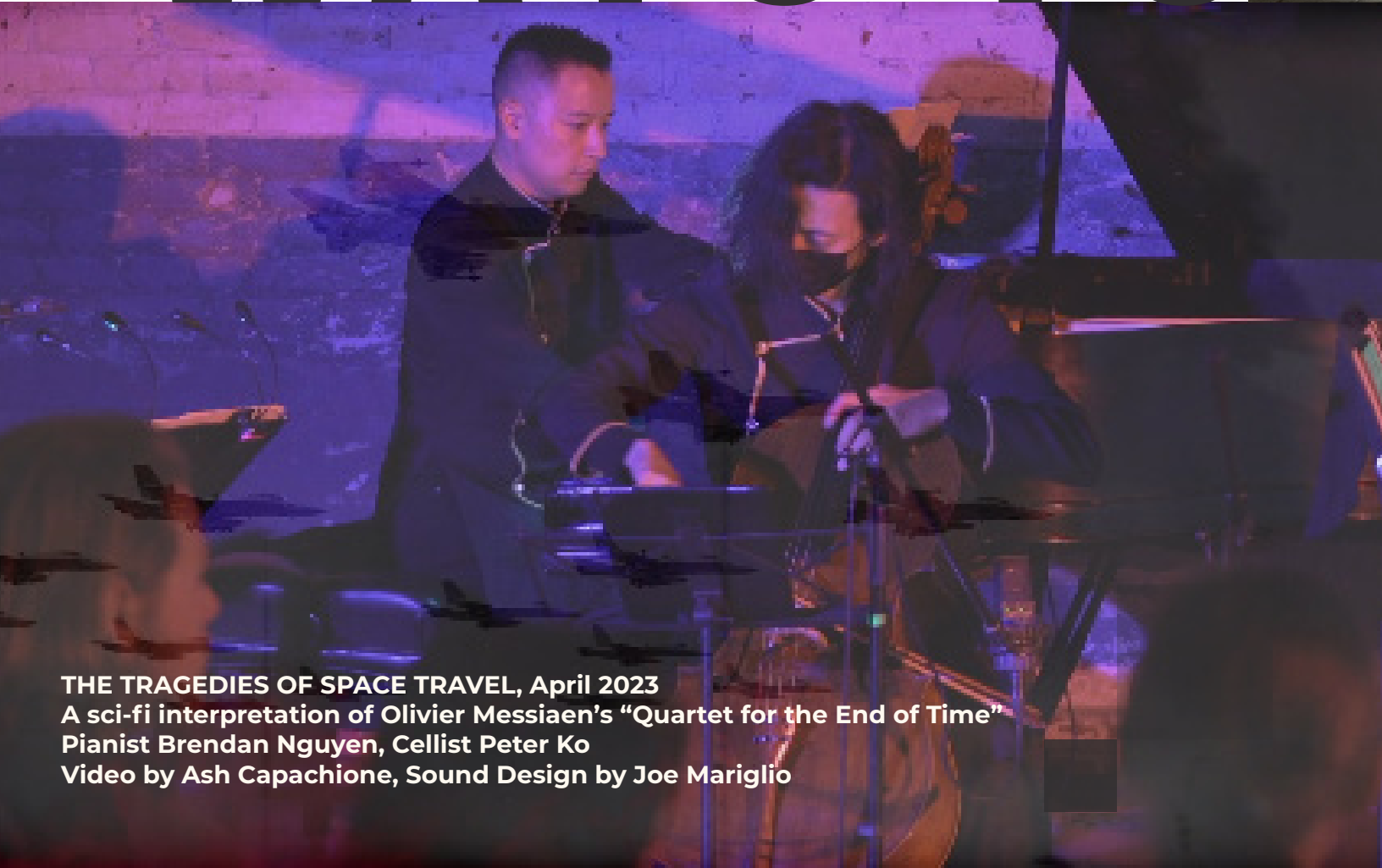


JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!

When you support Project [BLANK], you invest in a dynamic group of artists, musicians, and composers that are diversifying and revitalizing the arts in our community! Over the course of our first five seasons, we have worked hard to bring you innovative musical experiences, building new connections between disparate communities in our city.

Your tax-deductible donation will help sustain Project [BLANK] as we continue to bring performances of new and experimental music to San Diego — works that engage with urgent contemporary themes and celebrate the great and diverse wealth of talent in our beautiful city. Each season continues to grow in scope and scale, and next year is no different! Will you help us raise \$50,000 for next season?

WAYS TO



THE TRAGEDIES OF SPACE TRAVEL, April 2023

A sci-fi interpretation of Olivier Messiaen's "Quartet for the End of Time"

Pianist Brendan Nguyen, Cellist Peter Ko

Video by Ash Capachione, Sound Design by Joe Mariglio

PARADISE TBD a world premiere opera by Clinton McCallum, May, 2022
L-R: soprano Anishka Lee-Skorepa, baritone Jonathan Nussman, mezzo-soprano
Leslie Ann Leytham, tenor Miguel Angel Zazueta, soprano Mariana Flores-Bucio
Designed by Victoria Petrovich, Directed by Robert Castro



SUPPORT

Email Brendan@projectblanksd.org to learn more about the *many* ways you can help!

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WORKING TITLE, March 2020
“(untitled)matter, ritual performance
installation” by Carolina Montejo

THANKS

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The Wolfe Family Charitable Foundation

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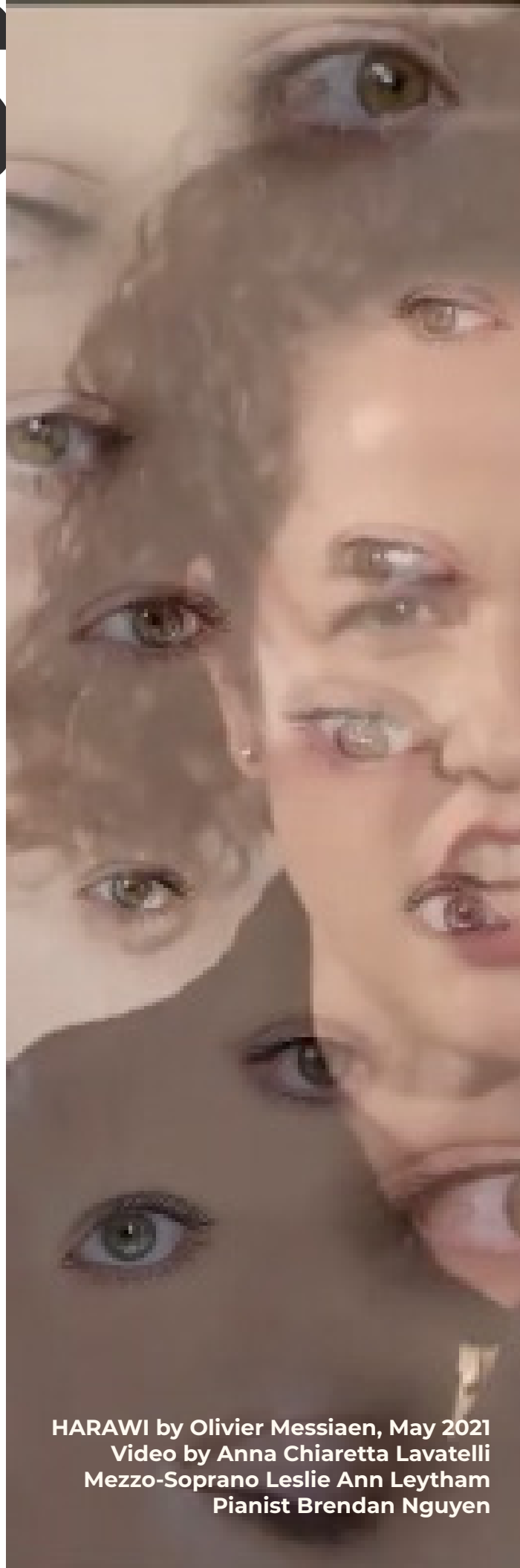
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Gerard Manecke
Megan Murphy and Jonathan Nussman
Linda Wilson

SOLOIST \$1 - \$99

Ian Craft
Bob Gans
Marsha Lyon
Maureen Mason
Anne Middleton
Tracy Weiss



HARAWI by Olivier Messiaen, May 2021
Video by Anna Chiaretta Lavatelli
Mezzo-Soprano Leslie Ann Leytham
Pianist Brendan Nguyen

SEE YOU NEXT SEASON!



THE SALTY SERIES

The 2023/2024 season kicks off in September with an *expanded* SALTY SERIES! In this series of monthly inexpensive concerts at Bread and Salt Gallery in Barrio Logan, we invite a local experimental artist to curate a night of cutting-edge new music. Concerts happen on the second Saturday of each month!

CA FESTIVAL OF NEW MUSIC

We're honored to have been invited to participate in the inaugural state-wide festival of New Music, which has been jointly curated by the LA Phil, SF Symphony, and SD Symphony this coming November. We'll be presenting thought-provoking chamber works by composer Laure Hiendl and MUCH more! Stay tuned.



WORKING TITLE

Our annual group art show returns! WORKING TITLE is a three-day, community-based exhibition of new works by painters, sculptors, sound artists, video artists, performance artists, composers, and musicians from throughout the greater San Diego area and Tijuana. Come see us transform St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral into a living, breathing Sistine Chapel!

THE ROBOTS

After 5 years of development with award-winning composer Carolyn Chen, we're so thrilled to bring you the World Premiere of THE ROBOTS! This genre-bending operatic adaptation of an early sci-fi play from 1920, *Rossum's Universal Robots*, tells the story of mass-produced robot workers revolting against their human makers.

