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PEAK Performances Programming History

6-1-2013

2012-2013 Season Brochure

Office of Arts + Cultural Programming

PEAK Performances at Montclair State University

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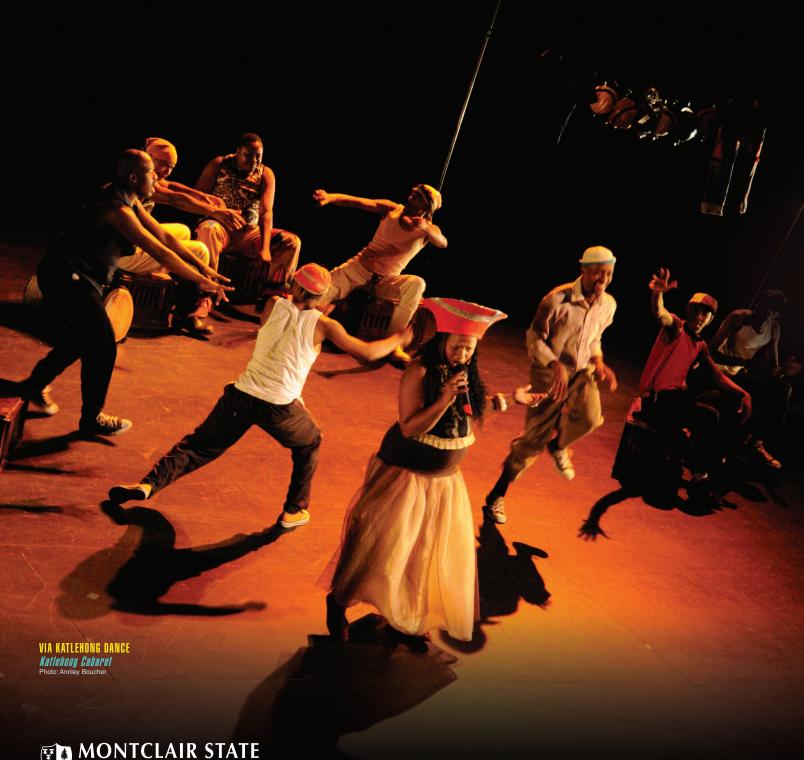
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Peak Performances



From opening night on September 29 to the final curtain call on May 11, artists in the 2012/13 Peak Performances season prove that exceptions rule at Montclair State University.

Opera premieres by composer David T. Little and director Robert Wilson set new standards for a familiar art form. Even more boldly, an American stage premiere from Romeo Castellucci highlights the innate capacity of live performance to illuminate the human condition by exposing its frailties.

Dance uncoils diverse worlds of expression with premieres by three distinctly different choreographers: Benjamin Millepied, Richard Alston, and Jasmin Vardimon. And without fail, the captivating performers of Via Katlehong return with the premiere of a uniquely South African cabaret.

Music crosses boundaries with traveling tales from ARTEK and Lionheart Vocal Ensemble, connects east to west with the Shanghai Quartet, and sustains new versions of classic works with pianists Sarah Rothenberg and Marilyn Nonken.

The season ends with original innovators changing the rules, namely the first-time collaboration between new-music standard bearers Laurie Anderson and the Kronos Quartet.

Creativity is celebrated all season. Whether an emerging visionary or a world class luminary, each artist appearing in the Alexander Kasser Theater will be heard in full voice – no compromise.

I look forward to greeting you at the Kasser.

- Jedediah Wheeler

Executive Director, Arts & Cultural Programming

Alexander Kasser Theater One Normal Avenue, Montclair, New Jersey, 07043

Dr. Susan A. Cole, President

THE 2012/13 SEASON AT-A-GLANCE

Get ready for a season full of exciting premiere events. This guide presents the season month to month, or you can read this brochure by genre. However you like to explore the arts, every seat at Peak Performances is always \$15.

SEPTEMBER

David T. Little/Royce Vavrek Alan Pierson/Robert Woodruff Dog Days

SEPT. 29 – OCT. 7.....p.5

OCTOBER

An Evening with Tracy K. Smith

OCT. 17p.30

ARTEK

I'll Never See the Stars Again

OCT. 20.....p.19

Shanghai Quartet feat. Jan Vogler (cello) Works by Haydn, Ravel, and Schubert

OCT. 21.....p.21

Benjamin Millepied L.A. Dance Project

OCT. 25 – 28.....p.11

DECEMBER

Richard Alston Dance Company A Ceremony of Carols

DEC. 13 – 16.....p.13

JANUARY

Robert Wilson/Bernice Johnson Reagon Toshi Reagon/Jacqueline Woodson Zinnias: The Life of Clementine Hunter

JAN. 26 – FEB. 3.....p.7

FEBRUARY

Lionheart with
ACME (American Contemporary Music Ensemble)
Wayfaring Stranger

FEB. 9......p.23

Romeo Castellucci Societas Raffaello Sanzio On the Concept of the Face, Regarding the Son of God

FEB. 14 – 17.....p.9

MARCH

Via Katlehong Dance Katlehong Cabaret

MAR. 16 – 24.....p.15

APRIL

Shanghai Quartet feat. Ying Huang (soprano) Chinasong

APR. 12.....p.21

Sarah Rothenberg and Marilyn Nonken
The Grand Gesture

APR. 13.....p.25

Jasmin Vardimon Company Freedom

APR. 18 – 21.....p.17

MAY

Laurie Anderson and Kronos Quartet
A New Work – Currently Untitled

MAY 10 – 11.....p.27

BROCHURE BY GENRE

Opera/Theater.....p.5 | Dance/Dance Theater.....p.11 | Music......p.19





College of the Arts - Daniel Gurskis, Dean

In addition to the professional programs and artists featured in this book, Montclair State's College of the Arts presents a full season of dance, theater, and music events that are open to the public. Tickets and information can be found online at **peakperfs.org.**





WORLD PREMIERE - A PEAK COMMISSION

DAVID T. LITTLE ROYCE VAVREK **ALAN PIERSON** ROBERT WOODRUFF

hat does it mean to follow your instincts? Featuring world class vocal talent, Dog Days is a darkly comedic new opera brought to life through David T. Little's inventive combination of classical and contemporary music elements. Based on the short story by Judy Budnitz, this world premiere investigates what happens when a working-class American family - and the "dog" appearing at their front door - is pitted against an apocalyptic scenario in the not-too-distant future. Featuring musical direction from Alan Pierson (artistic director for Alarm Will Sound and the Brooklyn Philharmonic), Dog Days was created in collaboration with librettist Royce Vavrek, and is directed by master auteur Robert Woodruff.

Featuring John Kelly and vocalists James Bobick, Marnie Breckenridge, Cherry Duke, Michael Marcotte, Peter Tantsits, and Lauren Worsham

With chamber ensemble Newspeak and special guests.

September October

7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m. 3:00 p.m.

Dog Days was produced by Peak Performances @ Montclair State (NJ) in association with Beth Morrison Projects

973-655-5112 | www.peakperfs.org | Every Seat \$15

Dog Days was commissioned by Peak Performances @ Montclair State (NJ). Selections from Dog Days were commissioned and presented by Carnegie Hall for the Weill Music Institute. Scenes from Dog Days were presented as part of New York City Opera's VOX Contemporary American Opera Lab

WORLD PREMIERE - A PEAK PRODUCTION

ROBERT WILSON
BERNICE JOHNSON REAGON
TOSHI REAGON
JACQUELINE WOODSON

ZINNIAS:

THE LIFE OF CLEMENTINE HUNTER

new chamber opera based on the life of renowned African-American artist Clementine Hunter, *Zinnias* is an intimate exploration of one of America's greatest natural talents. Born on a plantation in Natchitoches, Louisiana, Hunter's experiences revealed an innate talent for depicting life in the early 20th century through her paintings. Now, using her artwork and stories, Clementine Hunter's touching and unique journey is brought to the stage through the collaboration of Robert Wilson, Bernice Johnson Reagon, Toshi Reagon and Jacqueline Woodson.

Zinnias: The Life of Clementine Hunter

Concept, Direction and Design by

Robert Wilson

Libretto and Music Composition by

Bernice Johnson Reagon and Toshi Reagon

Story and Book by **Jacqueline Woodson**

World premiere of *Zinnias: The Life of Clementine Hunter* produced by Peak Performances at Montclair State University in January 2013. *Zinnias: The Life of Clementine Hunter* is made possible in part by a grant from the Association of Performing Arts Presenters Creative Campus Innovations Grant Program, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

ANGELS
BY CLEMENTINE HUNTER
from the collection of
Thomas N. Whitehead

January

at. Sun. Thurs. 26 27 31

8:00 p.m. 3:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.

February

7:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m. 3:00 p.m.



AMERICAN PREMIERE - A PEAK COMMISSION

ROMEO CASTELLUCIO

Societas Raffaello Sanzio (ITALY)

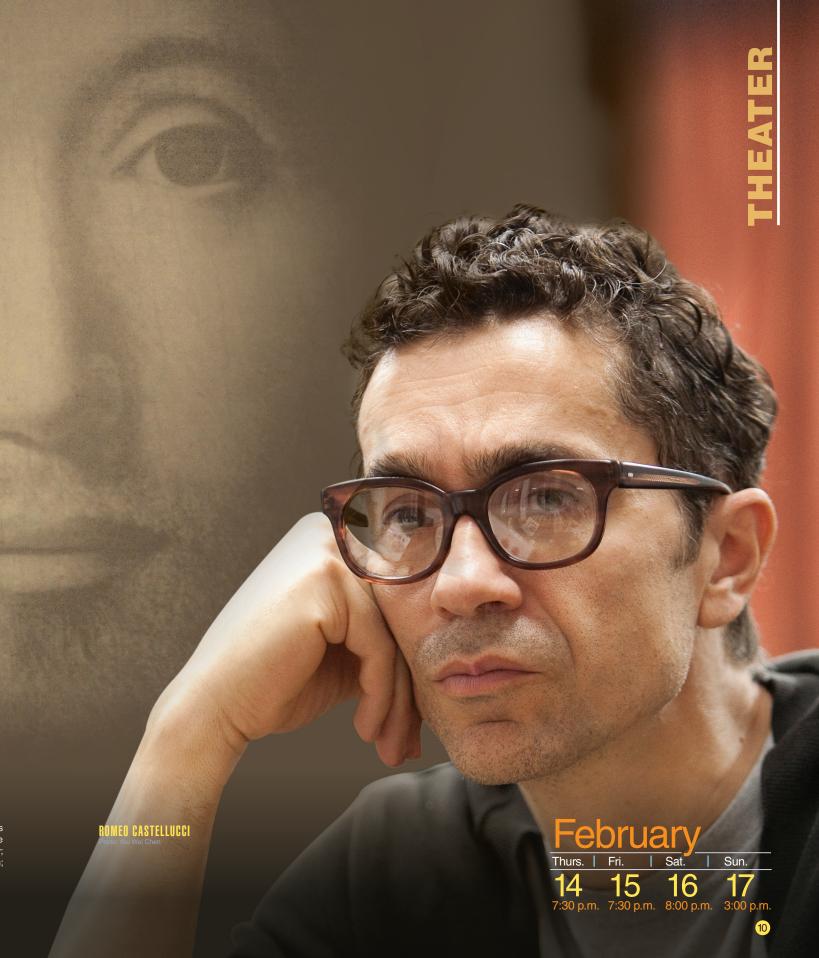
On the Concept of the Face, Regarding the Son of God

on't miss the American premiere of one of the most controversial theater pieces to emerge from Europe in the past few years. A starkly wonderous invention of stagecraft, *On the Concept of the Face, Regarding the Son of God* questions the meaning of life through a realistic prism of faith and love. As an adult son copes with caring for his aging father, this ode to compassion implores the audience to experience the sacred nature of dignity gained through suffering. In a work both tender and provocative, Romeo Castellucci pushes the limits of stage expression, drawing parallels between the spritual and the physical worlds.

Please be advised: Production contains adult themes and content

Produced by Societas Raffaello Sanzio. Co-produced by Peak Performances @ Montclair State (NJ), Theater der Welt 2010 (Essen); deSingel International Arts Campus (Antwerp); Théâtre National de Bretagne (Rennes); The National Theatre (Oslo); Barbican London and SPILL Festival of Performance; Chekhov International Theatre Festival (Moscow); Holland Festival (Amsterdam); Athens Festival; GREC Festival de Barcelona; Festival d'Avignon; International Theatre Festival DIALOG Wroclav; Belgrade International Theatre Festival; Spielzeit Europa I Berliner Festspiele; Théâtre de la Ville (Paris); Romaeuropa Festival; Theatre Festival SPIELART München; Le-Maillon (Strasbourg/ Scène Européenne); and Théâtre Auditorium de Poitiers. Produced in collaboration with Centrale Fies/Dro. Production photo: Klaus Lefebvre.





EAST COAST PREMIERE

L.A.DANCE PROJECT

Benjamin Millepied, Artistic Director

Featuring the East Coast premiere of a new work by Benjamin Millepied, with *Quintett* (William Forsythe) and *Winterbranch* (Merce Cunningham)

hrough his work with the New York City Ballet and on the film *Black Swan*, choreographer Benjamin Millepied is redefining dance for the 21st century. This program will feature a new work by Millepied, with a score by composer Nico Muhly and visual design by noted New York painter Christopher Wool. The company will also revive Merce Cunningham's controversial 1964 *Winterbranch*, a movement exploration of falling bodies set to a two-note score by La Monte Young, and William Forsythe's *Quintett*, a 1993 study in loss and hope to avant-garde composer Gavin Bryar's looping composition "Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet."

BENJAMIN MILLEPIED
Photo: Alexander Wagner

October Sat

5 26

27

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973-655-5112 | www.peakperfs.org | Every Seat \$15

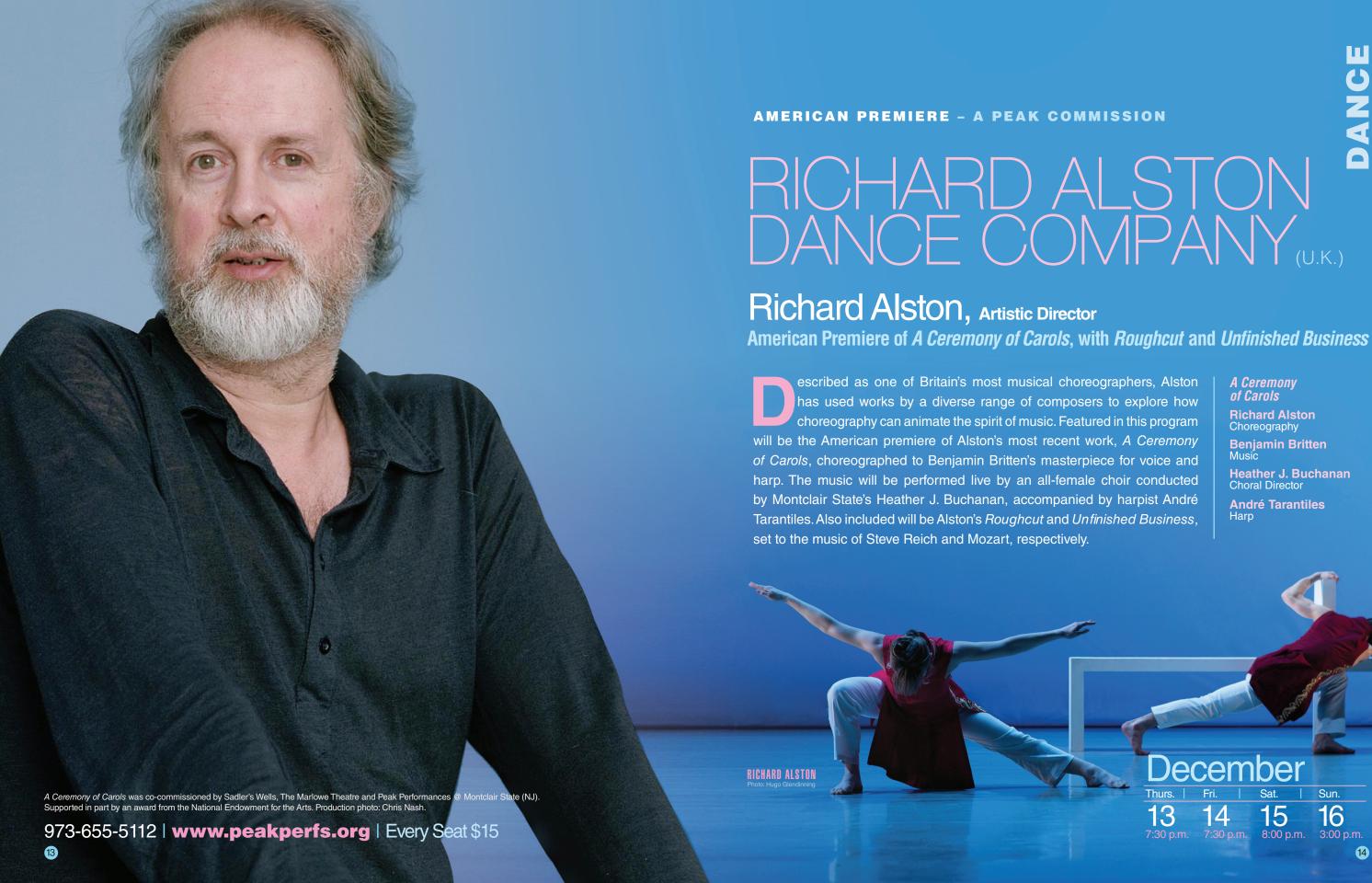
Commissioned by Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at the Music Center, Los Angeles

11

p.m. 7:30

0 p.m.

12



AMERICAN PREMIERE - A PEAK COMMISSION

MAKATLEHONG DANG (SOUTH AFRICA)

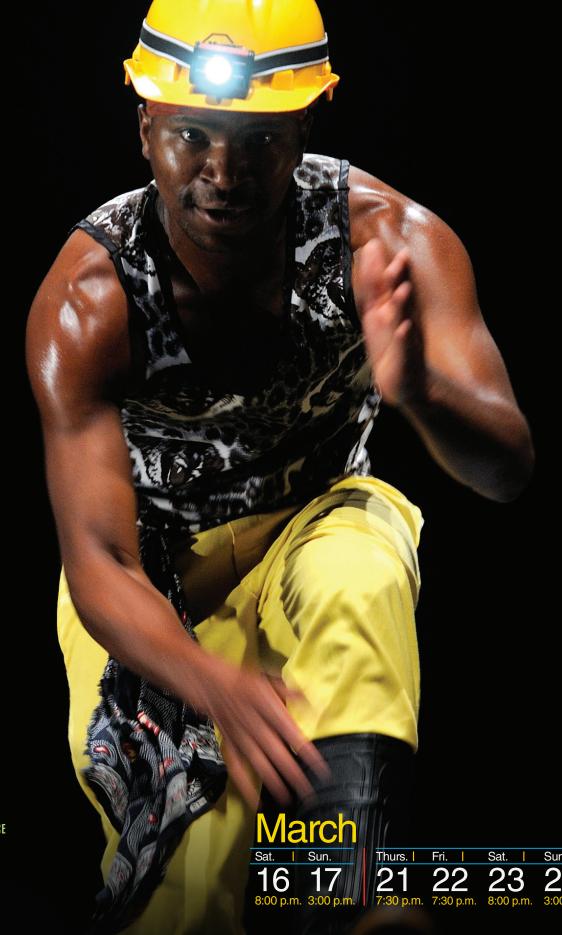
Katlehong Cabaret

riginally formed through an outreach program for youth during the Apartheid era, Via Katlehong's high-energy style is an energetic brew of "Pantsula" (street dance) and "Gumboot" (rhythmic physical percussion). Through constantly searching for new performance horizons, they have become a major player on the international stage. For their triumphant return to Peak Performances, this inventive American premiere is cabaret like you've never experienced before. By combining the group's powerhouse style with dynamite vocal performances of traditional folk music, a fresh and inventive look at modern South Africa is born.

Via Katlehong Dance Company Katlehong Cabaret

Siphiwe Nkosi, Director Hlengiwe Lushaba, Concept Vusi Mdoyi, Choreographer

Performed by
Steven Faleni,
Mandlenkosi Fanie,
Vuyani Feni, Hlengiwe Lushaba,
Vusi Mdoyi, Buru Mohlabane,
Tshepo Nchabeleng,
Siphiwe Nkosi,
and Xolani Qwabe



Produced by Damien Valette Productions. Co-produced by Via Katlehong Dance, Peak Performances @ Montclair State (NJ), Théâtre national de Chaillot, and Scéne nationale d'Orléans. Supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.





AMERICAN PREMIERE

JASMIN ARINA MARINA MAR

Jasmin Vardimon, Artistic Director

Freedom

n such previous mind-benders as *Yesterday*, *Justitia*, and 7734, Jasmin Vardimon has gained a well-deserved reputation in Britain for uniquely theatrical choreography that combines physical theater, innovative technologies, text, and dance with acute observations of human behavior. *Freedom*, a new full-length dance theater piece, explores notions of what keeps our imaginations free. For the company's first visit to the East Coast (and second to the U.S.), *Freedom* promises Vardimon's trademark physicality and brutally visceral characterizations.

Please be advised: Production contains adult themes and content.





Gwendolyn Toth, Artistic Director I'll Never See the Stars Again

ix singers and five instrumentalists tell the story of a group of Italian refugees in a series of vignettes expressing the comedy of love and the despair of betrayal. The musicians of ARTEK have built a reputation for the vitality of their spirited performances of baroque music. In I'll Never See the Stars Again, the lush music of Claudio Monteverdi and his contemporaries is re-imagined as a theater piece staged by Martin Platt, founding artistic director of the Alabama Shakespeare Festival. In an extremely entertaining fashion, ARTEK proves the journey is just as important as the destination.



SHANGHAI QUARTET

October 21 featuring Jan Vogler (cello)
April 12 featuring Ying Huang (soprano)

by demonstrating the amazing breadth of repertoire that has become the group's hallmark. In the fall, the group collaborates with cellist Jan Vogler to perform Franz Schubert's breathtaking String Quartet in C Major. In the spring, internationally renowned soprano Ying Huang joins the Quartet in performing *Chinasong*, a spectacular mix of traditional and popular Chinese folk music written and arranged by Shanghai Quartet violinist Yi-Wen Jiang. Together, both programs represent the special east-meets-west style that has become the touchstone of the Shanghai Quartet's illustrious career.



WITH AMERICAN CONTEMPORARY MUSIC ENSEMBLE (ACME)

Featuring the East Coast premiere of *Psalmbook* by Ingram Marshall

ionheart expertly joins classics from the Medieval and Renaissance vocal repertoire with new work by the most innovative composers of contemporary vocal music. In *Wayfaring Stranger*, the group joins forces with four members of the American Contemporary Music Ensemble (ACME) for the East Coast premiere of composer Ingram Marshall's *Psalmbook*. Accompanying Marshall's meditation on early American psalmody is an eclectic mix of music spanning more than 800 years ranging from sacred chant to Appalachian folk melodies. Works by Phil Kline and Laura Nyro are also highlighted in this ode to restless wanderlust.

Wayfaring Stranger

Lionheart Vocal Ensemble

Jeffrey Johnson, Lawrence Lipnik, John Olund, Richard Porterfield, Kurt-Owen Richards, Michael Ryan-Wenger

ACME

Caleb Burhans, violin Caroline Shaw, violin Nadia Sirota, viola Clarice Jensen, cello















Psalmbook was commissioned through Meet The Composer's Commissioning Music/USA program, which is made possible by generous support from the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Helen F. Whitaker Fund.

973-655-5112 | www.peakperfs.org | Every Seat \$15

8:00 p.m.



REGIONAL PREMIERE - A PEAK COMMISSION

LAURE ANDERSON KRONOS OLIARTET

hrough genre-defying careers with similar philosophies on the invention of new music, it's shocking that Laurie Anderson and Kronos Quartet have never collaborated before. All that will change in an electrifying season finale as artist/composer Laurie Anderson and the visionary Kronos Quartet perform a new evening-length piece in their very first collaboration. Composed by Anderson and arranged by Kronos Quartet, the piece will include written text and a dozen new songs that herald a new synthesis of sonic invention.

A New Work Currently Untitled

Laurie Anderson, violin

Kronos Quartet

David Harrington, violin John Sherba, violin Hank Dutt, viola Jeffrey Zeigler, cello

Commissioned by Peak Performances @ Montclair State (NJ); Adelaide Festival of the Arts, Australia; The Barbican Centre, London; Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, University of Maryland, College Park; Perth International Arts Festival, Crawley, Australia; Stanford Lively Arts, Stanford University, Palo Alto; University Of Texas Performing Arts Center, Austin. This tour of Kronos Quartet is made possible by a grant from Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation with support from the National Endowment of the Arts.

973-655-5112 | **www.peakperfs.org** | Every Seat \$15



KRONOS OUARTET



May





Peak Performances

engage!

Enhance your visit to the Alexander Kasser Theater with our series of post-performance Community Conversations, pre-show Shop Talks, and lobby receptions with the artists. Ask a question, get an insider's view, learn the story behind the story. All engagement events are free and open to the public. Visit www.peakperfs.org for updates.

Insite

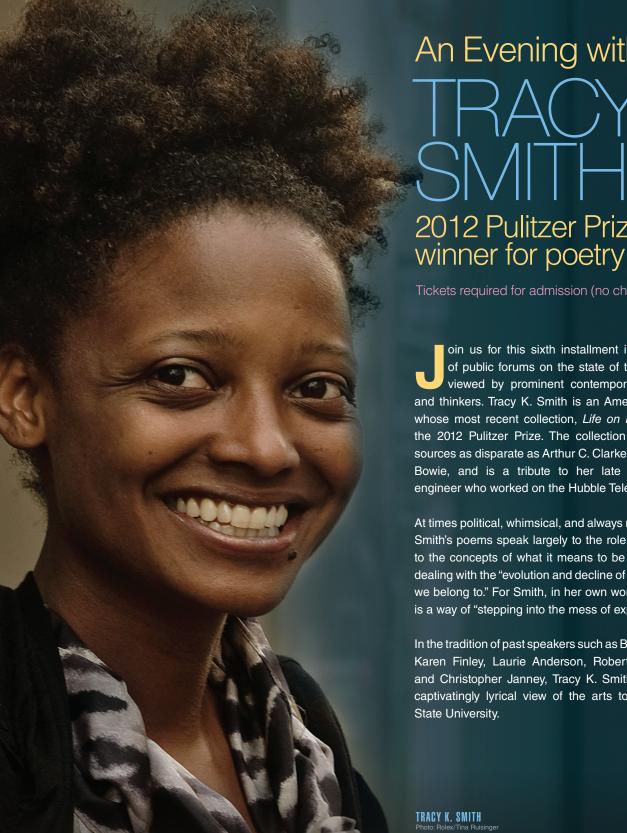
Part curated blog, part online magazine, and part dialogue, Insite is an interactive online space where artists share their perspectives, cultural commentators explore the issues, and audiences voice their opinions. Deepen your Peak Performances experience at Insite: www.peakperfs.org/insite.

Creative Thinking Project

A partnership between Montclair State's Office of Arts and Cultural Programming and the Research Academy for University Learning, the Creative Thinking Project draws on Peak Performances artists as catalysts for exploring how creativity can be integrated into the curriculum to ignite innovation and critical thinking across disciplines. Visit www.peakperfs.org/creativethinking.

The Creative Thinking Project was made possible in part by a grant from the Association of Performing Arts Presenters Creative Campus Innovations Grant Program, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. Photo: Montclair State University/Mike Peters.





An Evening with 2012 Pulitzer Prize

Tickets required for admission (no charge).

oin us for this sixth installment in a series of public forums on the state of the arts as viewed by prominent contemporary artists and thinkers. Tracy K. Smith is an American poet whose most recent collection. Life on Mars. won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize. The collection draws on sources as disparate as Arthur C. Clarke and David Bowie, and is a tribute to her late father, an engineer who worked on the Hubble Telescope.

At times political, whimsical, and always meditative, Smith's poems speak largely to the role of art and to the concepts of what it means to be American, dealing with the "evolution and decline of the culture we belong to." For Smith, in her own words, poetry is a way of "stepping into the mess of experience."

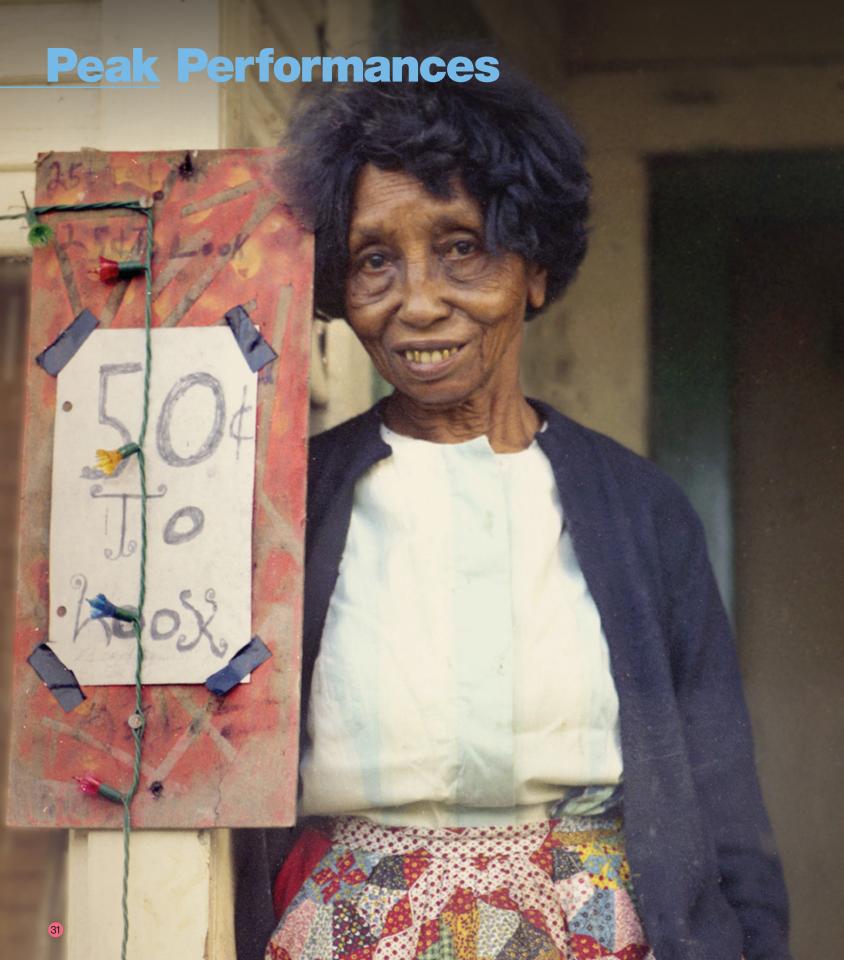
In the tradition of past speakers such as Bill T. Jones, Karen Finley, Laurie Anderson, Robert Brustein, and Christopher Janney, Tracy K. Smith brings a captivatingly lyrical view of the arts to Montclair State University.

TRACY K. SMITH

973-655-5112 | www.peakperfs.org







SPECIAL LOBBY EXHIBITION - SEPTEMBER 2012 - JUNE 2013

THE ART OF CLEMENTINE HUNTER

n conjunction with the 2013 world premiere of *Zinnias: The Life of Clementine Hunter*, Peak Performances is proud to present a new exhibition highlighting the career of Clementine Hunter. Curated in collaboration with Art Shiver and Tom Whitehead, co-authors of *Clementine Hunter: Her Life and Art* (Louisiana State University Press, 2012), this exhibit celebrates this treasured American original.

Born on a plantation in Louisiana, Clementine could neither read nor write, but her imagination was limitless, creating dolls for children, fringe for drapery, and quilts. Although Hunter didn't pick up a paint brush until after her 50th birthday, she is estimated to have created as many as five thousand works. Her paintings of plantation life, originally sold by Hunter for 25 or 50 cents, are now considered priceless. By the time of her death in 1988 at the age of 101, Clementine Hunter had become celebrated the world over for her works of art that capture everyday moments of a now-vanished way of life.

CLEMENTINE HUNTER (c.1886-1988) Photo: Thomas N. Whitehea

973-655-5112 | www.peakperfs.org



How To Order Tickets

www.peakperfs.org

973-655-5112

IN PERSON:

Box Office

Alexander Kasser Theater Montclair State University One Normal Avenue, Montclair, NJ 07043

BOX OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday: noon-6:00 p.m. On Performance Dates: 10:00 a.m. until curtain

AUDIENCE SERVICES:

boxoffice@mail.montclair.edu

TICKET POLICIES

- All performances are subject to change.
- There is a \$3 handling fee per ticket for telephone or online orders.
- There is a flat \$10 handling fee per telephone order of ten (10) tickets or more.
- Tickets and all processing/handling fees are nonrefundable, except in the event of show cancellation.
- Subject to availability, tickets may be exchanged at the box office up to 24 hours prior to the originally purchased performance, with a \$5 per ticket exchange fee.
- Latecomers will be seated solely at the discretion of the Alexander Kasser Theater management.

GETTING HERE

There are many convenient ways to get to the Alexander Kasser Theater, including direct weekday NJ Transit train service and weekend charter bus service from Manhattan. Visit **peakperfs.org** for more information, including details on directions and convenient parking.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS at Montclair

State receive one ticket at no additional charge to every Peak Performances event, through the Performing Arts Fee, with their valid student IDs. Tickets must be picked up at the box office.

SPECIAL SERVICES





- Special Seating: ADA accessible seating is available for all performances and events.
- Listening Assistive Devices: Wireless hearing enhancement systems are available free of charge on a first-come, first-served basis for all performances.
- Programs in large type are available free of charge on a first-come, first-served basis for all performances. Forty-eight hours' notice is required.
- Other special requests will be accommodated whenever possible. Direct inquiries to Audience Services at 973-655-4010

Special Thanks

Programs in this season are made possible in part by funds from:

Association of Performing Arts Presenters



The National Endowment for the Arts

The New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Dept. of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts



Discover Jersey Arts ARTS



The Mid Atlantic Arts Foundatio



Alison and James T. Cirenza

The Honorable Mary Mochary



Peak Performances

is on a mission to bring artists of uncommon imagination together with audiences of adventuresome spirits.

The exceptions rule at Montclair, but there is one absolute rule:

Every performance everv seat:

No exceptions.





Opened in 2004, the Alexander Kasser Theater is a 500-seat incubator for the next great evolution for the performing arts, and a home for the world's most visionary talents. A wide range of performances mix with exciting workshops and exhibitions to make the Alexander Kasser Theater an irreplaceable part of the arts community both here in Montclair and around the world.