

MWENSO AND THE SHAKES: HARLEM 100 (USA)
THU, OCT 17 • 8PM

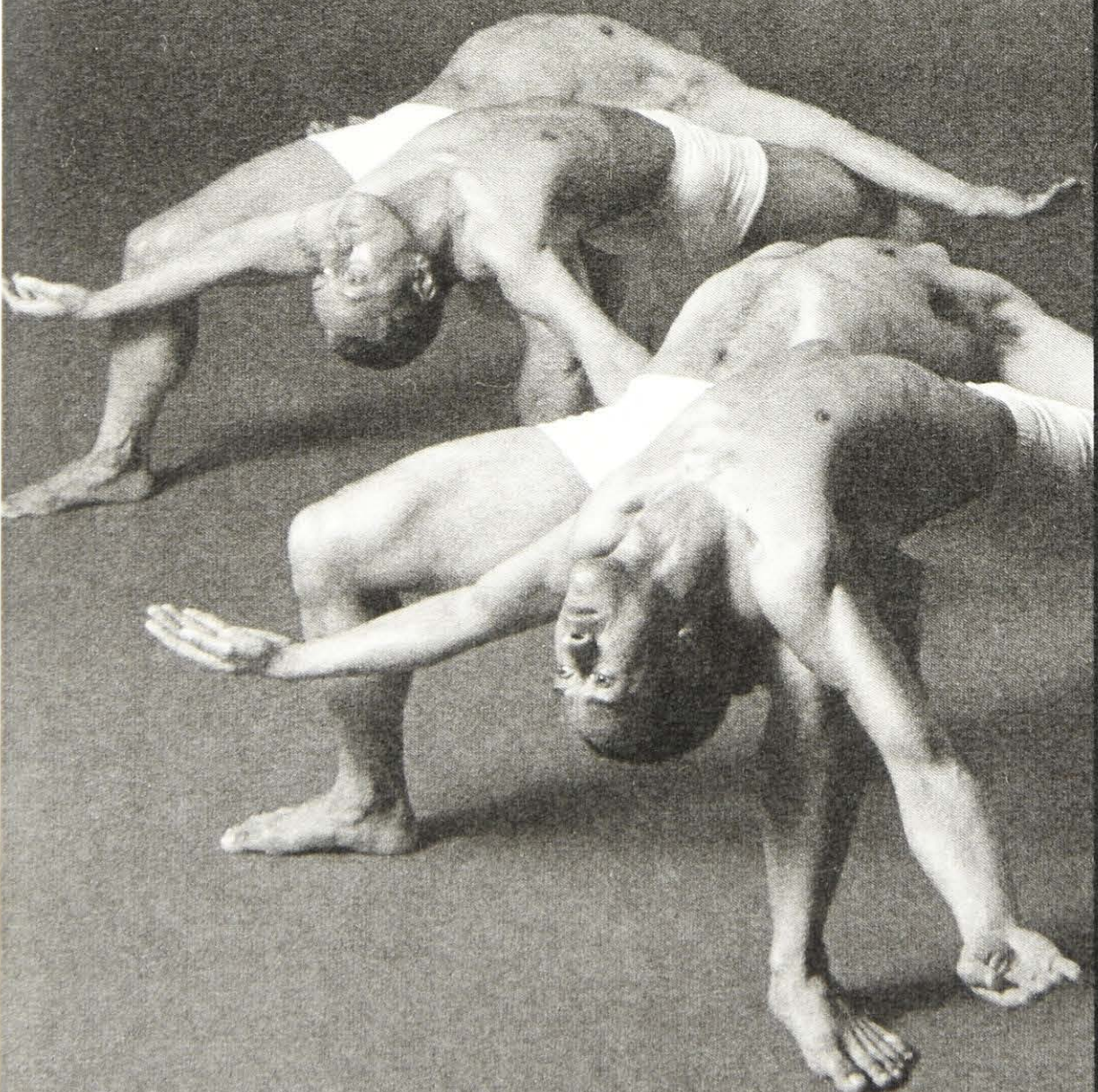
BLACK GRACE: CRYING MEN (NEW ZEALAND)
THU, OCT 24 • 8PM

SITI COMPANY: THE BACCHAE (USA)
WED, OCT 30 • 8PM

THE BRENTANO STRING QUARTET (USA)
FRI, NOV 1 • 8PM

VAS
VISITING ARTIST SERIES

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND



ACKNOWLEDGING THE LAND WHERE WE GATHER

Every community owes its existence and vitality to generations from around the world who contributed their hopes, dreams and energy to making the history that led to this moment. Some were brought here against their will, some were drawn to leave their distant homes in hope of a better life, and some have lived on this land for more generations than can be counted. Truth and acknowledgment are critical to building mutual respect and connection across all barriers of heritage and difference.

The Clarice's Visiting Artist Series believes that artists can be catalysts for community change, leadership and empowerment, and have chosen to begin the effort of building bridges across cultures by acknowledging what has been buried by honoring the truth.

We are standing on the ancestral lands of the Piscataway People, who were among the first in the Western Hemisphere to encounter European colonists. And we honor the enslaved who were integral to the creation of this University. We pay respects to these and other elders, past and present. Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, immigration and settlement that bring us together here today.

Cover:

Black Grace
Photo by Scott Venning

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The Clarice’s **VISITING ARTIST SERIES** curates a season of regional, national and international artists in dance, music, theater and performance. Beyond the stunning work these artists bring to the stage, the Visiting Artist Series is also committed to providing extensive campus and community engagement opportunities that extend the academic learning and cultural opportunities for UMD students as well as the community that surrounds the university. Through creative partnerships, we believe that artists can be catalysts for community change, leadership and empowerment. The Visiting Artist Series is part of the Artist Partner Programs that include the NextNOW Fest, the National Orchestral Institute + Festival, NextLOOK at Joe’s Movement Emporium and MilkBoy ArtHouse.

SITI COMPANY (USA)
THE BACCHAE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2019 • 8PM
KAY THEATRE, THE CLARICE

The performance will last approximately 95 minutes with no intermission.

Please join the artists for a Post-Performance Q&A.

Written by Euripides
Translation by Aaron Poochigian
Directed by Anne Bogart
Created and Performed by SITI Company

Dionysus: Ellen Lauren

Tiresias: Barney O'Hanlon

Cadmus: Stephen Duff Webber

Pentheus: Toussaint Jeanlouis

Soldier: J. Ed Ariaza

First Messenger: Leon Ingulsrud

Second Messenger: Will Bond

Agave: Akiko Aizawa*

Chorus: Roshni Shukla & Samuel Stricklen

Set and Lighting Designer: Brian H Scott*

Costume Designer: Lena Sands

Sound Designer: Darron L West*

Composer: Erik Sanko

Production Stage Manager: Ellen M. Lavaia

Assistant Stage Manager: Alyssa Escalante

Assistant Director: Nana Dakin

Assistant Set and Lighting Designer: Joey Guthman

Dramaturg: Helene Foley

Dramaturg: Norman Frisch

Choral Consultant: Kelly Maurer

Executive Director: Michelle Preston

Producing Director: Megan E Carter

The Actors and Stage Managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

**Members of the United Scenic Artists Union (USA).*

Anne Bogart is a member of SDC, the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, an independent national labor union.

This adaptation was commissioned by The J. Paul Getty Museum and first performed at the Getty Villa on Wednesday, September 5, 2018. The production was funded, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the Howard Gilman Foundation and the Fan Fax and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation.

SITI Company was built on the bedrock of ensemble. The company believes that through the practice of collaboration, a group of artists working together over time can have a significant impact on both contemporary theater and the world at large. Through its performances, educational programs and collaborations with other artists and thinkers, SITI Company challenges the status quo, trains to achieve artistic excellence in every aspect of their work, and offers new ways of seeing and of being as both artists and as global citizens. SITI Company provides a gymnasium-for-the-soul where the interaction of art, artists, audiences and ideas inspire the possibility for change, optimism and hope.

Founded in 1992 by Anne Bogart, Tadashi Suzuki and a group of likeminded artists, SITI Company began as an agreement to redefine and revitalize contemporary theater in the United States through an emphasis on international cultural exchange, training and collaboration. Originally envisioned as a summer institute in Saratoga Springs, NY, SITI expanded to encompass a year-round season inclusive of touring, the creation of new work and running a biennial Conservatory program for nine months of the year to cultivate the next generation of independent theater artists. Based in New York City, SITI continues to operate its international training program during its summer season in Saratoga.

In addition to Co-Artistic Directors Anne Bogart, Leon Ingulsrud and Ellen Lauren, SITI Company is comprised of eight actors, four designers, a stage manager and a playwright. The company represents a change in thinking about the relationships between artists and institutions. Offering performances from varied repertoire and workshops in the unique theater training they champion, SITI Company is dedicated to establishing long lasting relationships with theater presenters and their communities around the world.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ARTISTS AT GO.UMD.EDU/SITICOMPANY

SYNOPSIS

Euripides' *The Bacchae* is based on the myth of Pentheus, the young king of Thebes, who banned the worship of the god Dionysus, also known as Bacchus, and was punished as a result. Dionysus arrives in Thebes from Asia Minor disguised as a Lydian priest, with his band of Bacchant women to convince the Thebans that they should worship Dionysus as a god. He has driven the women of Thebes, including Agave, his aunt and Pentheus's mother, into an ecstatic frenzy of dance and hunting on Mount Cithaeron. The old blind seer Tiresias and Cadmus, Agave's father, join the Theban women as devotees in order to preserve the welfare of their city. King Pentheus orders his soldiers to arrest anyone found to be engaging in the rites.

Dionysus, in his disguise as the Lydian leader of the Dionysian priests, deliberately allows himself to be arrested, so that he might set a trap for Pentheus. Being a god, Dionysus breaks free of his chains and razes the palace to the ground with a giant earthquake. A messenger brings sensational reports from Mount Cithaeron, including news that the women of Thebes are behaving strangely and performing incredible feats and miracles. Dionysus persuades the king to dress as a woman and go up the mountain in disguise to witness the strange rites taking place there. A second messenger arrives in a state of shock, having witnessed the wild Theban women capturing Pentheus and tearing his body apart, piece by piece.

Still possessed by the Dionysian ecstasy, Pentheus' mother Agave, arrives back in Thebes, carrying what she believes to be the head of a mountain lion that she killed with her bare hands. She proudly displays her son's severed head to her horrified father Cadmus. As her frenzy begins to wear off, Agave realizes what she has done. Dionysus appears in his true form and sends Agave into exile and turns Cadmus and his wife Harmonia into snakes.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

"More than any other play in Western civilization, Euripides' The Bacchae is probably the one that most directly addresses the art of theater. Dionysus, one of the central characters in the plays, is not only the god of divine ecstasy, fertility, wine and harvest, but also presides over the theater. At one point a bewitched Pentheus exclaims, 'I seem to see two suns, the city of Thebes doubled.' Indeed, we attend the theater knowing that we are 'seeing double.' We are aware, for example, that we are looking at an actor or at precisely lit staging and scenery, but at the same time we allow ourselves to enter into another world that is merely suggested by what is actually present.

"Towards the end of The Bacchae, Agave enters carrying what she believes to be a mountain

lion's head but is, in fact, the severed head of her son Pentheus. Our Agave speaks in Japanese, transcending language—the eloquence of her emotional intensity communicates the unfathomable depths of her grief. Agave asks her father Cadmus where Pentheus is, not realizing that she is carrying his head in her hand.

*'Look what I'm holding in my arms—a trophy
worthy to be nailed up on your roof.*

*Come take it in your hands and celebrate
the hunt and ask your friends to feast with us.*

Eventually Cadmus calms Agave to the point that she realizes she is holding the head of her son.

Oh, wretched! It is Pentheus' head

Who murdered him? Why is he in my hands?'

"Dionysus arrives in the midst of this tragic domestic scene and proceeds to exile both Cadmus and Agave. Her final words as she exits:

*'I, with my pitiful sisters, now am heading
into exile. May I go where
accursed Mt. Cithaeron never sees me,
where my eyes will never look on Mt. Cithaeron,
where no sacred staff has been set up
as offering. Such matters are for other Bacchants.'"*

—Anne Bogart, SIT Company

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

"My translation of The Bacchae is exceptional in that it is intended for live performance. This emphasis means both that the translation is comprehensible on a first hearing, and that it preserves, formally, the incantatory quality of the poetry in the original. I translated the dialogue and narrative sections into the iambic pentameter of Shakespeare and set the choral sections apart with different rhythms and rhyme to make clear that these sections are song and not conversational speech. The resulting translation is a musical experience that modulates, as the original does, between spoken and sung lines of verse. Euripides was, famously, a poetic virtuoso, and I have done all I can to recreate the sonic richness of his original version in English.

—Aaron Poochigian

FEATURED ARTIST INTERVIEW



SITI Company Co-Artistic Director **Anne Bogart** is known for expanding what Mary Overlie originally articulated as the Six Viewpoints. Bogart and SITI Company use The Viewpoints as a way for actors to function together spontaneously and intuitively, and to generate bold, theatrical work quickly. It develops flexibility, articulation and strength in movement and makes ensemble playing really possible. School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies Assistant Professor Jennifer Barclay (who teaches Viewpoints) spoke with Bogart about the process of creating *The Bacchae*.

How did you use the Viewpoints, in collaboration with your ensemble, to create your production of *The Bacchae*?

We did daily training in Viewpoints and Suzuki, for 15 minutes each. These two methodologies create a shared language that the ensemble works with. But then when we began rehearsal, we fell into more traditional work. Picasso said that that the first stroke on the canvas is always a mistake, and so it is best to get on with the mistake, earlier rather than later. I believe that every act of construction is an act of destruction, and so I came in with a lot of ideas for this play that never happened and deviated through collaboration. *The Bacchae* really talks back to you, and the Viewpoints allow you to listen deeply. Our ensemble listened together, as if using a ouija board, and we followed what the play told us the staging needed to be.

Do you have a firm hand as a director?

The saying goes, “strong on the outside or inside, one cannot be both.” As a director, I am strong on the inside. I am the steel pole surrounded by cotton.

Do the designers join your early rehearsals?

Yes! As much as possible! Sound designer Darron L West were there from day one and, during our daily warm-ups, they used sound in conversation with the ensemble’s Viewpoints work. Our lighting designer Brian H. Scott joined in once we were in tech.

ARTIST ENGAGEMENT ON CAMPUS AND IN THE COMMUNITY

The Clarice's Visiting Artist Series is committed to providing extensive campus and community engagement opportunities that extend the academic learning and cultural opportunities. **Mwenso and the Shakes** visited School of Music (SOM) classes and participated in The Clarice's K12 Matinee Series. **Black Grace** founder and artistic director Neil Ileremia hosted an Arts Citizenship Talk (ACTnow) with College of Education professor and chair William Ming Liu. Black Grace company members also visited School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies (TDPS) classes and coached students from Northwestern High School in Prince George's County. **SITI Company** co-artistic director Anne Bogart visited TDPS classes and co-hosted an ACTnow event with Theatre Alliance's Raymond Caldwell. Company member Ellen Lauren also taught in TDPS and worked with Maryland Opera Studio students. **Brentano Quartet** coached and performed for SOM students.

COMING UP

VISITING ARTIST SERIES: JAZZ

STEFON HARRIS & BLACKOUT (USA)

FRI, NOV 8 • 7PM & 9PM

MILKBOY ARTHOUSE

STARTING AT \$25 PUBLIC / \$10 STUDENT/YOUTH /
UMD STUDENTS FREE

Stefon Harris and his airtight quintet Blackout thread tunes by the likes of Wayne Shorter, Horace Silver, Bobby Hutcherson and Abbey Lincoln together with sophisticated originals—Harris' vibraphone sparkling across everything. Alternately romantic and relaxed or charged and urgent, the band moves together effortlessly, their communal energy apparent with every turn of phrase. Harris is a consummate instrumentalist and a stunning bandleader in command of a mighty unit.

VISITING ARTIST SERIES: RECITAL

TENEBRAE (UK)

WED, NOV 13 • 8PM

ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, COLLEGE PARK

\$30 PUBLIC / \$10 STUDENT & YOUTH / UMD STUDENTS FREE

If angels exist, they sound exactly like the 17-voice Tenebrae. Tenebrae's performances are an odyssey of the voice. In concert, "Tenebrae [is] special," raves *The Guardian*. "These [are] exemplary performances, lucid and ... commanding." In this performance presented at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, the beloved chamber choir celebrates 20th-century English choral music, particularly the work of prolific poet and composer Ivor Gurney. Tenebrae closes with Herbert Howells' heartrending *Requiem*, an extraordinary piece showcasing the ensemble's impeccable precision, always in service to their musicality.

VISITING ARTIST SERIES: DANCE

MONICA BILL BARNES (USA)

HAPPY HOUR

NOV 21 - 22 • 8PM

MILKBOY ARTHOUSE

STARTING AT \$25 PUBLIC / \$10 STUDENT & YOUTH /
UMD STUDENTS FREE

Monica Bill Barnes inserts dance into unusual contexts, moving as fluidly on the world's largest stages as in an art museum or at this fictional after-work happy hour. After ample time for mingling and drinking, the true party kicks off with a wide array of dances including jazz, tap and ballet. Drawing from the shared experience of being utterly convinced that everyone can see the pimple on your nose or the awkward fit of your shirt, Monica Bill Barnes & Company act out that uncomfortable feeling at happy hours arising as a result of macho-societal tendencies.

VISITING ARTIST SERIES: THEATRE

PORTE PAROLE (CANADA)

THE ASSEMBLY

DEC 5 - 7 • 8PM

KOGOD THEATRE, THE CLARICE

\$25 PUBLIC / \$10 STUDENT & YOUTH / UMD STUDENTS FREE

Pioneering Montreal theater company Porte Parole uses research to create plays about complex topics including water usage rights, power utilities and police brutality. The 2016 American presidential election inspired Porte Parole to consider what may sound like a terrifying scenario: a dinner party with four strangers of divergent political persuasions. *The Assembly* draws from these real-life conversations of participants from the University of Maryland community.

VISITING ARTIST SERIES: DANCE

37TH ANNUAL CHOREOGRAPHERS' SHOWCASE (USA)

SAT, JAN 25 • 3PM & 8PM

DANCE THEATRE, THE CLARICE

\$25 PUBLIC / \$10 STUDENT & YOUTH / UMD STUDENTS FREE

A partnership between The Clarice and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, this showcase has been called "a rite of passage in the Washington area dance community" by *The Washington Post*. The showcase puts experienced choreographers and emerging artists on equal footing. Over the years, some of the region's best dance talent has choreographed and performed.

VISITING ARTIST SERIES: GLOBAL MUSIC

LEYLA MCCALLA QUARTET (USA)

FRI, JAN 31 • 8PM

MILKBOY ARTHOUSE

STARTING AT \$25 PUBLIC / \$10 STUDENT & YOUTH /
UMD STUDENTS FREE

New Orleans-based, New York-born, Haitian raised. Cellist Leyla McCalla's succinctly elegant folk music is her way of processing the nation's current political environment, where many of the issues are financial, but they're rarely simply financial. The former Carolina Chocolate Drops member deepens her examination of Creole identities in her sound by bringing together her voice and her cello with fiddle, clarinet, piano and electric guitar. At the forefront of her work is her Haitian identity, singing many of her tunes in Creole, which she classifies as a language of resistance, especially as she explores its connections to New Orleans.

LEARN MORE AT THECLARICE.UMD.EDU