The Broad Stage Announces 2020/21 Season, Paving the Way for a New Artistic Direction and Vision for the Future
First Season For Rob Bailis, The Broad Stage Artistic And Executive Director

SEASON LAUNCHES OUTDOORS IN FALL 2020 WITH WORLD PREMIERE OF MOBILE, THEATRICAL CHAMBER OPERA BIRDS IN THE MOON from Mark Grey and Júlia Canosa i Serra, directed by Elkhanah Pulitzer, performed outdoors at various sites, physically distanced and free to the public.

IN-THEATER SEASON TO RUN JANUARY THROUGH JULY 2021
Modified from original scope due to COVID-19 and proceeding with an abundance of caution, but also optimism. Working in partnership with Santa Monica College to devise reopening plan and ensure adherence to safety protocols.

ELEVEN LOS ANGELES PREMIERES
The 7 Fingers: Passengers • Acrobuffos: Air Play • Compagnie Marie Chouinard: Hieronymus Bosch, The Garden of Earthly Delights • Heartbeat Opera: Fidelio • Ephrat Asherie Dance Company: Odeon • Cristina Pato & Mazz Swift: INVISIBLE(s) • Fauxnique: The F Word • Nassim • Alanna Mitchell: Sea Sick • Yo-Yo Ma & Austin Mann: Truth, Trust and Service – How Culture Connects Us • Alan Cumming & Ari Shapiro: Och & Oy! A Considered Cabaret

SEVENTEEN ARTISTS NEW TO THE BROAD STAGE
Simone Dinnerstein • Fauxnique • Joe Lovano • Yo-Yo Ma • Austin Mann • Alanna Mitchell • Miloš • Cristina Pato • Dianne Reeves • Nassim Soleimanpour • Mazz Swift • Takács Quartet • Chucho Valdés • Acrobuffos • Ephrat Asherie Dance Company • Heartbeat Opera • Mark Morris Dance Group and Music Ensemble

THE RETURN OF BELOVED FAVORITES
Nat Geo Live celebrating 10+ year at The Broad Stage; chamber music series Beethoven, Bagels & Banter curated by Robert Davidovich; jazz & blues series blackbox curated by The Reverend Shawn Amos now introducing social dances; and an extraordinary season of poetry with Red Hen Press.

ARTISTS AS AGENTS OF A WELL SOCIETY
Yo-Yo Ma and photographer Austin Mann on the healing power of music; Heartbeat Opera on wrongful incarceration in Fidelio; the gender-bending Fauxnique’s The F Word; Iranian playwright Nassim Soleimanpour on the power of empathy; Canadian journalist Alanna Mitchell’s Sea Sick and the dark truth about our oceans; musicians Cristina Pato & Mazz Swift and the power of forgotten communities in INVISIBLE(s); the visceral impact of poetry with Red Hen Press.

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CLASSICAL, JAZZ & BLUES AND CABARET ON THE CONCERT STAGE

Classical: Takács Quartet • Simone Dinnerstein • Miloš
Jazz & Blues: The Stanley Clarke Band • Dianne Reeves, Chucho Valdes, and Joe Lovano • Cristina Pato & Mazz Swift • Keb’ Mo’
Cabaret: Alan Cumming & Ari Shapiro

MOVEMENT TRAILBLAZERS BRING THEIR WORK TO THE BROAD STAGE

Mark Morris Dance Group and Music Ensemble: Mozart Dances • Ephrat Asherie Dance Company: Odeon • The 7 Fingers: Passengers • Compagnie Marie Chouinard: Hieronymus Bosch, The Garden of Earthly Delights

A SPECTRUM OF DYNAMIC OPERA

Birds in the Moon • Heartbeat Opera: Fidelio • Elīna Garanča in recital

NEW LEADERSHIP ANNOUNCED

Rob Bailis completes new leadership team with Chief Operating Officer Matthew Rimmer and Chief External Affairs Officer Shana Mathur

Series Subscriptions and Create-Your-Own packages available at thebroadstage.org

May 27, 2020 | Santa Monica, CA – Rob Bailis, Artistic and Executive Director of The Broad Stage, Richard Kendall, Board President of The Broad Stage, and Dr. Kathryn E. Jeffery, Superintendent and President of Santa Monica College, announce The Broad Stage’s 2020/21 season, Bailis’ first since he joined in June 2019. The season, modified in scope as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, is optimistic in nature and paves the way for a new artistic vision for the future of the organization.

Bailis said, “I believe performing arts organizations grow in the soil in which they are planted, which is to say there is an inextricable bond between the needs and nature of a given community and the artists whom they call to illuminate, perplex and evolve their way of life. This is never more important than in times of crisis. As a relative newcomer to Santa Monica and the westside of Los Angeles, planning a season that must respond to these urgent conditions and uncertainties has been both immensely rewarding and also challenging.”

The announcement comes at a delicate time as the arts are reeling from the pandemic. The Broad Stage responds to these conditions with a condensed season running from mid-January through July 2021, with the hopeful exception of one outdoor, physically distanced event in the Fall and a robust selection of new digital offerings beginning in July 2020.

Bailis continued, “As an artistic director, I am as committed to the new, the groundbreaking and the controversial as I am to the proven, the beloved and the traditional. I began my career as a professional classical musician and I later found my way to contemporary dance and theater, so the journey has been unusual and the array of fellow travelers has been eclectic. As we face these challenging times, full of frustration, grief and loss, I am all the more moved to introduce a group of artists whom I know we can turn to for healing, inspiration and breakthroughs toward the betterment of our society. Provided we are able to convene safely, I believe the season will live up to our hopeful promise of listening deeply to our community and in response, introducing new artists and work to The Broad Stage, Santa Monica, our region and the world.”

Richard Kendall, Board Chair of The Broad Stage, said, “Rob’s leadership and creative qualities, and his deep connections to the major performing arts creators of our day made him the ideal choice to bring The Broad Stage into its next era. Now, one year after his appointment, his unerring instincts and great
positivity are guiding our team through this time, supported by two senior staff members: Chief Operating Officer Matthew Rimmer, who came to us two years ago from a long career on Broadway as a General Manager, and Shana Mathur, who recently joined as our Chief External Affairs Officer and was a successful non-profit consultant and the LA Phil’s Chief Marketing Officer from 2008 to 2018."

Santa Monica College announced in early May that it would continue distance-learning through the fall, and therefore the campus remains closed including the theaters primarily used by The Broad Stage, located at the Santa Monica College Performing Arts Center: The Eli & Edythe Broad Stage’s main stage, The Edye Second Space and The East Wing.

Santa Monica College Superintendent and President Dr. Kathryn E. Jeffery said, “For twelve seasons, The Broad Stage has become a Santa Monica College symbol of hope, optimism and a clarity of vision through the artists on our stages, and even as we always consider safety, we intend to keep that beacon shining as bright as possible to offer comfort during today’s challenging moment and inspire continuity of artistic expression that elevates the mind and spirit.”

Rimmer said, “The Broad Stage is working hand-in-hand with Santa Monica College, the City of Santa Monica, Los Angeles County and performing arts venues throughout the region on how to return safely to public performances indoors, including ingress/egress, queuing for restrooms and concessions, required facial coverings and enhanced sanitation procedures.”

Mathur added, “The safety and personal comfort of our customers are paramount. We want people to purchase tickets with confidence, knowing that we guarantee refunds for cancelled performances or even if they have a change of heart due to uncertainties associated with gathering in person. We’re hoping that people will invest in the future with us by buying tickets now, in support of the artists we champion on our stages and the broader community which we serve.”

While the in-theater season begins in January, The Broad Stage is planning to present a robust set of programs online starting in July through its streaming portal The Broad Stage At Home, to introduce the 2020/21 season artists and upcoming commissions for 2021/22 and beyond. More details on these programs will be announced in June.

Series Subscriptions and Create-Your-Own packages are available at thebroadstage.org. Members receive priority until June 3.

WORLD PREMIERE: BIRDS IN THE MOON

The official launch of The Broad Stage’s 2020/21 season will occur this Fall, with the World Premiere of Birds in the Moon, a mobile, theatrical chamber opera by Mark Grey and Júlia Canosa i Serra, and directed by Elkhanah Pulitzer. The opera, in collaboration with Meyer Sound, is transported in a shipping container which transforms into a state-of-the-art, self-powered stage, will be performed outdoors in a variety of to-be-determined locations around Santa Monica. Physical distancing protocols will be in place with multiple performances so that as many people as possible can enjoy. With live music, soundscapes, video projections and actors, Birds in the Moon is about the search for a better world. Now, even more timely than when originally conceived, the work considers the choices made by necessity in an environment where water is scarce, and migration is a desperate flight in search of a better life.

Grey and Canosa i Serra are best known for their National Opera of Belgium production of Frankenstein. Pulitzer directed David Lang’s prisoner of the state for the New York Philharmonic and the Barbican Theatre, Leonard Bernstein’s Mass for the LA Phil and at Lincoln Center, Nixon in China for the LA Phil, John Adams’ The Gospel According to the Other Mary for San Francisco Symphony and Lucia di
Lammermoor for LA Opera. The creative team is further enhanced with video design by Deborah O’Grady and production design by Chad Owens.

**HEARTBEAT OPERA, YO-YO MA & AUSTIN MANN, ORIGINAL THEATER PIECES, ALAN CUMMING & NPR’S ARI SHAPIRO**

In New York-based Heartbeat Opera’s Fidelio (Los Angeles Premiere February 13-14), real prisoners sing the parts of prisoners – an imaginative staging with live performers and 100 singers on video from incarcerated choirs across America. Fidelio is directed by Ethan Heard, Founding Co-Artistic Director of Heartbeat Opera; the music director is Daniel Schlosberg.

Yo-Yo Ma and Austin Mann (Los Angeles Premiere April 29) explore the role culture plays in helping to imagine and build a stronger, more resilient society, in their multimedia presentation Truth, Trust and Service – How Culture Connects Us. This special collaboration continued an experiment that Yo-Yo began with the Bach Project, a two year journey on six continents for which performances of Bach’s suites for solo cello were paired with “Days of Action” asking how culture seeks truth, builds trust and encourages all of us to work in service of one another.

In April 2021, three original theater-makers perform their acclaimed productions at The Edye, all seen for the first time in Los Angeles. The Bay Area’s gender bender Monique Jenkinson, the first cis-gender woman to win a major drag queen pageant, presents feminism as a powerful, vulnerable and subversive act through her drag queen alter ego Fauxnique in The F Word (April 2-3).

In Nassim (April 16–18) playwright Nassim Soleimanpour from Tehran appears on stage in an audacious theatrical experiment when a different performer joins him each night, while the script waits unseen in a sealed box. The New York Times said, “His new play speaks, at times eloquently, of trying to live and work in a place and with a language not your own.”

In Sea Sick (April 23-24), prize winning journalist Alanna Mitchell from Toronto tells the dark truth about our oceans. Exeunt Magazine said, “The story can be hard to hear, but Sea Sick convincingly argues that to hear this story completely is to forgive ourselves, and to understand our agency, our role, and ourselves as actors.”

In a different musical program on the main stage, two musicians embody this spirit: Galician bagpiper and Silkroad’s Cristina Pato and Juilliard-trained violinist Mazz Swift. Their program INVISIBLE(s) (Los Angeles Premiere March 20) sheds light on forgotten communities, Pato addresses women’s issues and Swift’s piece is about victims of police brutality and racism.

The season closes with a late-in-the-season and rare cabaret of tunes and tall tales from Tony Award winning actor Alan Cumming and NPR’s All Things Considered host and frequent Pink Martini singer Ari Shapiro in Och & Oy! A Considered Cabaret (Los Angeles Premiere July 30-31 presented with Southern California Public Radio).

**MARK MORRIS, EPHRAT ASHERIE, ACROBUFFOS, MARIE CHOUINARD, THE 7 FINGERS**

Among the companies and artists becoming part of The Broad Stage’s community for the first time this season are four movement trailblazers: Mark Morris Dance Group & Music Ensemble (June 10-13) performing Mozart Dances (The New York Times said, “Most artfully musical choreographer alive”); Ephrat Asherie Dance Company performing Odeon (March 5-6) (Berkshire Times said, “Just when you thought you knew something about dance, along comes Asherie to blow that all to smithereens.”); and Acrobuffos performing Air Play (Los Angeles Premiere January 23) – a stage-filling, unique wordless visual poem that brings to life the very air that we breathe, complete with stunning images and gales of laughter. Part sculpture, circus and theatre, Air Play transforms ordinary objects into uncommon beauty.
Compagnie Marie Chouinard (Los Angeles Premiere April 16-17) presents Hieronymus Bosch, The Garden of Earthly Delights from internationally-renowned and eye-openingly original choreographer Marie Chouinard. The performance is a living canvas of one of the world’s most famous paintings: a surreal dance vision that squarely confronts the before, during and after of original sin with visual wit, wonderment and chaos. Tanzchrift (Vienna) said, “Chouinard successfully pulls off the feat of actually bringing the Bosch triptych to life ... magnificent, delightful, startlingly well performed ... a new vision of Bosch.”

The 7 Fingers, a Broad Stage favorite, brings Passengers (Los Angeles Premiere February 19-21), a scintillating mix of evocative dance, physical expression, thrilling acrobatics and mesmerizing projections. Passengers reflects on our nostalgic fascination with trains, transporting audiences to dreams of another era and land, while celebrating the beauty of interpersonal relationships.

THE 2021 SEASON ALSO INCLUDES:

Duets with three legends: the pre-eminent jazz vocalist Dianne Reeves, Chucho Valdés - the most influential figure in modern Afro-Cuban jazz and saxophonist Joe Lovano, winner of DownBeat Magazine’s Critics and Readers Polls countless times as Tenor Saxophonist, Musician of the Year, Jazz Album of the Year and Triple Crowns. (Broad Stage Debuts, February 4-5)

A signature performance from Simone Dinnerstein, considered one of the foremost interpreters of Bach of her generation, of the Goldberg Variations (Broad Stage Debut February 6).

The Stanley Clarke Band (January 16) makes The Broad Stage their area home. Clarke, one of the most celebrated bass players in the world, attained “living legend” status during his 40-plus year career -- the first bassist in history to double on acoustic and electric bass with equal ferocity.

Takács Quartet (Broad Stage Debut January 15) in a program of Haydn, Britten and Debussy. “Arguably the greatest string quartet in the world,” said The Guardian. Former Broad Stage resident artist Richard Yongjae O’Neill recently joined the group.

Recital from Elīna Garanča (May 9) who made her United States recital debut at The Broad Stage in 2012. Opera News said, “Elīna Garanča has already secured her place in opera history, and she may just be getting started.”

Keb’ Mo’ (March 26) The five-time GRAMMY® winner has a reputation as a modern master of American roots music, performing an evening of old-fashioned blues mixed seamlessly with contemporary soul and folksy storytelling.

Miloš (March 12-13), the young virtuoso who revitalized the role of the guitar in classical music, has a repertoire spanning Bach to The Beatles.

THE RETURN OF BELOVED FAVORITE SERIES: NAT GEO LIVE, BLACKBOX, BEETHOVEN, BAGELS & BANTER, RED HEN PRESS

Nat Geo Live celebrates its 10th year at The Broad Stage. In Improbable Ascent (March 18-19), Maureen Beck relates her inspiring story as a one-handed rock climber. In Invisible Wonders (April 1-2) photographer Anand Varma uses a camera not just a tool to capture what he sees, but as a way to illuminate layers of beauty and complexity that are otherwise hidden from the naked eye. In How to Clone a Mammoth (May 20-21), Beth Shapiro asks the question could extinct species, like mammoths and passenger pigeons, be brought back to life?
Beethoven, Bagels & Banter (Sundays, 11:00am Jan 31, Feb 28, Apr 11; The Edye)
The popular series returns with a season-long celebration of Beethoven’s 250th birthday. Curated by Robert Davidovici and featuring a mélange of world-class guest musicians, each program will include at least one work by the great composer himself. “Robert Davidovici is a terrific violinist. His technique is of the ‘wow’ variety, his tone as huge as he cares to make it.” said The Boston Globe. Spend your Sunday mornings with great music, lively conversation and freshly made bagels.

This season blackbox – now in both The Edye and the East Wing Music Hall, which allows space for dancing -- is curated by The Reverend Shawn Amos, who will perform with his new band The Brotherhood (June 25), as well as evenings with vocalist Missy Anderson (February 16), bassist Jennifer Leitham (March 19) and guitarist King Solomon Hicks (April 9).

Red Hen Press, which partnered on The Broad Stage at Home during the pandemic hiatus, has three programs, the first exploring African American Poetry and the Blues (February 13) featuring Dexter L. Booth, Douglas Manuel and Eleanor Wilner, with music by Keith Flynn and The Holy Men. The second Those Who Loved Medusa (March 13) features the gorgeous operatic compositions of Mark Abel, sung by GRAMMY® Award-winning soprano Hila Plitmann, and poet Felicia Zamora; the third program, Poetry of Resistance (May 8) presents work by writers of color, women and LGBT writers Allison Joseph, Khalisa Rae, David Campos, Kazim Ali and Blas Falconer, and the “jungle jazz” mixture of African, Latin and Caribbean grooves and American Jazz from percussionist Munyungo Jackson.

Bailis said, “Our partnership with Red Hen Press allows us to embrace library arts; as we venture to become as much a producing theater, more than singularly a presenter. The presence of writers, creatives and creative producers is part of how we are envisioning our future.”

ANNOUNCEMENT OF SENIOR STAFF

The Broad Stage announces that it has completed its senior staff with the appointment of Los Angeles arts veteran Shana Mathur as Chief External Affairs Officer, joining previously appointed Chief Operating Officer Matthew Rimmer, who has had a long career as a Broadway General and Company Manager. Mathur, as Chief External Affairs Officer, will lead the institution’s Development, Marketing & Communications and Patron Services departments.

She will play a critical advancement role within the institution’s leadership team, contributing to the overall strength and future impact of the institution. By bringing the three outward bound departments together as one, The Broad Stage is signaling that it is taking a new, collaborative approach to patron and audience development.

Mathur’s experience in live arts runs deep in Los Angeles and beyond. For more than 20 years, she has held critical roles for large non-profit arts organizations at pivot points, driven by their need and desire to create, expand and deepen meaningful connections with their patrons and communities.

From 2008-2018, Shana was the LA Phil’s Chief Marketing Officer, leading marketing, communications and sales efforts for the organization and its iconic venues the Hollywood Bowl and Walt Disney Concert Hall. She played a major role in the organization’s tremendous growth during this time, from introducing Gustavo Dudamel to Los Angeles to planning the orchestra’s recent centennial. Since her departure from the LA Phil, she has worked on a consulting basis as a strategic advisor to major arts nonprofits across the country.

Bailis said, “I am tremendously pleased at our recruitment of Shana Mathur as our Chief External Affairs Officer. She brings to The Broad Stage a wealth of knowledge and experience from her time at the LA Phil during its period of tremendous artistic and financial growth and her vast experience working in the arts. She joins our Chief Operating Officer Matthew Rimmer, who came to us from a twenty-five year
career working as a Broadway General Manager and the commercial entertainment world. He has a kind of practical experience that is extremely applicable to the financial health of our organization."

Rimmer managed large Broadway theatrical productions including some of our era’s greatest hits: *The Phantom of the Opera, Miss Saigon, Hairspray, Chicago* and *Mamma Mia!* on Broadway, subsequent national tours and Las Vegas. He has also served as the International Spokesperson for *Walking With Dinosaurs - The Arena Spectacular*.

**Sponsors**

*Beethoven, Bagels & Banter:* Barbara Herman  
*blackbox:* Ann Petersen and Leslie Pam  
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**About The Broad Stage**

The Broad Stage gathers artists, thinkers and audiences to celebrate our shared humanity and expand the role the arts play in the vitality of our diverse community. As a presenter and producer of performing arts affiliated with Santa Monica College, The Broad Stage brings a bold array of renowned local, national and international artists across dance, theatre, humanities, classical, jazz and popular music, to the Westside of Los Angeles each year. In addition, our immersive Education & Community programs serve thousands of schoolchildren and families, and provide ongoing opportunities for SMC students and faculty to directly engage with the art and artists.

The Broad Stage primarily utilizes the state-of-the-art venues at Santa Monica College Performing Arts Center including The Eli & Edythe Broad Stage main stage, The Edye Second Space and The East Wing, and also increasingly brings a variety of site-specific work and community programs to spaces across the Westside. The Eli and Edythe Broad Stage main stage is unlike any performance space in the country; it is sublimely intimate with just over 500 seats yet strikingly grand in its feel, boasting one of the city’s largest proscenium stages. The 100-seat black box Edye Second Space and the versatile East Wing are adaptable performing spaces allowing for a wide variety of artists and experiences.

**Editors please note** when referring to our venue, we are appropriately The Broad Stage (three words) and we are located in Santa Monica, California. The Broad (two words) refers to the contemporary art museum on Grand Avenue in downtown Los Angeles.