

Yara Arts Group from La MaMa Experimental Theatre presents:

YARA'S WINTER FESTIVAL: WORLD EPIC SONGS

African American Songs



November 2020

www.yaraartsgroup.net

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Yara's World Epic Song Festival African American Songs

Entrance music: performed by Mary D. Williams

Introduction Virlana Tkacz

Songs Are Essential for Endurance: Mary D. Williams

Music: They Say That Freedom Is a Constant Struggle
Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel
Go Down Moses
Oh, Mary Don't You Weep
Hush. Hush. Someone's Callin' My Name
Steal Away Home
Lord, Why Come Me Here?
Swing Low, Sweet Chariot
I'm on My Way to Canaan Land
All songs performed by Mary D. Williams

Discussion:

How These Songs Are Learned
On the Wings Over Jordan Choir
Transformation of the Spirituals into Civil Rights Songs

Music: Wade in the Water
I Got a Robe, You Got A Robe
Over My Head I Hear Freedom in the Air

Exit Music How I Got Over

virtual event directed by Virlana Tkacz
bandurist and epic singer: Julian Kytasty
special guests: Mary D. Williams and Iryna Voloshyna
visual design: Waldemart Klyuzko,
tech support: Darien Fiorino

MARY D. WILLIAMS has performed the songs and told the stories of the Black South for over 25 years. She has traveled to colleges, public schools, churches, libraries to share her knowledge and art. Along with Dr. Timothy B. Tyson, she has taught a community-based college course, “The South in Black and White,” to over a thousand students at Duke University. Mary can be heard on the soundtrack for Hollywood movies, television, at theatres and featured on NPR “When you listen to Mary D. Williams,” Professor Craig Werner has said “you’re hearing the voice of a great singer, but you’re also hearing the voices of the elders and the ancestors.”

VIRLANA TKACZ heads the Yara Arts Group and has directed over thirty original shows at La MaMa Theatre in New York, as well as in Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv, Bishkek, Ulaanbaatar, and Ulan Ude. She has co-produced a series of concerts and recordings of Buryat Mongolian artists and of the Koliadnyky of Kryvorivnia from the Carpathian Mountains. She has also worked with Kyrgyz artists to create two theatre pieces based on Kyrgyz epics songs.

JULIAN KYTASTY grew up within a strong tradition of family music-making. He is a third generation bandurist following in the footsteps of his father Petro and grandfather Ivan Kytasty, and is recognized for his performance of Ukrainian epic songs. He works frequently with Yara Arts Group, most recently on a series of virtual events exploring the life and work of NY bandurist Zinoviy Shtokalko. His work on Yara’s *1917-2017 Tychyna, Zhadan, and the Dogs* earned him a NY Innovative Theater Award for best original score.

IRYNA VOLOSHYNA is a folklorist working with Yara Arts Group. Originally from Khmelnytskyi, Ukraine, she sang with Ladovytsi. In New York, she is a member of Ukrainian Village Voices and works at the Ukrainian Museum. She is a doctoral student at Indiana University.

WALDEMART KLYUZKO is an artist from Kyiv who has collaborated with Yara Arts Group since 2010, most recently creating the set for *Opera GAZ*. He is a visual artist who has had exhibits at La MaMa Galleria, the Ukrainian Institute of America and the Bezpala Gallery in Toronto.

DARIEN FIORINO is at Cornell University studying environmental science and performing arts. He was in Yara’s *Winter Songs on Mars* and *1917/2017: Tychyna, Zhadan, and the Dogs* at La MaMa.

STAFF: Publicity: Zoriana Siokalo

YARA ARTS GROUP was established in 1990 and is a resident company at La MaMa, the acclaimed experimental theater in New York. Yara has created thirty-seven theatre pieces based on extensive research in Eastern Europe, Siberia and Asia, in Yara’s signature style of multilingual dialogue and songs supported by evocative visuals and documentation. Yara has also created numerous traditional music events and the *Kurbas: New Worlds* exhibition for the Art Arsenal in Kyiv. **Yara Arts Group 306 East 11th St #3B, New York, NY 10003 (212)475-6474 yara@prodigy.net www.yaraartsgroup.net**

Yara’s Virtual Events are made possible by public funds from New York State Council on the Arts and the New York City Department for Cultural Affairs, as well as the friends of Yara Arts Group.



OTHER YARA VIRTUAL EVENTS:

www.yaraartsgroup.net

Serhiy Zhadan: Poetry and Jazz

Zinoviy Shtokalko: Bandura Instrumentals,
Singer of Tales
Epic Modernist
Ukrainian Epic Songs

Ukrainian American Cultural Figures:

Pawlo Humeniuk -known as the “King of Ukrainian Music” in the 1920s.

Vasile Avramenko -who brought Ukrainian dance to New York in 1929.

Zinoviy Shtokalko Ukrainian epic singer in New York in the 1950-60s

Oleh Lysheha – Ukrainian poet who worked with Yara in the 1990s

Yara Winter World Epic Song Festival

Kyrgyz epic, or dastan

Finnish Kalevala

Buryat epic or uliger

African American Songs

Ukrainian epic or дума