Yara Arts Group

Celebrates our diversity and the intersection of cultures that leads to a greater understanding.

Founded in 1990 by Virlana Tkacz, a director of Ukrainian heritage, Wanda Phipps, an African-American poet and Watoku Ueno, a Japanese designer.

Yara Arts Group
306 East 11th St. #3B
New York, NY 10003 USA
(212) 475-6474
www.yaraartsgroup.net

Yara Arts Group, a resident company at La MaMa Experimental Theatre in New York, is based in the East Village, home to a diverse community that includes a large number of Ukrainians and Japanese.
A company of American artists of Asian, African, Latino, Eastern and Western European ancestry who create original theatre pieces by bringing together plays, poems, songs, myths and historical material. Because of the diversity of our artists, we have privileged access to overlooked, but magnificent texts from the East. We have created over 35 theatre pieces and over a dozen puppet shows, based on extensive research in Asia, Siberia and Eastern Europe in Yara’s signature style of multilingual dialogue and songs supported by evocative visuals and documentation. Early works include: **Blind Sight** (1993), about Vasily Yeroshenko, a blind poet and the Japan he “saw” in 1914 (image 1 & 2); **Yara’s Forest Song** (1994), a ground-breaking multicultural production of a Ukrainian classic (image 3) and **Waterfall/Reflections** (1995), Yara’s collaboration with Ukraine’s national treasure - singer Nina Matvienko (image 4).

Yara created theatre pieces with Buryat-Mongolian artists of Siberia (image 5) and Kyrgyz artists of Central Asia (image 6), as well as series of theatre pieces with puppets grounded in Japanese culture (image 7). Recent works include: **Dark, Night, Bright Stars** (2016) about Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko and the great African-American tragedian Ira Aldridge (image 8); **1917-2017: Tychyna, Zhadan & the Dogs** (2017) about what individuals do when society crumbles, which won two NY Innovative Theatre Awards including best musical (image 9); and **Opera GAZ** (2019), (image 10) called the “most searing intentional modernist opera ever.”