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WHAT ARE THE GUERRILLAS DOING POST COVID-19 ISOLATION

BOSTON, MA (July 13, 2020)—Guerilla Opera’s thirteenth season of live performances ended as soon as it began, but the company has been all but silent. Here are their most recent upcoming events, new initiatives they’ve launched and ways to interact with the Guerrillas that are truly interactive.

[Beowulf Watch Party](#)

Thursday, July 23, 2020, 7:00PM EST

Commissioned and performed by Guerilla Opera in 2016, *Beowulf, a chamber opera in two acts* by Hannah Lash is a modern-day adaptation of the well-known epic poem, in which Beowulf is a doctor caring for his elderly mother and suffering from Post-Traumatic Stresses upon his return from a recent war. *Beowulf* investigates what it means to be a hero. (*Beowulf* was commissioned for and produced by Guerilla Opera in partnership with the Boston Conservatory at Berklee and supported by an OPERA America Opera Grants for Female Composers Discovery Grant. Used by arrangement with Schott Music Corporation, New York NY, publisher and copyright owner.)

[Poetry in Opera Workshop](#)

Saturday, July 25, 2020, 2:00PM EST

Guerilla Opera’s most popular free workshop is back! An interactive poetry-writing workshop inspired by libretti from our most exciting repertoire. Participants create their own poetry while exploring sensory-memory and themes connecting with the cultural realities of our contemporary society. Workshop lead by Guerilla Opera’s Director of Engagement Programs, Brenda Huggins.

[Guerilla Lab: Ensemble Performance](#)

Monday, July 27, 2020 – Friday, August 7, 2020

This Guerilla Lab intensive is designed to expand your creative mind, and to develop awareness, openness and quick thinking. Using Viewpoints Actor Training, you will explore important theatrical concepts of time and space and learn to create powerful work quickly. Spontaneous interactions from a group train our sense of play as well as build ensemble. It develops flexibility, articulation, strength in movement, and makes ensemble-generated work really possible! This workshop is \$175.00 to attend and \$148.75 with an Alumni Discount (15%). Workshop lead by Guerilla Opera’s Co-Artistic Director, Aliana de la Guardia.

[Guerilla Backyard Bash](#)

Friday, August 21, 2020 @ 7pm EST & Saturday, August 22, 2020 @ 3pm EST

The inaugural Guerilla Backyard Bash is a virtual backyard party that offers you an exclusive taste of what the Guerrillas have got cooking! They’ll premiere their latest “experiment” with design and direction by Deniz Khateri and the music of Kaija Saariaho, music from *A Dead Body* by local composer Mischa Salkind-Pearl and Franny Zhang, and featuring the

music of Emily Koh. They'll also reveal a brand new look! Purchase admission via Zoom link for you and your household for \$75.00 or join the Zoom Party with a friend from anywhere for \$112.50!

WHAT ELSE HAVE THE GUERRILLAS BEEN UP TO?

This month they launched their inaugural [Guerilla Lab](#), a series of intensive professional development workshops geared toward artist training to grow and evolve individual practices as part of a creative community with a strong emphasis on peer-learning and hands-on group exercises in a process-driven environment.

Their first workshop focuses on Libretto Writing and is lead by Brenda Huggins. It furthers their anti-racism, anti-sexism work in opera that began two years ago when Aliana de la Guardia and Julia Noulin-Mérat were appointed Co-Artistic Directors.

"We are feminists at our core," says de la Guardia "and while we're so proud of our artistic output, we saw that Guerilla Opera could do better. We immediately identified and engaged composers and many different kinds of artists we wanted to work with that were female-identifying, LGBTQ+, and people of color. Our Emergence Fellowship was one of our initiatives on this front as well." She adds, "We have always been a group that confronts preconceived notions. We're drawn to work that is complex and multicultural in nature. That's the world we live in."

Before they cancelled their season due to COVID-19 their thirteenth season mainstage lineup included Castle of Our Skins founder, Anthony R. Green, Victoria Chea, beloved local composer Marti Epstein, and featuring the unique animation work of Deniz Khateri, an up-and-coming theater artist and animator from Iran. Their Emergence Fellowship included composers Leah Reid, Caroline Louise Miller, Daniel Reza Sabzghabaei (دانیال رزاسابزغابایی) and Mina Salehpour (librettist), Jeremy Rapaport-Stein, as well as Niko Yamamoto and Athanasia Giannetos (librettist).

Guerilla Opera is the premiere ensemble for new opera in the Boston area and one of the first in the country to exclusively commission new works. Future seasons include works by Mischa Salkind-Pearl and Franny Zhang (librettist), Emily Koh, Elena Ruehr, Beth Wiemann, Tina Tallon, Gabriele Vanoni and Eva Chrusciel (librettist), as well as Grammy Award-winning composer Lansing McLoskey and Glen Nelson, whose work-in-development calls into question absolute notions of history and truth.

"When Brenda suggested this workshop we thought it was an incredible opportunity for Guerilla Opera to encourage and amplify other perspectives in our storytelling community." Noulin-Mérat adds, "Our ensemble's vision is to take on stories that confront antiquated traditions and examine our world through contemporary lenses. The opera industry should be infused with this. We were inspired and uplifted that so many varied and diverse artists came to us! Now we know we need to offer more so we can empower more!"

Their libretto workshop received fifty-nine applications for only twenty-eight spots from artists all over the world; composers, writers, singers, multi-media artists and more. More intensives will launch later this month and in August with training ranging from Viewpoints and Ensemble Performance theatrical training to Aesthetics in Fringe Opera.

De la Guardia notes: "Our ensemble approach to our music and art-making make us distinct in the opera world, and so we are focusing on peer learning experiences of many different kinds for these workshops. They're all online, all interactive and frequently have participants working together. This is really in sync with our creative process. We want to instigate creative collisions! Many different kinds of artists will meet each other at our workshops and this will foster future collaborations that will change the world! Artist exchange like this doesn't happen nearly enough in opera and classical music once you graduate higher ed. It becomes very isolated to academia and industry insiders. Breaking through can be hard."

In addition to the Guerilla Lab they have been working with the Haverhill Public Library since April on a [Community Series](#). They present free workshops that dissect and demystify opera production through the lens of their bold repertoire. These are frequently interactive as well and encourage questions and dialogue amongst the participants.

They are releasing monthly and bi-monthly podcast conversations with composers of their commissioned repertoire and sometimes each other, hosted by Tae Kim, their ensemble pianist.

Artistically, they are engaging with each other in short "[COVID Experiments](#)." With an ensemble-based performance practice that is both music and theater, the Guerilla All Stars have been and will be physically locked away from each other for a while! These experiments are short projects exploring music and theater, and serve to connect them with their art making and to each other, until they can come back to you in our intimate productions live!

Their latest experiment "Papillon" is a work in development, which will premiere at the [Guerilla Backyard Bash](#) in August. Aliana de la Guardia and Deniz Khateri team up for a unique presentation of Kaija Saariaho's ephemeral "Sept Papillons." Originally a chamber work for solo cello, the Guerillas breath imagination into the piece following the beautiful and ever-transforming life cycle of a butterfly. It features Khateri's design and direction and highlights her dazzling animation and shadow theater expertise. This, combined with de la Guardia's Cuban-inspired choreography and silhouettes and cellist Stephen Marotto's fragile musical rendition, promises to be a beautiful and transportative experience.

Another experiment "A Waltzer in the House" premiered as part of the Puppet Pandemic: On-Line! The Guerillas explore the unlikely and extraordinary friends we encounter now that we're more frequently home with puppetry and design made from collages of photographs and silhouettes by Brenda Huggins, and featuring "A Waltzer in the House" by Milton Babbitt and with text by Stanley Kuniz performed by Aliana de la Guardia and Mike Williams. This will also be presented as a "short" directly before the *Beowulf* Watch Party on Thursday, July 23.

With future Coronavirus outbreaks in mind they have been holding off announcing a scheduled season. "It will be a true season of discovery and experimentation," says Noulin-Mérat. Yet with works in development ranging from psychological thrillers to sophisticated family dramas to social justice, they're poised to launch into live performance with the ferocity their fans are used to.

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WHO WE ARE

Guerilla Opera has been a Boston-based, artist-led ensemble whose mission is to expand the possibilities of opera by immersing audiences in innovative, experimental and thought-provoking new works from cutting-edge composers in productions that reenvision the audience's relationship to the new work for profound and lasting experiences. In daring performances that often do not use a conductor, Guerilla Opera has garnered a national reputation for "deliciously inventive" (WBUR) contemporary opera with The Boston Globe raving that "radical exploration remains the cornerstone of everything it does." Since their founding in 2007 they have premiered over twenty-five new chamber works of varying lengths. Visit guerillaopera.org for more information.