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Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Presents
Holcombe Waller's *Requiem Mass: A Queer Divine Rite*



Photo courtesy of Hospital Hill

Friday and Saturday, November 16–17, 2018, 7:30PM
Grace Cathedral, 1100 California Street, San Francisco, CA

SAN FRANCISCO - (August 7, 2018) - In collaboration with Ghiberti Foundation at Grace Cathedral, [Yerba Buena Center for the Arts \(YBCA\)](#) is pleased to present [Requiem Mass: A Queer Divine Rite](#), a monumental choral work organized by renowned singer-composer **Holcombe Waller**. Making its San Francisco debut, *Requiem Mass* honors and invokes the peaceful repose of those who have suffered persecution due to their sexual orientation or gender expression. Featuring Waller and an all-abilities choir, the performance is an emotional and personal work informed by research into the pivotal years of gay history from the 1980s through the present day. The evening-length musical ceremony explores contemporary faith, advocacy through art, and collective catharsis, with emphasis on and engagement with San Francisco's LGBTQIA+ community. [Requiem Mass: A Queer Divine Rite](#) will have a two-night engagement in the historic **Grace Cathedral Episcopal Church** on **Friday and Saturday, November 16–17, 2018, at 7:30PM**. [Tickets](#) are now on sale to the general public.

“For more than forty years, San Francisco has been at the forefront of the LGBTQIA+ movement and has seen its share of tragedies,” says **YBCA Associate Director of Performing Arts Isabel T. Yrigoyen**, “During dark times, we need ceremonial healing to bring communities together in dignity and respect, reflect upon our past, and continue to strive towards liberation. *Requiem Mass: A Queer Divine Rite* connects art to social justice, and inspires us to fight for our dreams.”

In creating *Requiem Mass*, Waller engaged with experts in liturgical music, queer theory, and faith-based equality initiatives, as well as a broad array of local participants in a series of choral workshops. He has organized these choral workshops in various cities around the world, from Sydney, Australia, to Portland, Oregon. This summer in San Francisco, Waller's workshops have welcomed community members of all abilities to contribute to and participate in the creative process. Deeply influenced by input from local LGBTQIA+ community leaders, the San Francisco edition of *Requiem Mass* incorporates a reading from the **Grace Cathedral clergy**; a sermon by public theologian, artist, and poet **Marvin K. White**; a musical ensemble accompanying the choir developed from Waller's workshops; and more.

Waller's [final series of choral workshops](#) will take place **September 18, 20, 25, and 27, 2018, 7–9:30PM**, at **Grace Cathedral**. These workshops are 90 to 120 minutes each, free and open to the public, and the final opportunity to participate in the November performances. Pre-registration is highly encouraged, as space is limited to 40 participants per session.

[Requiem Mass Ticket Information](#)

Regular admission: \$12–\$32; seniors, teachers, and students: \$10.75–\$28.75; YBCA members: \$9.50–\$25.50

About the Artists

Holcombe Waller (b. 1975, Stanford, CA) is one of America's most unique voices in music theater. He is a 2011 United States Artists Berresford Fellow in Music, an award that noted his mournful, folk-inflected style as well as his approach to music “as total theater.” He is a Creative Capital artist, a four-time recipient of the MAP Fund grant, and a Joan Shipley Fellow of the Regional Arts and Culture Council of his hometown of Portland, Oregon. Waller has authored and produced scores of evening-length theater-based interdisciplinary music performances, and he has been presented and commissioned by the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Under the Radar Festival at the New York Public Theater, On the Boards, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Centre Pompidou, and many others. Waller's collaborations with choreography include work with Joe Goode Performance Group (San Francisco), zoe | juniper (Seattle), and Miguel Gutierrez (New York). His film score work includes music for the Sundance-selected documentary *We Were Here* (2011) and the two-part short film series *Dare* (2005). He has appeared as an actor in multiple films by artist Ryan Trecartin, and recently completed a Northwest regional tour of *Notes from the Riverkeepers*, an elaborate sung history of the high-risk transportation of fracked crude oil by cargo trains through the Columbia River Gorge. In addition to his interdisciplinary work, he has self-released five albums on his own label, Napoleon Records.

Erik Flatmo (b. 1975, Palo Alto, CA) is a West Coast-based scenic designer who works in theater, opera, and dance. His designs have appeared on the stages of American Conservatory Theater, Asolo Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre,

South Coast Repertory, Yale Repertory Theatre, Opera Santa Barbara, and the San Francisco Opera, among others. His professional focus is on original plays and dance pieces, and he has designed premiere productions by emerging playwrights Julia Jordan, Brooke Berman, Gary Sunshine, Zakiyyah Alexander, and Anne Washburn. Locally, he has collaborated extensively with director/playwright John Fisher, currently the Artistic Director of San Francisco's Theatre Rhinoceros. Upcoming work includes projects at San Francisco's Magic Theatre, San Francisco Opera Center, and Joe Goode Dance Company. Flatmo holds a BA in Architecture from Columbia University and an MFA in Design from the Yale School of Drama.

About the Curators

Marc Bamuthi Joseph is the Chief of Pedagogy at YBCA. He oversees the organization's performing arts program as well as signature initiatives such as YBCA Fellows and the YBCA 100. He is a 2017 TED Global Fellow, an inaugural recipient of the Guggenheim Social Practice initiative, and a proud honoree of the United States Artists Rockefeller Fellowship. He is also the winner of the 2011 Herb Alpert Award in Theatre, and an inaugural recipient of the Doris Duke Performing Artist Award. In pursuit of affirmations of black life in the public realm, he cofounded the Life Is Living Festival for Youth Speaks, and created the installation *Black Joy in the Hour of Chaos* for Creative Time. An imminent addition to his practice is a 2018 commission by the Brooklyn Museum to produce *the restless dead*, a series of site-specific performed elegies for Brooklyn-born ghosts. Joseph recently completed a new libretto with Bill T. Jones for Opera Philadelphia. His latest evening-length work, */peh-LO-tah/*, was commissioned by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and has been presented at leading cultural institutions across the nation.

Isabel T. Yrigoyen is Associate Director of Performing Arts at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. She produces the annual performing arts season at YBCA, which in its recent history has showcased ten to fifteen theater, dance, music, and interdisciplinary performances by local, national, and international artists. With Marc Bamuthi Joseph, she co-designed and implemented *Transform*, YBCA's new signature performance festival that features a two-week celebration of the power of ideas through transformative performance. Yrigoyen has acted as a contributing music curator for YBCA's Performing Arts department, curating creative music and

innovative groundbreaking artists in all genres. Her curatorial practice is driven by an interest in bridging musical traditions with contemporary performance practice, with an emphasis on women composers, experimentalists, and artists in social practice. In addition, Yrigoyen oversees and directs the Community Performance Rental program as a YBCA representative, booking and overseeing more than 160 contracted performances for a wide array of Bay Area nonprofit arts organizations who present dance, theater, and music on YBCA's stages. She currently serves on the board of directors of California Presenters, a statewide organization committed to advancing professional touring and presenting the performing arts for all the people of California.

Credits

Requiem Mass: A Queer Divine Rite, originally titled *Requiem Mass: LGBT / Working Title*, has been supported, in part, by grants from Creative Capital, MAP Fund, Equity Foundation, Autzen Foundation, and Pride Foundation. *Requiem Mass: LGBT / Working Title* was commissioned by the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art (PICA), premiered at the 2015 TBA Festival with support from the Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, and traveled to Performance Space in Sydney, Australia, the following year.

YBCA programs are made possible in part by: The James Irvine Foundation, with additional funding by National Endowment for the Arts, Grosvenor, and Members of Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

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About Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA) is one of the nation's most innovative contemporary

arts centers. Founded in 1993, YBCA's mission is to generate culture that moves people. Through powerful art experiences, thoughtful and provocative content, and deep opportunities for participation, YBCA is committed to creating an inclusive culture that awakens personal and societal transformation. YBCA presents a wide variety of programming year-round, including performing arts, visual arts, film/video, and civic engagement. For tickets and information, call 415.978.ARTS (2787). For more information, visit ybca.org.

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