



ANCRAM OPERA HOUSE

Jeffrey Mousseau & Paul Ricciardi
Directors

PRESENTS

NONE: A PRACTICAL BREVIARY
Composed, written and performed
by Heather Christian



**Council on
the Arts**

Ancram Opera House 2020 season is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.



A note from Heather Christian:

A Breviary (also referred to as “The Divine Offices” or the “Canonical Hours”) is a series of 8 short masses that are sung at 3-hour intervals throughout the day by Catholic cloistered nuns and monks.

A Practical Breviary is an attempt to adapt these masses for atheists and agnostics and amateur physicists and devout of all religions. The “None” (the piece you will spend time with tonight) is a mass that takes place at 3pm, which, in Christian traditions, is an hour of despair and isolation. To me, in this current pandemic, it’s not particularly important we do this at 3pm today, as in our current moment, time seems to have gone haywire.

This rendition of a “None” is meant to be an alchemistic ritual that helps shift our rooms of isolation into those of solitude, which is a small color shift, but an important one nonetheless. The sound design you will hear up against this mass is taken from NASA recordings of the “music” different planets in our solar system are making, and I have used them inside the music metaphorically so that the “heavens” can respond to or join in these refrains. We start at the sun and move outward until we are out of the solar system, and hopefully back into our own rooms, where we’ve cleared out a little bit more space for contemplation and peace.

Text in the final piece lovingly adapted from James Baldwin

Approximate running time is 55 minutes

HEATHER CHRISTIAN is an Obie Award-winning composer/performer and 2018 Sundance Institute Time Warner Fellow. Recent composing/performing credits include her own work *Oratorio for Living Things* (Ars Nova), *Prime: A Practical Breviary* (Playwrights Horizons Soundstage), *Animal Wisdom* (The Bushwick Starr) in addition to being a lead artist on devised works *Mission Drift* (Nat’l Theater London), *The World Is Round* (BAM). Recent Film and TV: *The Shivering Truth* (Adult Swim), *Lemon* (Dir. Janicza Bravo). She was named one of *Time Out NY*’s Downtown Innovators To Watch and is a 2019 Harold and Mimi Steinberg Trust commissionee. She’s released 10 records, taught at NYU and Princeton, operates her own recording studio in Beacon, NY, and can be seen regularly in concert as *Heather Christian & the Arbornauts*. www.heatherchristian.com. Instagram: [@hcarbarnawuts](https://www.instagram.com/hcarbarnawuts)



ABOUT ANCRAM OPERA HOUSE

AOH, celebrating its fifth anniversary under new leadership, offers an April through December season of theatre, cabaret, literary, storytelling and community programs.

AOH's theatre productions include *HOMEBOY* (Berkshire Theatre Critics Award for Outstanding Solo Performance); *WE'RE GONNA DIE*; *THE BROTHERS SIZE* (Berkshire Theatre Critics nominations for Outstanding Ensemble and Outstanding Play); the American premiere of *IN PRAISE OF ELEPHANTS*; *PERFORMING OLANA*, an original site-specific piece staged at Olana; *AUNT LEAF*, also presented in Aguascalientes, Mexico; and the premiere of a new musical adaptation of *THE SNOW QUEEN*.

As an incubator of alternative cabaret, AOH hosts acclaimed artists including Taylor Mac in *HOLIDAY SAUCE* which went on to NYC's Town Hall and San Francisco's Curran Theater, Diana Oh who was subsequently produced at The Bushwick Starr in Brooklyn, and Stew and longtime collaborator Heidi Rodewald in *STAGED DIVES* which was then performed at Joe's Pub in NYC.

CRYSTAL RADIO HOUR features new short stories written by Hudson Valley and Tri-state regional writers, including Wesley Brown, David Rabe and Courtney Maum, that are read by professional actors.

Community storytelling and theatre-making programs are very much at the heart of AOH's programming. *REAL PEOPLE REAL STORIES (RPRS)*, presented twice a year, features local residents sharing personal, authentic narratives. *LOCAL CHARACTERS*, debuting this year, showcases community members in fun, free-wheeling conversations. AOH leads storytelling workshops for young people at the Northeast Community Center and, this fall, 5th and 6th graders at the Taconic Hills School. For adult learners, AOH also offers an annual spring intensive workshop focusing on a particular area of theatre-making such as songwriting in 2019 and playwriting in 2020.

AOH MISSION

Ancram Opera House creates meaningful encounters through the performing arts that forge connection. Through its productions, AOH offers a unique opportunity to directly experience, up close, visionary theatre artists at the top of their field yet seldom seen in the region. AOH's community-based arts and storytelling programs with local residents encourage day-to-day participation in the performing arts. AOH seeks to foster a sense of place for a rural region and contribute to a healthier and happier community.



The Angram Opera House presents a mix of contemporary theatre, alternative cabaret, storytelling and community programs. Located in a former grange hall in rural Columbia County, AOH offers a unique opportunity to directly engage, up close with visionary theatre artists at the top of their field, yet rarely seen in our region.

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List as of as of December 31, 2020. If we inadvertently omitted your name or there is a correction to it, let us know and please accept our apologies. We are grateful to all of our supporters.