

2018 BAM Next Wave Festival

Heidi Rodewald and Donna Di Novelli's *The Good Swimmer*, a pop requiem for the youths of the Vietnam War, receives world premiere at BAM, Nov 28—Dec 1

Bloomberg Philanthropies is the Season Sponsor

The Good Swimmer

Music by Heidi Rodewald
Lyrics by Donna Di Novelli
Directed by Kevin Newbury

Music direction by Marty Beller
Choreography by Raja Feather Kelly
Set design by Victoria "Vita" Tzykun
Video design by Greg Emetaz
Lighting design by Eric Southern
Costume design by David C. Woolard
Sound design by Brandon Wolcott
Arrangements by Heidi Rodewald and Marc Doten
Orchestrations and additional arrangements by Dana Lyn

BAM Fisher (Fishman Space) 321 Ashland Pl
Nov 28—Dec 1 at 7:30pm
Tickets: \$25

Master Class: *Making Your Own Rules*

Co-presented by BAM and Mark Morris Dance Group
With Heidi Rodewald, Donna Di Novelli, and Kevin Newbury
Nov 30 at 11am, Mark Morris Dance Center (3 Lafayette Ave)
Price: \$25
Visit BAM.org/master-classes for more information and to register

Oct 16, 2018/Brooklyn, NY—Composer Heidi Rodewald, known for her collaborations with Stew on *Passing Strange* and *The Total Bent*, strikes out on her own in *The Good Swimmer*, a "pop requiem" that addresses issues of war, heroism, sacrifice, loss, and idealism. The moody, multi-layered song-cycle for guitar, bass, piano, trumpet, woodwinds, strings, drums, and

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vocals is performed by a nine-piece band led by singer David Driver. Set in the early days of the Vietnam War among a group of lifeguards, Donna Di Novelli's lyrics are a radical recontextualization of found texts, including a defunct lifesaving manual. A cast of young singers in their teens and early 20s at the start of their professional careers—Jeremy Weiss, Sophia Byrd, Naseer Slets, Joey LaPlante, Luke Bob Robinson, Papa Holt, and Kennedy Kanagawa—vividly conveys the sense of young people being thrust into a historical moment they have no control of. Their shattering experience brings the audience to a galvanizing realization: we truly honor our fallen soldiers only when we defy the political drumbeat of a senseless war.

Heidi Rodewald is the Tony Award-nominated, Obie Award-winning co-composer of the musical *Passing Strange*, which transferred from The Public Theater to Broadway in 2008 and then was made into a film by director Spike Lee. Rodewald joined the band The Negro Problem in 1997, where she began a longtime collaboration with singer/songwriter, Stew. She has collaborated with him in a range of capacities—as a co-composer, producer/arranger, and performer. Rodewald is co-composer with Stew of *Brooklyn Omnibus*, presented in the 2010 Next Wave Festival, *Making It St. Ann's Warehouse* (2010), *Family Album* Oregon Shakespeare Festival (2014), *Notes of a Native Song* Harlem Stage (2015), *Wagner, Max! Wagner!!* Kennedy Center (2015), and *The Total Bent* at The Public Theater (2016). She scored two short films for director Leigh Silverman: *Over The River & Through The Woods* (2017), and *Reprieve* (2018).

Donna Di Novelli has a writing career that spans film, opera, music-theater, and stage. Di Novelli is the co-screenwriter of *Madeline's Madeline*, directed by Josephine Decker, the closing film of BAMcinemaFest 2018. She also created text for Paola Prestini's *Oceanic Verses* (Kennedy Center, Barbican Centre), and libretto for the San Francisco Opera commissioned *Heart of a Soldier* (2011) with music by Grammy-nominated Christopher Theofanidis. She has collaborated with Oscar-winner Rachel Portman, and is at work on a new opera with composer Stewart Wallace. As a screenwriter, she also penned the award-winning short film, *Stag*, (2015) directed by Kevin Newbury and available on iTunes. She and her long-time collaborator, Randall Eng, premiered their jazz-influenced opera, *Florida* at UrbanArias in April 2018, and are working on a new opera, *Before the Night Sky*, a contemporary adaptation of the Gemini twins myth. Excerpts of it was featured in Opera America's New Works Forum in January 2017. She has won fellowships from the MacDowell Colony, UCross, and The Rockefeller Foundation Center at Bellagio and recently attended the World Opera Forum in Madrid. www.donnadinovelli.com

Kevin Newbury is an opera, theater, and film director based in New York City. His productions have been presented by top opera companies, festivals, and orchestras including Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, the Santa Fe Opera, Barcelona Liceu, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Minnesota Opera, the San Francisco Symphony, L'Opéra de Montréal, Prototype Festival, Bard's Summerscape, Portland Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Philadelphia Orchestra, Glimmerglass Opera, Seattle Opera, Canadian Opera Company, American Repertory Theatre, Center Theater Group/LA, the Park Avenue Armory, and Wexford Festival in Ireland. He was nominated for a Grammy award for Bernstein's *Mass* with Marin Alsop, which was also named one of the best events of the year by *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.

For press information contact David Hsieh at dhsieh@BAM.org or 718.724.8027.

Produced by KiWi Productions.

Commissioned by BAM.

Credits

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General Information

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. BAM Harvey Theater is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Greenlight Bookstore at BAM kiosks. BAM Fisher, located at 321 Ashland Place, is the newest addition to the BAM campus and houses the Judith and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio. BAM Rose Cinemas is Brooklyn's only movie house dedicated to first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, offers varied light fare and bar service prior to BAM Howard Gilman Opera House evening performances.

Subway: 2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue – Barclays Center (2, 3, 4, 5 to Nevins St for Harvey Theater) D, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue
Train: Long Island Railroad to Atlantic Terminal – Barclays Center
Bus: B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM

For ticket information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit BAM.org.

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