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Circus: Wandering City

ETHEL

Directed by Grant McDonald

BAM Harvey Theater

Nov 14—17 at 7:30pm

Running time: approx. 1 hour 20 minutes, no intermission

Composed and performed by members of **ETHEL**

Created in collaboration with **The Ringling**

Ralph Farris (viola)

Kip Jones (violin)

Dorothy Lawson (cello)

Corin Lee (violin)

Projection design by **John Narun**

Set design by **Jason Ardizzzone-West**

Costume design by **Beth Goldenberg**

Lighting design by **Oona Curley**

Sound design by **Stowe Nelson**

Executive producer **Karen Jenkins**

Producer **Jenney Shamash**

Season Sponsor:

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Leadership support for music programs at BAM provided by the Baisley Powell Elebash Fund



ETHEL: Dorothy Lawson, Kip Jones, Ralph Farris, Corin Lee. Photo: Matthew Murphy

CIRCUS: WANDERING CITY

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|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| A Wondrous Space | Dorothy Lawson |
| 3bwe | Kip Jones |
| Rednosology | Kip Jones (soloist) |
| Seat 47C | Corin Lee |
| Canvas and Silk | Ralph Farris |
| Sweet and Strong | Dorothy Lawson (soloist) |
| No Net | Dorothy Lawson |
| The Breakaway | Ralph Farris |
| Emmett & Lou | Ralph Farris (soloist) |
| Joey Fink | Ralph Farris |
| Clownsituation | Dorothy Lawson |
| Grifters | Kip Jones |
| The Pyramid | Dorothy Lawson |
| On The Edge | Corin Lee |
| Out of the Ashes, Parts I & II | Ralph Farris |
| A Moment In This Show | Kip Jones |
| Waltz | Dorothy Lawson |
| Tumblers | Kip Jones |
| Center Ring (Mojo Perpetuo) | Ralph Farris Corin Lee (soloist) |
| Moment of Truth | Dorothy Lawson |

Circus: Wandering City features interview excerpts from La Norma Fox, Margie Geiger, Ward Hall, Dolly Jacobs, Jackie LeClaire, Pedro Reis, and Victoria Cristiani Rossi. All interviews were originally presented on the Ringling Museum's "Collecting Recollections" series (Dwight Currie, Host). We honor the memory of Ward Hall with this performance.

ETHEL endorses the AVID family of software solutions and Alclair in-ear monitors.
Cello harness designed by Tom Kirchner and Eddie Caccaval.

Production & stage manager **Kelly Shaffer Allen**
Assistant lighting designer **S. "Stoli" Stolnack**
Associate set designer **Lauren Barber**
Technical director **Joseph Silovsky**
Advancing production manager **Sadie Alisa**

Co-commissioned by BAM and The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art

Good evening and thank you so much for joining us!

We offer you the New York premiere of *Circus: Wandering City*, inspired by the Ringling Museum's expansive archives and interviews, as a tribute to the remarkable inhabitants of a world with which we've fallen in love.

It is impossible to touch Circus, its grandeur and nobility, without being transformed in some fundamental way. As you'll soon hear from Circus legend Dolly Jacobs, we too believe in our heart of hearts that the Circus will never die. This night of music and celebration is our attempt at ensuring that. The amazing humans you'll see projected here revealed to the world a trailblazing community that expressed itself through daring spectacle, remarkable effort, and seemingly super-human skill. The family that is Circus shows us that our differences are beautiful and to be celebrated, that strength and grace are not mutually exclusive, that human limitations can and should be overcome.

The spectrum of love, exuberance, and positive expression that is inherently present in every aspect of the Circus could never be encapsulated in one night. The images we've selected are but a few of our favorites, inspired by and in honor of the great Circus traditions... to fly, to move mountains, to dance on air, to defy death. Their stories inspired us to create a work that celebrates the anticipation, sweat, fortitude, joy, and transcendence that characterizes the lives under the Big Top. We hope you'll fall for them as well.

—ETHEL and Grant McDonald



ETHEL

Established in New York City in 1998, ETHEL quickly earned a reputation as one of America's most adventurous string quartets. Twenty years on, the band continues to set the standard for contemporary concert music. Known for its enlivened playing, blending uptown, conservatory musicianship with downtown genre-crossing, ETHEL has been described as "indefatigable and eclectic" (*The New York Times*), "vital and brilliant" (*The New Yorker*), and "infectiously visceral" (*Pitchfork*). Since its inception, ETHEL has released nine feature recordings (one nominated for a Native American Music Award), performed as guests on 35+ albums, won a Grammy with jazz legend Kurt Elling, and performed in 14 countries, 45 states, and 250+ cities.

At the heart of ETHEL is a collaborative ethos—a quest for a common creative expression that is forged in the celebration of community. The quartet creates and tours rich, often multimedia, productions including the evening-length ETHEL's *Documerica* (2013 Next Wave), inspired by the tens of thousands of images shot in the 1970s as part of the Environmental Protection Agency's decade-long Project Documerica; *The River*, a collaboration with Taos Pueblo flutist Robert Mirabal; *Grace*, a journey of redemption through music featuring works from Ennio Morricone, to Hildegard von Bingen and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan; and *Circus: Wandering City*, which explores the phenomenon of circus through the eyes and insights of people who have created its special thrills and illusions. Commissioned by the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art and the Brooklyn Academy of Music, *Circus: Wandering City* is an immersive work combining projections of stunning images, films and interviews from the museum's archives, the words of circus performers past and present, and original music composed and performed live by ETHEL. *Circus: Wandering City* made its world premiere in January 2018—the 250th anniversary of the modern circus—at the Ringling.

ETHEL is the resident ensemble at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Balcony Bar, Ensemble-in-Residence at Denison University, and 2018/19 Quartet-in-Residence at Kaufman Music Center's Face the Music. ETHEL is Ralph Farris (viola), Kip Jones (violin), Dorothy Lawson (cello), and Corin Lee (violin). ethelcentral.org

RALPH FARRIS (artistic director, viola) is a founding member of ETHEL. He is a Grammy-nominated arranger, an original Broadway orchestra member of *The Lion King*, and the former musical director for The Who's Roger Daltrey. He has collaborated with Leonard Bernstein, Martin Scorsese, Depeche Mode, Natalie Merchant, Harry Connick Jr., Allen Ginsberg, Yo-Yo Ma, and Gorillaz. A three-time Tanglewood Fellow and a graduate of Walnut Hill School for the Arts, Farris earned bachelor's and master's degrees from The Juilliard School, earning the school's William Schuman Prize. He has received composition commissions from NYU's Aquila Theatre, flute/marimba visionaries Lawler + Fadoul, dance mavericks Monkeyhouse, and Las Vegas darlings Jarrett & Raja. RalphFarris.com

KIP JONES (violin) is known for his ebullient and innovative solo performances in a style he describes as "experimental folk." A modern musical troubadour, Jones has performed at scores of eclectic venues such as Ecuador's Ministry of Economic Inclusion; Tirana's Liceu Artistik "Jordan Misja," two miles inside Chom Ong Tai cave in Laos; the summer homes of nomadic Mongolian herders; and on platforms of most subway systems in North America. As a composer, his work has been commissioned by ensembles that include the Lake Superior Chamber Orchestra and A Far Cry. A native of Minnesota, Jones earned his degree in violin performance from the Berklee College of Music. KipJones.net

DOROTHY LAWSON (artistic director, cello) is a founding member of ETHEL. She has performed with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, White Oak Dance Project, Philharmonia Virtuosi, American Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and numerous new music ensembles. Lawson served 10 years as faculty of Joseph Fuchs' Alfred University Summer Chamber Music Institute, and she teaches in the Preparatory Division of Mannes College at The New School in New York City. An original orchestra member of Jason Robert Brown's *The Last Five Years* and Broadway's *The Woman in White*, she is a member of acclaimed Brazilian jazz ensemble Marcelo Zarvos +Group, and the Ron Carter Nonet. Lawson hails from Canada.

CORIN LEE (violin) is one of the most sought-after violinists of his generation. He has appeared on the great American stages, traditional and otherwise—from Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium to the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery; from Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center to EDC Las Vegas. Lee's performances have been broadcast on Fox, CBS, and NBC News. His "musically marvelous" (Steve Reich) electronic arrangements have set the new standard for innovation in solo string performance. Lee received degrees from Juilliard (BM) and Yale School of Music (MM). In addition to concert work, he directs *Liberated Performer*, a program that guides and trains musicians to defeat performance anxiety. LiberatedPerformer.com

GRANT MCDONALD (director) is a director and projection designer for concerts, theater, and live events. Previous works with ETHEL are *Blue Dress* (National Sawdust) and *ETHEL+*

(Oz Nashville). Notable designs include *Black Mountain Songs* (2014 Next Wave; tour), *Stars on Ice* (North America tours), Esperanza Spalding's *Emily's D+ Evolution* (world tour), and *The Internet's Ego Death* (Camp Flog Gnaw). He has also created content for Lana Del Rey's *LA to the Moon* (world tour), *The Official Prince Tribute* (Minneapolis), and Alt-J's *This is All Yours* (world tour). GrantMcDonald.com

JOHN NARUN (projection design) has designed previously at BAM for *The Laramie Project Cycle* (BAM, 2013) and *The Tallest Tree in the Forest* (BAM, 2015). Other theater credits include *Born for This* at Arena Stage, *The Secret Life of Edward Gorey* at Sheen Center, *What I Did Last Summer* at Signature Theatre, *Blueprints for Freedom* at Kansas City Rep, *The Squirrels* and *The Darrell Hammond Project* at La Jolla Playhouse, *Mughal-e-Azam* at the NCPA in Mumbai, India, and the *Radio City Christmas* and *Spring Spectaculars*. His visuals have also shared the concert stage with Madonna, Ricky Martin, Christina Aguilera, Jennifer Lopez, Céline Dion, Britney Spears, and the Spice Girls. Narun's work has appeared on television on *The Oprah Show*, and on ABC, CBS, NBC, HBO, Fox, Discovery, E!, HGTV, and TV Guide. His projection design work has earned him a Drama Desk Award nomination, two Henry Hewes Design Award nominations, two Craig Noel Award nominations, and an NYIT Award nomination. His broadcast work earned him an Emmy Nomination for Outstanding Title Design in 2002. JohnNarun.com



JASON ARDIZZONE-WEST's (set design) recent designs include: *Jesus Christ Superstar* (NBC, Emmy Award), *Good Grief* (Vineyard Theatre), *Uncle Vanya* (The Old Globe, Hunter Theater Project), *The Royale* (Cleveland Playhouse), Lana Del Rey (world tour), *One Thousand Nights & One Day* (Prospect Theater), *Illyria, Hungry, What Did You Expect?*, *Women of a Certain Age* (The Public Theater, with Susan Hilferty), *Bullets Over Broadway* (national tour, NETworks Presentations), and *Next To Normal* and *Caroline, or Change* (Tantrum Theater). Ardizzone-West received a bachelor of architecture from Cornell University, College of Architecture, Art & Planning, a master of fine arts from New York University, Department of Design for Stage & Film, and is a member of USA 829. ArdizzoneWest.com

BETH GOLDENBERG (costume design) for opera has designed: *Macbeth, the little match girl passion, Stabat Mater* (Glimmerglass); *The Guilty Mother, The Secret Gardener* (On Site Opera); *Don Giovanni, Carmen, Lucia di Lammermoor, Daphnis & Chloé* (Heartbeat Opera). For New York theater: *Wilder Gone* (Clubbed Thumb); *The Changeling* (Red Bull Theater); *Engagements, The Other Thing* (Second Stage Theatre); *Soldier X* (Ma-Yi Theatre); *God of Carnage, By the Way Meet Vera Stark* (Juilliard). Regional theater: *Frankenstein, The Christians* (Dallas Theatre Center); *Blueprints to Freedom* (La Jolla Playhouse); *Henry V, Queens for a Year* (Hartford Stage); *Disgraced* (Asolo Rep). She is an associate artist with Heartbeat Opera and earned an MFA from NYU. BethGoldenbergDesign.com

OONA CURLEY (lighting design) is a lighting and scenic designer from New York City specializing in new and devised work. She recently

designed the Obie Award-winning production of *Underground Railroad Game* at ArsNova (now on tour). Her work has been seen in New York (ArsNova, Atlantic Theater Co., Vineyard Theatre, Cherry Lane, La MaMa, The Flea, Joe's Pub, JACK, The New Ohio, Theater for the New City, NYU/Tisch), Philadelphia (Arden Theatre, Opera Philadelphia, Curtis Opera, FringeArts, Kimmel Center, Bearded Ladies Cabaret, Theater Horizon, Team Sunshine Performance Co., Shakespeare in Clark Park, anonymous bodies, Carbon Dance Theatre), and regionally (Indianapolis Symphony, Brown/Trinity Rep, Sharon Playhouse, Gamm Theater, Chester Theatre, and the Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas). Curley earned her MFA from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, where she received the J.S. Seidman Award for Design Excellence, the Dean's Fellowship, and was NYU's nominee for a Princess Grace Award. She holds a BA from Brown University, where her designs earned the Zonta Award for Theatre Arts and the Weston Award for Theatre Design. Curley is an associate artist with the Bearded Ladies Cabaret and a company member with Lighting Rod Special. OonaCurley.com

STOWE NELSON (sound design) in New York has worked on: *Intractable Woman* (Play Co.); *queens, The Wolves* (LCT); *Animal Wisdom* (Bushwick Starr); *Miles for Mary, The Essential Straight & Narrow, Samuel & Alasdair* (Drama Desk nomination, *The Mad Ones*); *The Skin of Our Teeth* (Theatre for a New Audience); *Small Mouth Sounds* (Lortel Nom, Ars Nova); *Indian Summer* (Playwrights Horizons); *The Painted Rocks at Revolver Creek, The Wayside Motor Inn* (Signature). For regional theater: Actors Theatre of Louisville, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival. wingspace.com/stowe





Photo: Frank Atura

KAREN JENKINS (executive producer), executive director and director of development of ETHEL's Foundation for the Arts, was executive producer for ETHEL's *Documerica* which premiered at the 2013 Next Wave Festival. As an arts administrator, program developer, and fundraising counsel, she has worked for the Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham Companies, Joffrey Ballet, Bandaloop, Circle in the Square, Dance Theater of Harlem, MASS MoCA, The New Museum, New York Hall of Science, New York Studio School, Tribeca New Music Festival, and ISSUE Project Room, among other organizations. Jenkins holds a BFA from Rhode Island School of Design.

JENNEY SHAMASH (producer) is a New York-based performing arts producer and manager. She has worked with Park Avenue Armory, Performance Space New York, Irish Repertory Theatre, and the Tony Award-winning Signature Theatre Company. She has collaborated on productions around the US and internationally as a producer, general manager, or company manager with artists such as Taryn Simon, Monica Bill Barnes, BeBe Winans, Peter Sellars, Bill Irwin, Athol Fugard, Martha Clarke, Annie Baker, Charles Mee, and Sam Shepard. Recent

projects include Hannah Gadsby's *Nanette*, Irish Rep's annual *The Dead, 1904*, Taryn Simon's *An Occupation of Loss*, and several public art installations with artist Ben Zamora. She has a degree in Theater & Dance and French from Amherst College.

KELLY SHAFFER ALLEN (production & stage manager) has been a stage manager and production manager for a variety of companies and venues across many disciplines. She is based in Brooklyn where she likes to eat cookies and listen to the radio with her little ones. Credits include: Lincoln Center Out of Doors and Midsummer Night Swing (2014—18); *Let the Right One In* and *Black Watch* (National Theatre of Scotland); *This Was the End* (Mallory Catlett/Chocolate Factory); *Beowulf: A Thousand Years of Baggage* (Banana Bag & Bodice); *Chekhov Lizardbrain* (Pig Iron Theatre Co.); *Silence! The Musical* (Tesseract Theatre Co.); *Brief Encounter* (Kneehigh Theatre); *Bellona: Destroyer of Cities* (Jay Scheib); *Romeo & Juliet* and Euro-Asian tour of *Life & Times Episodes 1 & 2* (Nature Theater of Oklahoma); and *Dog Sees God: Confessions of a Teenage Blockhead* (File 14 Productions).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Board of ETHEL's Foundation for the Arts
The John and Mable Ringling Museum—Dwight Currie, Deborah Walk, Michael Kohlmann, and Aaron Muhl

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Immersive Music Project—Jesse Lewis, Kyle Pyke and Shauna Barravecchio
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Thanks to Alice Austin, Coco Bentley, Walt Bostian, Elizabeth Bradley, Robert L. Brashear, Clay Brown, Hilary Chaplain, Jenna Clark Embrey, Judy Finelli, Susan Frankel, Ting He, Kathy Horejsi, Ching-chu Hu, Jarrett & Raja, Noelle Jones, Alison Kavey and QueBA HM, Christine LeBeau, Sharyn Lonsdale, Leonard McGill, Zach Miller, Joseph V. Melillo, Mike Morris, Michael Picton, Mary-Alice Pomputius, Jason Tate, Nolan Thies, Limor Tomer, John H. Townsen, and Bill Weeden.

And of course, a huge shout-out to our brilliant interview subjects: La Norma Fox, Margie Geiger, Ward Hall, Dolly Jacobs, Jackie LeClaire, Pedro

Reis, and Victoria Cristiani Rossi. Thank you, and we love you ALL!

ETHEL's Foundation for the Arts thanks the Lily Auchincloss, Double R, Samuels, Scherman, and Thompson Family Foundations and the New York Department of Cultural Affairs, New York State Council on the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts for support of *Circus: Wandering City*.

For booking inquiries for *Circus: Wandering City* please contact:

Columbia Artists
Tim Fox & Alicia Horwitz
212.841.9503
booking@columbia-artists.com
Columbia-artists.com

For booking inquires for all other ETHEL programs please contact:

Baylin Artists Management
Marc Baylin
257.880.3750
mbaylin@baylinartist.com
baylinartists.com

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