

The Exalted

Written by Carl Hancock Rux

Music by Theo Bleckmann

Directed by Anne Bogart

Commissioned by BAM

DATES: OCT 28—31 at 7:30pm

LOCATION: BAM Fisher (Fishman Space)

RUN TIME: Approx 1hr 5min
(no intermission)

#THEEXALTED
#BAMNextWave

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THE EXALTED

NY Premiere

CONCEIVED AND WRITTEN BY
Carl Hancock Rux

MUSIC BY
Theo Bleckmann*

PERFORMED BY
Carl Hancock Rux
Theo Bleckmann

DIRECTED BY
Anne Bogart

SCENIC AND COSTUME DESIGN BY
Maureen Freedman

VIDEO BY
Onome Ekeh

LIGHTING DESIGN BY
Brian H Scott

STAGE MANAGER
Kristy Bodall

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
Felicia Lobo

PRODUCED BY
Stephen Cohen for Music + Art

*All music composed by Theo Bleckmann except “Lili Marleen” (Norbert Schultze) and “Lord is it Mine?” (Roger Hodgson) (both arrangements by Bleckmann); Piano Trio in A-minor (Gustav Mahler)

The Exalted was first presented at the Center for the Art of Performance at UCLA in 2013. The work was further commissioned by the BAM/Next Wave Festival 2015 and developed in residence with Live Arts Bard at the Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College, and the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts in Philadelphia, PA.

Special thanks to Hamilton Kirby, Patrick Synmoie, Christian Epps, Kristy Edmunds, and Morgan Green.

ABOUT *THE EXALTED*

The Exalted resurrects stories from the past in a mesmerizing narrative on the fight for freedom, combining strands of the life and final days of the once influential, now mostly forgotten, German-Jewish art historian Carl Einstein, one of the first critics to affirm the importance of African sculpture, thus influencing figures such as George Grosz, Pablo Picasso, and Georges Braque, and impacting the development of Cubism and the European avant-garde. Einstein, whose work was characterized by communist sympathies and anarchist views, inevitably became a target of the German right wing during the interwar Weimar period. Interwoven with reflections on the genocide of the Herero and Nama people in pre-WWI German-occupied Africa—the first genocide of the 20th century and a direct precursor to Hitler’s holocaust—*The Exalted*, based on a forthcoming novel by Carl Hancock Rux, is a poetic meditation on heritage, love, and the willpower to overcome atrocity.





Who's Who

CARL HANCOCK RUX
Conception, Writer, Performer

Carl Hancock Rux is an award-winning poet, playwright, novelist, essayist, and recording artist. He is the former head of the MFA writing for performance program at the California Institute of the Arts (2006—09) and has taught or been in residence at the University of California San Diego, Stanford University, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Hollins University, University of Iowa, and Brown University.

Rux is the author of the novel *Asphalt*, the Obie award-winning play *Talk*, and the *Village Voice* literary prize-winning collection of poetry, *Pagan Operetta*. He has worked as a writer and frequent guest performer in dance, collaborating with Marlies Yearby's Movin' Spirits Dance Theater, Urban Bush Women, Jane Comfort & Co., Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and Martha Clarke. Most recently, *Four Corners*, the critically acclaimed piece choreographed by Ron Brown for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, which premiered at Lincoln Center in June 2013 was set to Rux's *Lamentations (for you, son)*. Rux received a Bessie award for his direction of the

Lisa Jones/Alva Rogers dance musical, *Stained*. Rux originated the title role in the folk opera production of *The Temptation of St. Anthony*, directed by Robert Wilson with book, libretto, and music by Bernice Johnson Reagon as part of the Ruhrtriennale festival in Duisburg, Germany. The opera had its American premiere at the BAM Next Wave Festival in October 2004 and world premiere at the Paris Opéra Palais Garnier. Rux's *The Blackamoor Angel*, created with composer Deirdre Murray, was performed as part of SummerScape at Bard College. He appeared in the Foundry Theatre's production *How Much is Enough?* in its three-week run at St. Ann's Warehouse in fall 2013. Rux was also the curator of the *WeDaPeoples Cabaret* originally conceived by Sekou Sundiata and presented each September by Harlem Stage.

His film credits include *The Grand Inquisitor* (as The One, directed by Tony Torn), *Brooklyn Boheme* (documentary, directed by Nelson George and Diane Paragas), *Migrations* (directed by Nelson George), and *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised: a Film about Gil Scott-Heron* (documentary, directed by Don Letts), among others. Rux is the subject of the Voices of America television documentary, *Carl Hancock Rux, Coming of Age* (produced by Larry Clamage and Richard Maniscalco), recipient of the CINE Golden Eagle Award. He was host and programming director of the WBAI radio show, *Live from Nuyorican Poets Cafe*, contributing correspondent for XM radio's *The Bob Edwards Show*, and frequent guest host on WNYC's *Soundcheck*. Rux co-wrote and narrated the radio

documentary, *Walt Whitman: Songs of Myself*, awarded the New York Press Club Journalism award for entertainment news.

To mark the 10th anniversary of 9/11, WNYC's The Greene Space commissioned Rux to create and perform a spoken word piece meant to be a mosaic of remembrance of this historical event. *A City Reimagined: Voices of 9/11 in Poetry and Performance*, was presented in partnership with The New Press and the Columbia Center for Oral History live in The Greene Space on September 7 & 8, 2011. It marked Rux's return to The Greene Space after a memorable appearance in *A Global Piano and Literary Salon: Bebop Spoken Here* on May 12, 2011, with an impromptu recitation accompanied by jazz pianist, Gerald Clayton. His CDs include *Rux Revue* (Sony/550), *Apothecary Rx* (Giant Step), *Good Bread Alley* (Thirsty Ear), and *Homeostasis* (CD Baby). Rux is the recipient of several awards including the Herb Alpert Prize, NYFA Prize, NYFA Gregory Millard fellowship, and NEA/TCG artist-in-residency fellowship. Last fall he co-wrote (with Arthur Yorinks) and performed in *NPR Presents Water ±* directed by Kenny Leon (national tour) and was recently commissioned to create a new work for the The Kunststiftung NRW (Arts Foundation of North Rhine-Westphalia). Rux is currently working on his new novel.

THEO BLECKMANN

Music, Performer

A jazz singer and new music composer of eclectic tastes and prodigious gifts, Grammy-nominated Theo Bleckmann, who has resided in New York City since 1989, has released a series of gorgeous and irreverent albums on Winter & Winter, including recordings of Las Vegas standards, Berlin Kabarett, and popular "bar songs" (all with pianist Fumio Yasuda); a recording of newly-arranged songs by Charles Ives (with the improvisational jazz/funk collective Kneebody); and his *Solos for Voice and Toys*. In his highly acclaimed CD release of 2012, *Hello Earth—The Music of Kate Bush*, Bleckmann managed to bring an entirely new perspective to the songbook of the British pop recluse. 2013 saw the release of *Mother Goose Melodies*, a return to Bleckmann's uniquely interpretive collaborations with Fumio Yasuda. Most recently, Bleckmann has been touring Europe with Ambrose Akinmusire and recording with Julia Hülsmann's trio, for the ECM label.

Bleckmann's most frequent collaborators include John Hollenbeck and Gary Versace (The Refuge Trio) and guitar phenomenon Ben Monder. Exploring the classical repertoire in the context of jazz in his work with pianist-composer-arranger Uri Caine, Bleckmann has additionally collaborated with a remarkable roster of contemporary musicians and composers, including Laurie Anderson, Peter Eldridge, Philip Glass, Kate McGarry, Sheila Jordan, Luciana Souza, Michael Tilson Thomas, Kenny Wheeler, John Zorn, the Bang on a Can All-Stars and most prominently, Mer-

edith Monk, with whom Bleckmann worked as a core ensemble member for 15 years. His uniquely flexible and colorful voice has also inspired compositions by, among others, Michael Gordon, David Lang, Ikue Mori, Kirk Nurock, Julia Wolfe and, prominently, Phil Kline, who wrote three major song cycles for Bleckmann: *Zippo Songs* (2004, BAM Next Wave 2012), *Locus Solus* (2006), and *Out Cold* (2012), which premiered at the BAM Fisher. Bleckmann has composed for a range of instruments from piano, violin, and kalimba to chimes, glockenspiel, toy microphone, and sewing machines. He composed an evening-length work for voice and the JACK String Quartet and created the space alien language for Steven Spielberg's *Men in Black*. Bleckmann's work has been described as "from another planet" (*The New York Times*), "transcendent" (*Village Voice*), and "brilliant" (*New York* magazine), and left one critic wondering, "does he eat people food?" (*AllAboutJazz*).

Recent accolades include NPR's 2012 top 10 jazz albums of the year for *Hello Earth! The Songs of Kate Bush*, top five spots in the 2013 and 2014 *DownBeat* critics' polls for best male vocalist, third place for best vocalist in the 2012 *Rhapsody* poll of 119 critics (formerly hosted by the *Village Voice*), *Boston Phoenix* best jazz acts of 2012, and WQXR's Operavore best opera of 2012. He has received the prestigious ECHO Jazz award from the Deutsche Phono-Akademie in his native Germany and appeared on *Late Night with David Letterman* with Laurie Anderson. In 2015, he received a grant from the Peter S Reed Foundation.

ANNE BOGART

Director

Anne Bogart is a prolific and award-winning American theater and opera director. She is the co-artistic director of SITI Company, which she founded with Japanese director Tadashi Suzuki in 1992, and a professor at Columbia University where she runs the graduate directing program. She is the author of five books: *A Director Prepares*; *The Viewpoints Book*; *And Then, You Act*; *Conversations with Anne*; and, most recently, *What's the Story: Essays about art, theater, and storytelling*. She is the recipient of a Doris Duke artist grant, a USA fellowship, a Rockefeller fellowship, and a Guggenheim fellowship as well as three honorary doctorate degrees, from Bard College, Cornish School of the Arts, and Skidmore College. Recent works with SITI include *The Theater is a Blank Page*; *Persians*; *Steel Hammer*; *A Rite*; *Café Variations*; *Trojan Women*; *American Document*; *Antigone*; *Freshwater Under Construction*; *Who Do You Think You Are*; *Radio Macbeth*; *Hotel Cassiopeia*; *Death and the Ploughman*; *La Dispute*; *Score*; *bobrauschenbergamerica*; *Room*; *War of the Worlds*; *Cabin Pressure*; *The Radio Play*; *Alice's Adventures*; *Culture of Desire*; *Bob*; *Going, Going, Gone*; *Small Lives/Big Dreams*; *The Medium*; Noel Coward's *Hay Fever* and *Private Lives*; August Strindberg's *Miss Julie*; and Charles Mee's *Orestes*. Operas include Verdi's *Macbeth*, *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, and Bizet's *Carmen* (Glimmerglass); Bellini's *Norma* (Washington National Opera); three operas by Deborah Drattell and *Nicholas and Alexandra* (Los Angeles

Opera); *Marina: A Captive Spirit* (American Opera Projects); and *Lilith* and Brecht/Weill's *Seven Deadly Sins* (New York City Opera).

MAUREEN FREEDMAN

Scenic and Costume Design

Maureen Freedman has designed for text-based performance, devised performance, puppetry opera, dance, and film. Her work has taken her to the UK, Israel, and the US. Some highlights include *Feral* (National Theatre Studio, UK); *I Hate the Way I Love You* and *Medea Triptych* (Robin Howard Dance Theatre at the Place, UK); *Wolves at the Window* (Brits Off-Broadway Festival at 59 E59 Theatres NYC); *Gianni Schicchi* (Opera Gala on Martha's Vineyard); *Intimate Apparel* (Connecticut Rep, NAPAT award for design excellence, SILV award for excellence in scenic design); *The Boat is Sinking* (Tsavta Theatre Tel-Aviv, Israel, Golden Hedgehog award for best costume design); *The House by the Lake* (Acco Festival, Israel, and touring Europe and Canada, best design award); and *Herzl* (Rina Yerushalmi Itim Ensemble, Israel). Freedman had the privilege of taking part in Cheek by Jowl Theatre Company's emerging young professional's program and presenting her designs at the Linbury Prize finalist exhibit in England. Future projects include production design for *Hansel and Gretel* and *Daughters of the Regiment* at UCONN opera.

ONOME EKEH

Video

Born in Nigeria and raised on both sides of the Atlantic, Onome Ekeh started out as a painter, gravitated towards design, and fell in love with cinema. Somewhere in the collision she went digital. She has produced works for film, theater, and radio and is the recipient of several fellowships including the Jerome Foundation, Greenwall Foundation, and the Künstlerhaus Buchsenausen Fellowship. She is the co-founder and conceptual gear-machinitrix behind Featurezoo.net. Her fiction and sound cinema can be found at thememorexe.com.

BRIAN H SCOTT

Lighting Design

In productions at the Park Avenue Armory, Brian H Scott created lighting for Douglas Gordon's *Tears become... Streams become...*, *Oktophonie* with Rirkrit Tiravanija, and *the event of a thread* with Ann Hamilton. His recent lighting designs include Laurie Anderson and Kronos Quartet's *Landfall*, and the Anne Hamilton/SITI Company's *theatre is a blank page*, as well as Douglas Gordon's *Bound to Hurt* and *Neck of the Woods*. Scott is lighting designer for New York-based SITI Company and Austin, TX-based Rude Mechanicals, as well as San Francisco's Kronos Quartet.

KRISTY BODALL

Stage Manager

Kristy Bodall is a freelance stage manager working in NYC. Current projects include *The Gray Man* (Pipeline Theatre Company) and Spring Street Social Society's fall event. Previous stage managing credits include *Together We Are Making a Poem in Honor of Life, Bull's Hollow Part II: The Princess Alaska* (Ars Nova Project Residency); *Blue Window* (Strasberg Institute); *You on the Moors Now* (Theatre Reconstruction Ensemble); *War Lesbian* (harunalee); *Melancholy Play* (Strasberg Institute); *Clown Bar* (Pipeline Theatre Company); *Messages from a Mental Institution* (Dream Up Festival); *Pentecost* (Middlebury College); *After the Chairs* (Fresh Fruit Festival); *ANT Fest 2013* (Ars Nova); *Tape* (Strasberg Institute); *Rhinoceros* (Atlantic Acting School); *Giant Killer Slugs* (Pipeline Theatre Company); and *Follow the Leader* (Panicked Productions). Production Assistant credits include *Project Shaw* and *Old-Fashioned Prostitutes* (Public Theater); *Storefront Church* (Atlantic Theatre Company); and *Richard II* (Pearl Theatre Company). She is resident stage manager for Pipeline Theatre Company, and holds a BA in theater arts from Dickinson College.

Photo: John Labbe



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