

Con Vivo Music presents  
**Chilltown Boogie**

by Alon Nechushtan

Sunday, Oct 2, 2022 at 3pm  
Jersey City Theater Center



CON VIVO MUSIC

**Nimbus**  
Samuel Pott, Artistic Director



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TC** JERSEY  
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THEATER  
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from the Jersey City Arts and  
Cultural Trust Fund.



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supported by The  
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Cultural & Heritage Affairs, Thomas A. DeGise,  
Hudson County Executive & the Hudson  
County Board of County Commissioners.

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**Sunday, Oct 2, 2022 at 3pm**  
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**1. THE HERO - 1779, Paulus Hook**

Music by Alon Nechushtan, Libretto by Jenny Cresswell  
Colin Levin, baritone - George Washington  
Sarah Nelson Craft, mezzo-soprano - Henry Lee

**2. THE HAUNT - 1840s/our time, Lincoln Park Cemetery**

Music and Libretto by Alon Nechushtan  
Jonathan R. Green, baritone - Joe  
Kimberli Render, soprano - Abigail

**3. THE BOATMAN - 1878, the Morris Canal**

Music by Alon Nechushtan, Libretto by Tony Asaro  
Daniel Chiu, baritone - Willam Billy McKenna  
Amy van Roekel, mezzo-soprano - Mary

**4. THE CHOICE - 1892, Temple Beth-El**

Music by Alon Nechushtan, Libretto by Dana Leslie Goldstein  
Peter Kendall Clark, baritone - Rabbi Schweizer  
Jessica Bowers, soprano - Representative of Elders

**5. THE MAYOR - 1949, City Hall**

Music by Alon Nechushtan, Libretto by Luke Jerod Kummer  
Daniel Klein, baritone - Frank Hague  
Maurio Hines, tenor - John V Kenny

# Con Vivo Music - Chilltown Boogie

## Production

Karina Parker, director  
Benjamin Grow, music director  
Zach Herchen, production manager

Lance Michel, lighting designer  
Grigory Gurevitch, vignette drawings  
Alisa Eykillis, vignette video art

## Orchestra

Sarah Goldfeather, violin  
Carolyn Jeselsohn, cello  
Andrew Roitstein, bass

Riko Higuma, keyboard  
Devon Cupo, percussion

## Nimbus Dance

Harumi Elders, choreographer  
Alyssa Acciavatti  
Catherine Escueta  
Miku Hirayama

Yanil A. Pabón  
Will Pettigrew  
Javier Rochel

## Thank You

CVM would like to thank Jersey City Theater Center, Nimbus Dance, Jersey City Cultural Affairs, Temple Beth-El, the Historic Paulus Hook Association. Grigory Gurevitch, and Dr Timothy White for their incredible support.

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[www.convivomusic.org](http://www.convivomusic.org)



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# 1. THE HERO

**Music by Alon Nechushtan**  
**Libretto by Jenny Cresswell**

*Paulus Hook, 1779. President George Washington has a chance meeting with Henry Lee (Light-Horse-Harry). Although Lee was the big war hero at Paulus Hook, his temperament was such that he had few friends. He was regarded as highly sensitive and extreme.*

*Decades after the Revolutionary War, it is documented that Lee had many behaviors associated with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.*

*When he died, his life was in shambles, including a year-long stint in debtor's prison.*

*Although he is the father of Robert E. Lee, Henry did know him. He was largely absent in the lives of his children. Washington had known Henry practically since birth. He had courted his mother prior to her marriage, and the two remained close friends.*

**WASHINGTON:** Light Horse Harry!

**HENRY:** President Washington! What brings you to New Jersey?

**WASHINGTON:** I'm waiting on that treaty from England. It's been nearly four months since I sent Justice Jay to draft an agreement with King George (III). I've got high hopes this will keep us out of another war. But if not -

**HENRY:** Children huddled like mice in a corner.

**WASHINGTON:** What? What was that?

**HENRY:** Mice with sad eyes. Trembling and twitching.

**WASHINGTON:** What? Henry! How are things in Virginia? How is Anne?

**HENRY:** Virginia? Things are fine! After returning from your call to Pennsylvania last year -

**WASHINGTON:** Hooo that was a close one! The Whiskey Rebellion! I owe you one -

**HENRY:** They decided I should no longer be (the) Governor. It sat empty until the next election.

**WASHINGTON:** I don't understand.

**HENRY:** To answer your question, Anne is expecting her first child.

**WASHINGTON:** Happy news indeed! Perhaps another boy to follow in your footsteps! We'll find a place for you in Philadelphia!

**HENRY:** Heavy and wet. Blistered feet. Water at our chests. Swimming guns. Powder turned to heavy sand.

# Con Vivo Music - Chilltown Boogie

**WASHINGTON:** You always were bright – and a proud Virginian. I had my eye on you since

birth. Your mother was so proud. Do you know I almost married her? Off you went – The College of New Jersey. The top of your class at age 17.

**HENRY:** I had plans to go to London and study law, but the war...

**WASHINGTON:** The war. For my sake, and for our country's, I'm glad you didn't. Finest man on a horse to this day!

**HENRY:** Is that why you let me carry out Paulus Hook?

**WASHINGTON:** It was a good plan. 4 years in and everyone was stale. Who was winning?

**HENRY:** Who was losing?

**WASHINGTON:** Your plan was solid.

**HENRY:** You said it could only be carried out with at least 300 men.

**WASHINGTON:** It was a good plan, and you took 400. Who was winning?

**HENRY:** Who was losing?

**WASHINGTON:** Your plan was solid.

**HENRY:** 14 miles in the woods, water rising. Soaked and heavy. Our knees, our waists. Soon our necks. Gunpowder soaked, all we had were bayonets.

**WASHINGTON:** Lucky for you –

**HENRY:** Lucky. 3:00 am.

**WASHINGTON:** Sutherland had sent 100 of his loyalists out to forage.

**HENRY:** McClean told us! He had watched them for weeks. Without him –

**WASHINGTON:** 159 men were captured in the blink of an eye! A remarkable feat!

**HENRY:** The plan was to burn the barracks down.

**WASHINGTON AND HENRY:** Fire! Fire! Fire!

**HENRY:** Is this the sound of my own mind? Young boy, better run or you'll go up in flames!

**WASHINGTON AND HENRY:** Fire! Fire! Fire!

**HENRY:** There, in the corner – a baby crying.

**WASHINGTON AND HENRY:** Fire! Fire! Fire!

**HENRY:** My men are outside screaming. A mother's low voice, The suckle of her newborn. Who can find comfort her? Around the corner the smell of death and urine.

**WASHINGTON AND HENRY:** Fire! Fire! Fire!

**WASHINGTON:** Sick men /

**HENRY:** / And the children, sad little mice

**WASHINGTON:** / Sad little mice

**HENRY:** What coward has placed you here?

**WASHINGTON AND Henry:** Fire! Fire! Fire!

**WASHINGTON:** Hold your flames!

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**HENRY:** Men! Hold your flames! We are not a people of brutality!

**WASHINGTON AND HENRY:** We are not a people of brutality!

**WASHINGTON:** You marched back 14 miles. Only 2 prisoners died. Paulus Hook was a victory and gave our soldiers the boost they needed. You earned that medal!

**HENRY:** I earned the medal /

**WASHINGTON:** / You earned the medal.

**WASHINGTON:** Time to catch the ferry back to New York. Please give Anne my best.

**HENRY:** Thank you, sir.

**WASHINGTON AND HENRY:** We are not a people of brutality!

**HENRY:** I earned the medal, Did I have a choice? 16 years ago I was a hero, Did I have a choice?

**WASHINGTON:** You earned the medal.

**HENRY:** I earned the medal.

**WASHINGTON:** You earned the medal.

**WASHINGTON AND HENRY:** We are not a people of brutality?

**HENRY:** But you give a boy a gun, tell him to decide who will live or die. Save a child, spare his mother, catch his father, and should he try to run, watch him bleed at your feet – you're a hero.

**WASHINGTON:** Did you have a choice?

**HENRY:** 16 years ago, I was a hero. Did I have a choice? It would be 4 more years til the war ended. I wanted to study law. By then I was 27. War was in my blood.

**WASHINGTON:** Did you have a choice?

**HENRY:** 16 years ago, I was a hero. Did I have a choice?

**WASHINGTON:** Henry Lee was a sensitive man... after the war, he experienced Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, making poor business deals with heavy consequences, serving a 1 year-long sentence in debtor's prison. When he died, his life was in shambles.

# 2. THE HAUNT

Music by Alon Nechushtan

Libretto by Alon Nechushtan

*Halloween of 1840s / our time. Inside the old Lincoln Park Cemetery, across from the old Bergen church, Jersey City. It is just past midnight. Joe appears in a cemetery before a mystified Abbey. Could this be a mere random chance encounter between two complete strangers that sparks a spontaneous, riveting convergence, on a spooky Halloween night in the creepy old Lincoln Park Cemetery – or perhaps a wry series of unfortunate events bound by the unpredictable and astounding forces of fate?!*

**JOE:** Abigail, Abigail, Sister Goodwin, are you there under the pale moonlight?

Strange, I could've sworn there was a thick cornfield in this very spot, but a minute ago and now – an evil spell turned it all to a creepy crypt, what a dreadful illusion – the soil so dark, so moist, so sticky.

Wake up, Joe! Y'aint got long to stay here.

Is it sweat or the color of blood dribbling down my brow? What hath you with my sanity, gloomy cemetery hellgate? Everything is but a distant blurry, fragmented memory: m'laying unconscious momentarily, or 'twas eternally? Chased here to hide by them slave catching dogs, God damn them.

I only remember getting hit by some stones, Or were they missiles and bullets in this ambush, I'm so relieved we dodged them unharmed somehow.

It is so strange, t'looks like a grave yard of some kind, an open meadow – ain't at all safe from them lurking eyes, they got spies to hunt me like a mad dog.

Abigail, Abigail Goodwin, is it you? Who are you? so fair, so young, speak now, or be silence forever; I'm in a terrible rush, without an instant to loose idling.

**ABBEY:** I'm not Abigail Goodwin, though she lies not far from here. I'm her namesake, your great-great granddaughter, you can call me Abbey, sir.

**JOE:** You have been bamboozled, or perhaps Micky Finned, girl; Abigail is very much alive and well, God bless her kind heart; she set this meeting ground, this very morning, when we spoke, underneath the altar by the secret door.

**ABBEY:** It's quite fantastic! All seems like a dream, phantasm most remarkable and vivid, like a reverie about to be break any minute, I have so much to learn from you, sir, about your life, about your wife, about your grandsons.

# Con Vivo Music - Chilltown Boogie

**JOE:** Such a bunch of rubbish, more rut than I can handle, li'l Mrs, I don't have a son, mos def' this isn't a place for children in this hellish world – newborns are but trade, property in a trifle poker game. What d'ya make of that?!

I don't have time to lecture you! I'm not the teaching kind, speak with brother Still, the bravest conductor. Speak with sister Harriet – the fearless prophet. Good bye Miss', I ain't got no moment to waste. We're heading with ma' missus to Canada. Through the river Jordan, that's where the future lies, wish me luck, with God's speed - good bye.

**JOE:** Jordan's river's chilly cold, Hallelujah, Kills the body not the should, Hallelujah!

**ABBEY** Wait ....I'm so sorry to drop the forecast, you have never made it to Canada when they... when they... when they... (struggles to complete the sentence)

**JOE:** When they what ? Speak now, you blubbering fool.

**ABBEY:** Your wife stayed here all her life, she was one of the first new members accepted to the old Bergen church, this one across the street. She sought her freedom in this county, she's buried in the next plot of land, along with all your grand children. What's an instant for you – is centuries which ere passed now, you will have a grandson, a scion to us all, seven grand children and 64 great great children.

**JOE:** Stop belaboring, here's a question for your peculiar magic can cast: has 'Moses' came back from 'Egypt'?

**ABBEY:** You must mean Harriet? She indeed returned and freed so many, shaping the form of things to come/

**JOE:** / Has 'The Grand Conductor' delivered 'The Goods'?

**ABBEY:** You mean William Still? His servitude in the vigilant committee of Philadelphia was incomparable; Their legacy is very well commemorated, rest assured, the master plan worked at every level /

**JOE:** / Has sister 'G' is safe and sound, unharmed?

**ABBEY:** You mean Abigail Goodwin? She lived to see her dreams come true, died at 74 young, predicting that "slavery will ere long cease, humbled in her death as in her astounding life.

**JOE:** And what about I, all in vein? We've crossed the Raritan river – not uninterrupted for many days and nights, chased from East New Brunswick like cattle.

We've been walking on the railroad for so long, I can't remember I found a temp job with the quakers Tom and John by the canal, carrying their stubborn mules in a straight line day in day out, dragging the barges along the ridges of the Morris canal. Saving the pennies, those very barges that could ran me down my freedom away /

**ABBEY:** / No one ever took your freedom away!

**JOE:** Saving the pennies, those very barges that could ran down /

**ABBEY:** / No one ever took your freedom away!

# Con Vivo Music - Chilltown Boogie

**JOE:** Have you been following the liberator?  
Have you been hearing of moral suasion? And  
the prophet sayeth:

“This is the kind of fasting I want:  
Free those who are wrongly imprisoned;  
lighten the burden of those who are working for  
you.

Let the oppressed go free,  
and remove the chains that bind people.

We shall overcome!”

– says I, Joe

**ABBEY:** Please take my word, your life was not  
wasted; we’re meeting on your birth date,  
celebrating your life with pints and a jolly meal,  
keeping the torch burning.

**JOE:**

Steal away

Steal away

Steal away to Jesus

Steal away

Steal away home

I haven't got long to stay here.

My lord, my lord, he calls me.

He calls me by the thunder.

The trumpet sounds within my soul

I haven't got long to stay here.

# 3. THE BOATMAN

Music by Alon Nechushtan

Libretto by Tony Asaro

*1878, Morris Canal. Opened in 1831, the Morris Canal connected Pennsylvania to the Eastern Seaboard. Mule-drawn canal boats carried up to 900,000 pounds of coal and iron each year with a trip from the canal's start to its end in Jersey City taking 5 days. William 'Billy Black' McCullough, a former alcoholic turned born-again Christian, and his wife Mary discuss the growing city, Christian life, and working the banks of the Morris Canal.*

**BLACK:** First question: why am I here?

I'm not a preacher. Never said I was. I'm a boatman. Haulin' wood up the Morris Canal. That cross right there? Made o' that wood I haul. Boatmen don't use fancy words. Mostly vulgarities.

When the Lord came in and saved me, he took all that filth right of me, I'm afraid though, that didn't leave me much left over. but I'll testify to you. I'll plead my case, the best I can.

Next question: why are you here? You. An' you. An' you over there. Chances are, you're not a preacher neither. Bet you're regular Joe – like me.

Maybe ya' work on the docks, or ya' pull a lever in some fact'ry in Elizabeth, or ya' lay bricks. You got a boss. You got a wife. You got kids you gotta keep fed. Frettin' 'bout too much whiskey in your gullet. Bettin' with too much

money from your wallet. Sweatin' from too much daily strife in your dreary life. What's in your thoughts?

Are ya' where you thought you'd be? Are ya' who you want to be? Somethin' brought you here, brought you to this tent to listen to some guy – – tell you somethin' you need to hear. So I'll testify to you, the best I can to plead my case.

First, I'll tell you who I am, then, I'll tell you who I was. The name is William Mccollough, "Billy Black" on the canal – Boatman Billy Black. If you ask around the river, they'll tell ya, "Billy's alright."

**MARY:** "Billy's alright"

**BLACK:** My lovely wife, Mary.

**MARY:** Ask around on the river, an' his wife'll tell ya' too. My "Billy's alright", ha ha!

**BLACK:** Thank you, Mary – can I get on with it now?

**MARY:** Oh, don't pay me no mind. Not just yet. My part's comin' later! you'll hear from Mary then!

**BLACK:** That ya' will. I am a righteous soldier of god ,the spirit of god strives within me.

# Con Vivo Music - Chilltown Boogie

**MARY:** Amen!

**BLACK:** I am saved. I walk in the light of Christ.  
My heart is his heart. My hands are his hands.

**MARY:** Hallelujah!

**BLACK:** Praise the lord. Amen, hallelujah! But,  
let me tell you who I was. Billy Black was no  
good: Not a robber, but full of dirt! Filth!  
Foolish talk! Slobberin' around: obscenity  
spoutin', tobacco chewin', Sabbath breakin'.  
The wildest kind o' Irishman. Full of the drink  
and full of pride.

Scotch whiskey was my vice – my water an' my  
air. That's all I had faith in back then. An' I  
prayed to that false god ev'ry day an' ev'ry  
night.

Billy Black was no good, the devil's fire in his  
heart. That's why hooch burns in your chest.  
That's the flames o' hell. Make no mistakes  
about it. But I stand before you a changed man,  
thank the good lord, Jesus!

**MARY:** He is changed indeed!

**BLACK:** Now the spirit of the lord strives within  
me!

**MARY:** Amen!

**BLACK:** I called out to the Lord when I was in  
trouble, asked him to deliver me from the  
appetite of strong drink. And the good Lord  
did!

**MARY:** And the good Lord did, yes he did!

**BLACK:** And found out that my wife was prayin'  
from our home in Stanhope. Come Mary, my  
love: tell these kind folks what a sinner I was.

**MARY:** With pleasure, William, you'll hear from  
me, God's honest truth. This holy man of  
Christ? He was a brute.

**BLACK:** Sure was!

**MARY:** Dirt an' filth!

**BLACK:** That's the truth!

**MARY:** He wasn't fit to speak to a woman, let  
alone marry one. That I am his wife today is a  
miracle of the lord Jesus.

**BLACK:** A miracle of the lord Jesus, he is  
mighty indeed!

**MARY:** Amen. When I met him he liked liquor,  
though he staved off the drink while he fought  
in the war.

**BLACK:** Yes indeed, I liked liquor, yes indeed.

**MARY:** When I met him I informed him if he  
wants me, he can drink no more.

**BLACK:** I can drink no more.

**MARY:** When I met him he was ornery jus' a  
foul-mouth degen'rate whom heaven abhorred.

**BLACK:** Yes indeed, I was ornery indeed

**MARY:** When I met him I informed him if ya  
love me you must also love the lord.

**BLACK:** Yes indeed, you must love the lord!

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**MARY:** That's the influence of a Christian woman. The gentle sex ain't as gentle as ya think! it's been twelve years since, he's still righteous and good, all thanks to my Christian womanhood.

Show some penitence. Start repentin' like ya' should. An' give a little thanks thanks to that Christian womanhood!

**BLACK:** Brothers and sisters, take a look at your hands. Do it. Go on now. The devil's workshop, every single one. Who amongst us has not used their hands for sin? Hands that steal. Hands that fornicate. Hands that cause harm to your fellow man.

If your hand causes you to fall into sin, chop it off. Chop it off! It's better for you to enter into life crippled than to go away with two hands into the fire of hell, which can't be put out! Is that what you want, friends? you want those hands to burn eternally in flames? You want those hands to rot, maggots consuming your flesh? Or will you lift those hands to God? Raise those hands in prayer.

**MARY:** Hallelujah!

**BLACK:** My lovely Mary, my lovely wife, these sinners need salvation.

Heavenly lord, our hands to heaven  
Hear the entreaty we convey.  
Spurn not these hands though they are errant.  
Hands that have sinned can also pray.

By joining hands to praise Christ Jesus,  
By giving o'er our souls to save,  
Righteously from his holy kingdom  
He will redeem us from the grave.

Heavenly lord, our hands to heaven,  
Never forsake these calloused palms.  
Fingers that grasp in search of evil  
Also turn pages to the psalms.

Make not the fist of hateful anger.  
Bear not the crest of selfish pride.  
Ye shall attend our lord and savior  
Sitting in heaven by his side.

# 4. THE CHOICE

Music by Alon Nechushtan

Libretto by Dana Leslie Goldstein

*1892, in the lecture room of a new synagogue on York street in Jersey City, on a beautiful Sunday morning. the youth group of Temple Beth El has just finished their regular weekly meeting, and the teenage members have a big question for their rabbi. A question about their recent history.*

*Rabbi Schweizer is popular and approachable, but he's never told them what happened – how they got here, to this new building, this new congregation, with its more Americanized religious practices, when they all know that their families used to be – at least in name – orthodox. Rabbi Schweizer has the answers: he made it happen but he has never told the story before. Now, though, there's been an article in the newspaper about the new temple, and people are talking. The teens want to hear how it happened from Rabbi Schweizer himself – he decides to tell them everything, since the decisions he made were ultimately for them.*

**RABBI SCHWEIZER:** How did we get here? That's what you want to know? How did we grow into this headline in the paper.

A breakaway congregation – a different kind of temple – a different kind of future.

You deserve to be told the difficult story, how we left the fold and began a new story. How we built something I know will last, how we built without losing the past.

**THE ELDERS:** You saw a problem, you asked for a meeting, the meeting – it didn't go so well but it led you to this, but it led me to you, it led me here... change isn't always something to fear.

**RABBI SCHWEIZER:** You're young – you might not understand, but I don't blame the elders, I don't blame anyone. They were doing the best they could, they were keeping the ways they knew.

When you've lost your home, when you've lost your land, when you're starting again with mouths to feed. The rules you've always followed must see you through. I saw something else – I won't call it a vision – but maybe that's what it was. In this new world, this new land, the modern year of 1892 – I saw what I had to do.

I've been thinking long into the night, I've been praying too. I've been trying to puzzle it out: how to really become an American and still be a Jew...

I would fall asleep by the candle light til that morning I woke to a winter sun – so sharp and bright, It was like it answered me and I knew, I knew.

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**THE ELDERS:** You saw a problem, you asked for a meeting, the meeting – it didn't go so well but it led you to this, but it led me to you, it led me here... change isn't always something to fear.

**RABBI SCHWEIZER:** How we began before any of you were born – we stepped off the boats and became a congregation, became a community who worshipped at sundown, and closed for shabbat, we dovened in Hebrew – the old trusted orthodox ways.

**THE ELDERS:** You saw a problem, we know you know, the young – we see it in their face, they're drifting away.

**RABBI SCHWEIZER:** I watch them drift away, I watch them choose – America over faith, why should they lose? when you've lost your home, when you've lost your land, when you're starting again, you cling to what you believe.

**THE ELDERS:** You saw a problem, we know you know, just say what you're trying to say.

**RABBI SCHWEIZER:** Sundown, a beautiful time: the bridegroom arriving to meet the bride, sundown is seven or eight in the summer, sundown is four or five in the cold! Sundown keeps changing, and this rearranging of hours is taking a toll.

**THE ELDERS:** There – you said it. You said it to them. You saw a problem

**RABBI SCHWEIZER:** You would do anything to keep the flame, I didn't care – I was on a tear. If sabbath services all year round are at 8:15, a time that allows for a family dinner whose dream is the American Dream, they can still be Jews! They won't have to choose.

You know I'm not naïve, I do believe we came to this shore, we chose to make a change, why not one more?

I'm speaking to you, not in Yiddish or Hebrew, so that even the stranger at our gate will understand –

The more we speak English, the less foreign we seem, so my sermons will not be in Yiddish or Hebrew, but English and we'll have Sunday school and we'll have a youth group, an organ, a choir, a helping hand society.

**THE ELDERS:** You saw a problem, it didn't go so well, your ideas were not met with an open mind.

**RABBI SCHWEIZER:** There isn't a thing I said that I regret, and yet, and yet... the only way to do what I wanted to do was to become a headline in the paper; a breakaway congregation, a different kind of temple and future.

It wasn't an easy thing to do, it wasn't a painless thing to do, nearly broke my heart in two, but I knew, but I knew, you deserve to know the difficult story – how we left the fold, and began a new story.

You can have both the future and the past, you still learn the Torah but the books is just one part of who we are – the only way to move forward is to move on. Take a step and don't look back.

**THE ELDERS AND RABBI SCHWEIZER:** You/I saw a problem, it didn't go well, it was worth that terrible meeting.

# 5. THE MAYOR

Music by Alon Nechushtan

Libretto by Luke Jerod Kummer

*City Hall, 1949. Frank Hague ruled Jersey City as mayor for more than 30 years. Although he grew up poor and possessed little formal education, he owned an iron will and a knack for leveraging his hometown's position as a terminal for ships, railroads and highways to generate tremendous profits and political clout. He further parlayed his total control over a large, active voting base to sway elections across the state and beyond. The combination made him royalty in Jersey City and kingmaker in Trenton and Washington, D.C., including helping candidates such as Woodrow Wilson and FDR reach the White House. "Duh Mare," as Hague was called in the 12 wards, filled his war chest and lined his pocketbooks by squeezing industries dependent on Jersey City's location and demanding an annual 3 percent kickback from all city workers' salaries on what was known as "Rice Pudding Day". The practice spanned generations and in many households became an institution on calendars as important as filing income taxes on April 15.*

*Hague's sway began to wane after World War II, however, when changing demographics no longer supported a patronage system disproportionately rewarding Irish Americans. Returning veterans who fought Fascism overseas also questioned Hague's dictatorial ways. A tough-nosed former crony, John V. Kenny, the leader of the Second Ward that included Hague's own birthplace, the Horseshoe, saw an opening.*

*After being passed over in the line of succession, when Hague retired from the mayoralty in 1947 under the specter of indictment, the one-time deputy successfully campaigned in 1949 against Frank H. Eggers – Hague's nephew, chosen heir, and puppet. For a community that regarded their boss as invincible, the news came as a shock. Raucous crowds gathered in the streets outside City Hall, where loudspeakers blared Kenny's campaign theme song, "Now is the Hour." Backers old and new chanted in support of the diminutive Kenny, referred to both derisively and fondly as "The Little Guy." In the end, Kenny would lack the skill or sway of his mentor. He was also at least as unscrupulous, as a successful criminal trial a couple decades later proved. But on election night in 1949, much of Jersey City flooded the streets in awe. Suddenly, anything was possible.*

**KENNY:** Look, Louie. Barn. Fellas. Gimme a sec compose myself before I go out der, huh?

**KENNY:** Friends. Romans. Irishmen... and don't forget my Polish. Bless ya's, too! Na Zdrowie! Ya finally picked a new mayor, new blood, How's it feel? Jersey City.

**HAGUE:** C'mon Johnny. Know I allow no smokin' on the job.

**KENNY:** Geez, like seein' a ghost.

# Con Vivo Music - Chilltown Boogie

**HAGUE:** Dead? Me? Haguey? Duh Mare? Never.

**KENNY:** Know what? That's yer problem – thought you's immortal.

**HAGUE:** Bet again.

**KENNY:** It's new blood now. Time for a better man.

**HAGUE:** Sure, Johnny Boy. New blood. Jus' wait... Wait till we cuts the lil' swine betrays 'Duh Mare.'

**KENNY:** I ain't the hog been Hoovering up every loose coin in Hudson County fer three decades. I've done nothin' but good on ya, an' look how you passed o'er Johnny Boy for yer push-over nephew.

**HAGUE:** Put you on top of the whole second ward.

**KENNY:** Gived me duh horseshoe – some kind of award ?

**HAGUE:** We never jus' take one to the chin. We pound him to earth, maybe do him in.

**KENNY:** Times is changed. Jersey's winds blowin' 'nother way. See, it ain't my doin' jus' yer turn for a screwin'. That's cost of bein' boss today.

**HAGUE:** Nonsense, not that I ever did nothin' wrong or cavalier, but lemme be clear, got people can make you disappear.

**KENNY:** Look at that, got no fear. Look down. See them? Hear? Them is cheers. Not for 'Haguey' may surprise, but that's cries for the lil' guy!

**HAGUE:** Look at you, I remember when he wasn't pint-size? Now guess he eyes, the big prize, every year! Thinks he's Cagney, tap dancin', actin' mean. But got no backbone, looks, brains or spleen!

**KENNY:** Just another two-bit hoodlum in the 'shoe. What you got, you owe to my pop. Ned Kenny's one that made you.

**HAGUE:** d'you recall, Johnny Boy, when 'Haguey' run to ground man who shot your brotha' down? Asked you then, you was coward, didn't give him licks I gave that 'talian 40 kicks.

**KENNY:** My ol' man lent 75 dollars, wadn't 'cause you's a saint or scholar, dressed like royalty, now you forget loyalty.

**HAGUE:** You say the 'little people' don't love me? – it's jus' 'cause you're trying to climb above me. Well, Johnny Boy, it's a pity, 'f you think you'll ever own Jersey City!

**KENNY:** Time moves on! What you had is gone. You're the one should be frightened, if you don't wanna get indicted, don't give me no reason, to try you for treason: graft, gamblin' rackateerin', strong-armin', larceny... I've been around, I know where the bodies' burial ground.

**HAGUE:** I got no worry, no judge, no jury in Jersey ever convicted me.

**KENNY:** Careful where you're steppin' got my own army of zepplin, now's the hour for 'Haguey's big goodbye.

**HAGUE:** Thirty years spoonin' out puddin' made me a popular guy.

# Con Vivo Music - Chilltown Boogie

**KENNY:** Well, friend here comes the end, your whole career, don't shed a tear.

**HAGUE:** When I was comin' up, eight of us kids livin' in a cold-water flat down in da 'shoe. Ol' man come from Ireland, an' he strived. But even if he's qualified, said "cat'lics need not apply." This is Jersey City, we got a view of 'lady pretty'; So I run with a gang – I seen heads get bustin', figured there's a better way.

**HAGUE:** Politics is legal hustlin', don't blame me for my talent to rise. For years I paid my dues, on boards and the commissions, too. Till one day I'm Mare – Heights, Gammon-town, Journal Square, Palisades – all way to water's edge. One thing is little people I never forgot. Turkeys and Christmas baskets I'll always get.

**KENNY:** Let me tell you a story, how 'Haguey' become bigger than 'Kong' Before forgetting lil' people led him wrong: started ambitious, we Irish gots a hard time Cat'lics, strugglin' to make a dime. So he sews up power, one vote at a time, so he sews up power, one ward at a time.

Italy: every body knows where all the roads go, here – gotta go through Jersey City and pay a toll! All of Jersey City got their price to pay. Cough three percent of their salary, every year on Rice Puddin' Day. He gets rich, wearing a crown – then the whole city falls like dominoes down.

**KENNY:** What'd do you thinks next, what's next to do? Ask Woodrow Wilson and F.D.R too – how they got to Pennsylvania Avenue! Is this a city for the people? Or jus' somet'ing be won? He leads with the barrel of a gun; he became a dictator. Now Jersey City's has a liberator. Now it's time... to turn over the reigns... to John 'Victory' Kenny – The Little Guy!

**HAGUE:** You call me venal?

**KENNY:** You're just getting' senile. Man used to be ruthless, now he's jus' toothless.

**HAGUE:** I built the maternity ward.

**KENNY:** An' bought a million-dollar mansion on da shore.

**HAGUE:** My people will never forget Hague!

**KENNY:** Sure, that's why they brought here a dozen egg.

**HAGUE:** Only won kissin' Polish and 'red'.

**KENNY:** Least unlike you, gave no ballots to the dead.

**HAGUE:** Comedy sideshow, that's what you are.

**KENNY:** Put out the 'papa' – have a cigar!

**HAGUE:** Johny Boy, I looked after you, kid.

**KENNY:** Phuey, You kept me down gettin' greed.

**HAGUE:** I treated you like a son!

**KENNY:** Thanks, father 'Haguey', I accept your congratulation! The night has just began.

**HAGUE:** I had twelve wards, run by my chosen apostles, but one lil' Judas turned to be hostile.

## Biographies - Composer



### **Alon Nechushtan - composer**

"A talent to watch, with a surfeit of ideas, an unbridled spirit and bold, two-fisted sense of Architecture" - (Down Beat magazine), composer Alon Nechushtan's music adventures have brought him to far corners such as the Yokohama Festival Japan with his contemporary compositions, The Sao-Paulo Brazil Jewish Music Festival with his Quintet Talat, Toronto, Manila with his concerto for the Philippine Symphony Orchestra and The Tel Aviv New Music Biennale with his Compositions for Large Ensemble. A resident of New York City, he has performed in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Central Park SummerStage, The Blue Note Jazz Club and Joe's Pub frequently with his projects as a band leader of various groups or as an in-demand sideman. All About Jazz magazine called him "a fantastic pianist-composer with abundant chemistry and boundless eclecticism." He studied composition with Michael Gandolfi, orchestration

with Lee Hyla, and additional composition lessons with Lukas Foss At the B.U, John Harbison & Louis Karchin at June In Buffalo Composition Masterclasses with Fredrick Rjewski, Pierre Boulez and Alexander Gehr. Piano with Fred Hersch, Paul Bley, Ran Blake, Danilo Perez, big band and jazz composition with Bob Brookmeyer, improvisation with Jerry Bergonzy, Bob Moses, George Garzone, Henry Threadgill and Uri Caine. He has released over 10 solo recordings on various leading recording labels: Enja (Germany), MGN (Netherlands), Tzadik (USA), BuckyBall (USA), Creative Sources (Portugal), Between the Lines (Netherland), Ayler (Sweden). [www.musicalon.com](http://www.musicalon.com)

## Biographies - Librettists



### **Tony Asaro - THE BOATMAN**

Tony received his Masters Degree in Musical Theatre Writing from NYU, TSOA. He is a Resident Artist at American Lyric Theater. Tony has written music and lyrics for the musicals *The Cable Car Nymphomaniac*, *Flocked Together: The Green Parrots of Telegraph Hill*, *LifeCycle*, and *Our Country*. His opera *All Wounds Bleed* presented in Opera America's New Works Forum in 2012, and received its world premiere at Tulsa Opera in 2013. It has since been produced at Brooklyn Music School, Chicago Fringe Opera, and last year in a virtual production at University of Michigan. Tony wrote the libretto for *The Halloween Tree* and for *Zheng*.



### **Jenny Cresswell - THE HERO**

Jennifer Cresswell is a librettist, soprano, educator, and author with a passion for curating and creating art through a 21st century lens. As a performer, highlights of the 2021-22 season include appearances as Cherubino in Ragnar Kjartansson's 12-hour marathon piece, *Bliss*, with Detroit Opera, the Social Worker and News Reporter in *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X*, and Olivia in Minnesota Opera's filmed production of Kamala Sankaram's *INTERSTATE*, for which she also served as co-librettist with her co-star, Kathleen Kelly. Other notable roles in recent years include Magda Sorel in *The Consul*, Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, The Mother in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, Charlotte in *Before Breakfast*, Hannah After in *As One*, and Der Trommler in *Der Kaiser von Atlantis*.

As an author, Jennifer has been published in *Classical Singer*, *The Middleclass Artist*, and in *An Injustice!* This season her poetry was featured in *Vexations in Time*, a durational performance art piece performed in Times Square, New York City. She has recently been a guest on Keturah Stickann's podcast, *Words First*, as well as *Opera Uprising*, where she speaks candidly about what it means to be a singer, creator, and mother in today's artistic market. Dr. Cresswell is currently on faculty at the Interlochen Arts Academy. She is a graduate of the University of Michigan, where she was named a Rackham Presidential Fellow and a recognized Scholar by the Center for the Education of Women.

## Biographies - Librettists (cont.)



### **Dana Leslie Goldstein - THE CHOICE**

Playwright/Lyricist Dana Leslie Goldstein has won the New England New Play Competition, Harold and Mimi Steinberg Playwriting Prize, Different Voices New Play Award, ACTF New Play Award and numerous development grants. Her work has been seen at Manhattan Theatre Club, Cherry Lane, Culture Project, Women's Project, York, Theatre80, New Dramatists, Vineyard Playhouse, Brave New World Rep, American Stage, on Ellis and Liberty Islands, at the UN and more. Member: BMI and the Dramatists Guild.  
[www.danalesliegoldstein.com](http://www.danalesliegoldstein.com)



### **Luke Jerod Kummer - THE MAYOR**

Luke Jerod Kummer is an author and scriptwriter whose recent works include Takers Mad, an Audible Original drama about a turn-of-the-century true crime, and The Blue Period, a bestselling novel that depicts the real-life tragedy that inspired Pablo Picasso's creative coming of age. Kummer's nonfiction writing has appeared in The New York Times, New York, The Washington Post, Washingtonian Magazine, Literary Hub and New Republic. He is currently drafting another work for the stage.

## Biographies - Director / Music Director



### **Karina Parker - director**

Karina is a Brooklyn-based director, performing artist, and educator. Karina is the co-founder and co-director of the grassroots opera company Killer Queen Opera, and is a founding member of the NYC vocal ensemble Musica Vera. Karina received her bachelors of fine art in vocal performance and music education from Carnegie Mellon School of Music.

Karina (soprano) is a multi-disciplinary vocalist, performer, and director - with a special interest in early music, folk music, and musical theater. Karina has performed with organizations such as The United Nations, NBL, The Italian Academy, Pittsburgh Resonance Works, Pittsburgh Festival Opera, Canticum Novum Singers, Oberlin School of Music, Carnegie Mellon University, Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, and The Laguna Beach Playhouse. In

addition to operatic repertoire, Karina specializes in choral and chamber music. Her past choral work includes performances under the direction of internationally renowned conductors Manfred Honeck, Gustavo Dudamel, Gary Wedow, Andrés Cárdenes, Harold Rosenbaum, Elph Ely, and many more. Karina currently directs, performs, and teaches in New York City's five boroughs.



### **Ben Grow - music director**

Conductor Benjamin Grow has worked with a wide array of ensembles in New York City and serves as Principal Conductor of Chelsea Opera and Co-Director/Conductor of the sinfonietta Ensemble Échappé, which is presented regularly by the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the Italian Academy at Columbia University. He is also Music Director of the Southern Tier Symphony. He has also conducted studio recordings and workshops for Opera Philadelphia with artists including Frederica von Stade. Recent engagements include concerts with the Orchestra of St. Luke's.

Mr. Grow teaches at The Juilliard School and has been guest conductor at the Manhattan School of Music. For several years, he co-presented an annual lecture at the 92nd Street Y, "The Physics of Music," as part of their Mysteries of Science series, and has given pre-concert talks at the Museum of Biblical Art. He received his Bachelor of Music from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University and his Master of Music at the Manhattan School of Music.

## Biographies - Vocalists



**Colin Levin, baritone - THE HERO - George Washington**

Baritone Colin Levin's 2022-2023 season includes a return to Carnegie Hall as the Baritone soloist in the Faure Requiem with Distinguished Concerts International New York (DCINY), Pierre Birabeau/Red Shadow in Sigmund Romberg's The Desert Song with Winter Opera St. Louis, the cover of Charles Darwin in the Premier of the Opera Southern Crossings by Zaid Jabri/Yvette Christiansen at the Gerald W. Lynch Theater in New York City, and Nordic Art Song recitals in New York City, Puerto Rico, Lenox MA, and Lund, Sweden. Career highlights include Carnegie Hall debut as the Baritone soloist in Mark Hayes' Gloria, Manfred Lewin in Heggie's For a Look or a Touch at Jordan Hall with the Boston Gay Men's Chorus, Baritone soloist in Carmina Burana with the Tanglewood Youth Chorus and Orchestra, Papageno in The Magic Flute with Opera on the James, Schaunard in La Boheme with both Opera Roanoke and Opera Connecticut, Dr. Falke in Die Fledermaus with Fargo-Moorhead Opera, Taddeo in L'italiana in Algeri with Opera Company of Middlebury, and Thomas

Brown in Sullivan's The Zoo with Odyssey Opera, in addition to covering the title role in Hindemith's Cardillac with Opera Boston.



**Sarah Nelson Craft, mezzo-soprano - THE HERO - Henry Lee**

Known for her vibrant and engaging storytelling, mezzo-soprano Sarah Nelson Craft has been hailed by Opera News as "exquisite... glowing... and genuine." She has been presented in recital by Carnegie Hall, Five Boroughs Music Festival, Brooklyn Art Song Society, and Music Academy of the West, collaborating with renowned pianists including Warren Jones and Martin Katz. She recently brought her passion for early music to the title role in Handel's Solomon with New York Baroque, Inc. and Amor Artis Chorus, as well as the role of Piramo in Hasse's Piramo e Tisbe with The Little Opera Theatre

of NY. Concert highlights include Bach's Mass in B minor at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall, Mozart's Coronation Mass at Alice Tully Hall, Vivaldi's Gloria at Carnegie Hall, Mahler's Symphony No.2 with the New Jersey Festival Orchestra, Canteloube's Chants d'Auvergne with the Brooklyn Symphony Orchestra, and Brahms' Alto Rhapsody with Princeton Pro Musica. Favorite operatic roles include the title role in Rossini's La Cenerentola and Massenet's Cendrillon, as well as Cherubino, Hansel, Dido, and Hermia in Britten's A Midsummer Night's Dream. Ms. Craft has performed with companies including the Caramoor International Music Festival, New York City Opera, Death of Classical, ChamberQUEER, and the Macau International Music Festival. Upcoming engagements include Elgar's Sea Pictures with Brooklyn Symphony Orchestra, Debussy's Trois ballades de François Villon with New York Repertory Orchestra, and an appearance in Brooklyn Art Song Society's New Voices Festival.

## Biographies - Vocalists (cont.)



### **Jonathan R. Green, baritone - THE HAUNT - Joe**

Jonathan R Green is an American Verdi Baritone originally from Chicago and now resides in Harlem NY. He is an alum of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and studied with Richard Miller. Jonathan also attended Indiana University and the University of Kentucky and studied with Tim Noble and Dr Everett McCorvey. Jonathan has been a soloist with the National Choral (NYC) performing as the baritone soloist in Carmina Burana. He has internationally performed at the Sempr Oper (Dresden), Deutsche Oper am Rein (Düsseldorf), Teatro Massimo Bellini (Catania), Teatro San Carlo (Napoli), and most recently Teatro Regio (Torino). His operatic credits include the title roles of Rigoletto, Falstaff, and Figaro (Mozart and Rossini), Scarpia (Tosca), Renato (Un Ballo in maschera), Guglielmo (Cosi fan tutte), Marcello (La Bohème), Crown (Porgy and Bess), and Germont (La Traviata).



### **Kimberli Render, soprano - THE HAUNT - Abigail**

Lyric soprano, Kimberli Render, recently made her Off-Broadway debut as a Swing in the Lincoln Center Theater's critically acclaimed premier of Intimate Apparel, opera by Ricky Ian Gordon, libretto by Lynn Nottage and directed by Bartlett Sher. Ms. Render made her Metropolitan Opera debut as a featured chorus soloist in the GRAMMY award winning production of Gershwin's Porgy and Bess.

Roles include Liu in Turandot (Puccini), Donna Anna in Don Giovanni (Mozart), Hanna Glawari in The Merry Widow (Lehar), Elisetta in Il matrimonio segreto (Cimarosa), the Governess in Turn of the Screw (Britten), and Lucinda in Into the Woods (Sondheim). Cover roles include Leah in Southern Crossings (Jabri), Marguerite in Faust, and Micaela in Carmen.

Ms. Render's career includes solo, concert, ensemble, and chorus work. As an extra-chorister in the Metropolitan Opera, she has been seen in Turandot, Die Meistersinger, Boris Gudanov, and Fire Shut Up in My Bones. Concert

engagements include Coronation Mass, Rossini Stabat Mater and Bach's Magnificat under the baton of the world-renowned conductor, Helmuth Rilling.

Ms. Render completed a Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance at Colorado State University and two Bachelor of Music degrees in Music Education and Vocal Performance at Columbus State University's Schwob School of Music.

## Biographies - Vocalists (cont.)



**Daniel Chiu, baritone - THE BOATMAN - Willam Billy McKenna**

Daniel Chiu is a baritone based in Brooklyn, NY. Daniel began his studies in 2015 at SUNY New Paltz with Kent Smith, now mentor. Fall 2019, Daniel went on to study with Maitland Peters for his Masters. He graduated May 2021 from Manhattan School of Music with his Masters degree in Opera & Voice. Daniel has sung in the states, abroad, and most recently as an apprentice artist for Sarasota Opera's 2022 Winter season. He has recently performed in Greece as Aeneas from Dido & Aeneas, and in New York with The Opera Next Door's production of The Old Maid and the Thief as Bob.



**Amy van Roekel, mezzo-soprano - THE BOATMAN - Mary**

Soprano Amy van Roekel has been described by the Washington Post as "a lovely singer and an accomplished actress," receiving many accolades for her performances on both the operatic and concert stage. Highlights of her career include roles with Florida Grand Opera, Lyric Opera Cleveland, Central City Opera, Chautauqua Opera, in addition to concerts with the National Symphony Orchestra, Virginia Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, and Santa Fe Symphony, to name a few. Recent appearances include a Scarlatti opera with the early-music group ACRONYM in Boston, as well as recitals with the organization Lyric Fest in Philadelphia. In addition to performing and teaching, she is mom to 11-year-old twins and resides in Brooklyn.

## Biographies - Vocalists (cont.)



**Peter Kendall Clark, baritone - THE CHOICE - Rabbi Schweitzer**

Baritone PETER KENDALL CLARK recently appeared in the world premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon/Michael Korie's *The Garden Of The Finzi-Continis* with New York City Opera and The National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene, and in the New York premiere of Tom Cipullo's *The Parting* with Chelsea Opera. Previously with NYCO: Ted Rosenthal's *Dear Erich*, *Candide* directed by Harold Prince, Peter Eötvös' *Angels in America*, Charles Wuorinen's *Brokeback Mountain*, and Iain Bell/Mark Campbell's *Stonewall*. Regionally: Caramoor Opera, Anchorage Opera, Opera on the James, Charlottesville Opera, Hawaii Opera Theatre, Virginia Opera, St. Petersburg Opera, Chelsea Opera, Syracuse Opera, Union Avenue Opera and Skylight Music Theatre. Favorite roles: Sweeney Todd, Fredrik Eggerman, Henry Higgins, King Arthur, MacHeath, Older Thompson, Count Almaviva and Eugene Onegin. Since May of 2020 he has given over 250 outdoor concerts in Brooklyn in the series *Songs From The Ledge*, aka "the hottest ticket in town", according to the New York Post. Upcoming: Older Thompson in *Glory Denied* with Roanoke Opera, 2023.

Brownstone Baritone (YouTube) [www.songsfromtheledge.com](http://www.songsfromtheledge.com) [www.peterkendallclark.com](http://www.peterkendallclark.com)



**Jessica Bowers, soprano - THE CHOICE - Representative of Elders**

Jessica Bowers has performed with Utah Opera, Anchorage Opera, Opera Boston, Central City Opera, and Ohio Light Opera. Roles include Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*, Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*, and The Mother Abbess in *The Sound of Music*, Nicklausse in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, and The Queen in John Harbison's *A Full Moon in March*. She has performed with Cygnus Ensemble, Taconic Music, Poetica Musica, L'Artiste Ordinaire, Dali Quartet, Composers Concordance, and Satori Ensemble. Recently, she premiered Akemi Naito's one-woman opera, *Emily Brontë*, in New York City and Tokyo, and Earl Kim's opera, *Footfalls*, at Lehigh University. This season she will perform with The Village Trip, Poetica Musica, Con Vivo Music, *Concerts on the Slope*, and The Bowers Fader Duo

She and her duo partner, Oren Fader, guitarist, have released two albums - *Between Us All*, on the Naxos label, through New Focus Recordings, and *People, Places, & Pets*, on Bridge Records, which is an album entirely made up of music written for them by Paul Salerni.

This fall, they will present their seventh annual new American art song concert featuring music written for them by Victoria Bond, David Glaser, Tim Mukherjee, Jeffrey Young, and Joel Suben.

## Biographies - Vocalists (cont.)



Daniel Klein

**Daniel Klein, baritone THE MAYOR - Frank Hague**

Daniel Klein has been hailed by the New York Times for his "stentorian bassbaritone" and "dark and steely voice." Audiences and critics alike have found his performances imaginative, adventurous, and occasionally even downright terrifying. In 2021, Daniel returned to Opera Company of Middlebury as Thibaut d'Arc in Tchiakovsky's *The Maid of Orleans* (Orleanskaja djeva) and made his Opera on the James debut as Don Bartolo in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. In 2022, Daniel made his debut with Intermountain Opera Bozeman as Koko (Colton) in Soren Kessel's newly conceived and critically acclaimed *The Montana Mikado*, was guest faculty at the Brevard Music Center, and will return to Opera on the James as the Sagrestano in Puccini's *Tosca*. [www.danielkleinonline.com](http://www.danielkleinonline.com)



**Maurio Hines, tenor - THE MAYOR - John V Kenny**

Maurio Hines is a native of Durham, North Carolina. As participant in the Glimmerglass Young Artist Program, Mr. Hines made his debut as Matthew Kumalo in Kurt Weil's *Lost in the Stars*. Recently, Mr. Hines worked with Lyric Opera of Chicago in *Porgy and Bess*, was a featured dancer in Hawaii Opera's production of *Flying Dutchman*, *The Mikado* with the New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players, Oklahoma with Denver Center Theatre Company and is currently singing at The Metropolitan Opera. Mr. Hines received his Bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance at Greensboro College and his Master's of Music at East Carolina University

## Biographies - Orchestra



### **Sarah Goldfeather, violin**

Sarah Goldfeather is a composer-performer who writes music for her three ensembles, Goldfeather, Cipher, and Exceptet, and was the violinist in the Tony Award-winning and Grammy-nominated Broadway production of Oklahoma! at Circle In The Square Theater. Her compositions include commissions from pianist Timo Andres, ETHEL quartet, a 25-minute song cycle which she premiered with Contemporaneous in 2018-2019, and several works for Exceptet and Cipher. She also writes and performs music for GOLDFEATHER, an experimental pop band based out of New York City. The whimsical brainchild of Sarah

Goldfeather and Mike Tierney, Goldfeather's music has been described as "a nightmare funhouse-mirror take on Carly Rae Jepsen-style upbeat pop [that is] deeply disconcerting and outrageously fun" (National Sawdust Log), "full of light and life" (The Current, Minnesota Public Radio), and "poignant...striking and laudable" (The Deli Magazine). Their fourth studio album, Change, will be released in 2022. Sarah is also the co-founder and artistic director of Exceptet, a seven-piece new music ensemble that commissions new works from emerging composers. Described as "eclectic" and "quirky" by the New Yorker, Exceptet is also proud to collaborate with composer Katie Balch, who won the prestigious Barlow prize to write a piece for the group in 2022. Sarah is also the co-founder and violinist of Cipher, a soprano-violin duo with Justine Aronson.

As a violinist, Sarah has performed as a soloist for The NYU International Conference of the Arts in Berlin, the AMEE Festival in Madrid and Valencia, the TEDxMET series at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and has been a featured composer-performer for the WildShore Festival in Alaska, The Present Music Festival in Milwaukee, The Johnstone Fund for New Music in Columbus, OH, The Laudie D. Porter Artist Series at Carleton College in Northfield, MN, The Center for New Music in San Francisco, The MATA-Ecstatic Music Festival at Merkin Hall, and more. She is currently the violin sub for the Public Theater's new musical, Suffs, and has additionally performed at The Barclay's Center, Lincoln Center Out of Doors, Alice Tully Hall, The Bang on a Can Marathon, The Park Avenue Armory, and with Courtney Love, Ronnie Spektor, Lizzo, Kimbra, to name a few. Her television performances include the 2019 Tony Awards, the Tonight Show, the Today Show, and Kelly and Ryan.



### **Devon Cupo, percussion**

Devon Cupo is a percussionist and composer who resides in northern New Jersey. He has an undergraduate degree with a double concentration in percussion performance and composition from The Hartt School at The University of Hartford. He studied percussion under Benjamin Toth. He graduated summa cum laude, and was the recipient of the Hartt percussion studio's 2021 John Cage award. Devon Cupo is currently focusing on steel pans and frame drum, and performing video game music.

## Biographies - Orchestra (cont.)



### **Carolyn Jeselsohn, cello**

Known for her musicality, expressive tone, and collaborative spirit, cellist Carolyn Jeselsohn has performed throughout the world as a soloist, chamber artist and orchestral musician. As a freelancer Carolyn has appeared at Carnegie Hall, Merkin Hall, Le Poisson Rouge, Miller Theater, The Skirball Center for the Performing Arts, The Auditorio de Tenerife, The Auditorio Alfredo Kraus and many others. Carolyn has performed with The Knights, Con Vivo Music, String Orchestra of New York, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, and Dorian Baroque. She received her training at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Studying with Merry Peckham and Allan Harris, Carolyn earned her Bachelor's and Master's in cello performance with a focus on string quartet playing. Carolyn also studied baroque cello at l'Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya in Barcelona,

Spain. Carolyn has been a performing artist at the Takács Quartet

Seminar, the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival, Yellow Barn Chamber Music School and Festival, the Perlman Music Program Chamber Music Workshop and Kneisel Hall Chamber Music Festival in Blue Hill, ME. Carolyn has had the privilege of studying chamber music with Donald Weilerstein, Peter Salaff, Paul Katz, Joel Krosnick, Ronald Copes, Kim Kashkashian, and Itzhak Perlman.

A dedicated educator, Carolyn teaches out of her studio in Maplewood, NJ. She is a Suzuki registered teacher and trained with Pamela Devenport at the School for Strings and the Intermountain Suzuki String Institute. Carolyn has been on the faculty of numerous schools throughout NYC and New Jersey. Notably, Carolyn was on the faculty at the Third Street Music School Settlement for 15 years and was the Director of the Barbara E. Field Chamber Program. Carolyn lives in Maplewood, NJ with her husband and two kids and enjoys gardening, listening to and attempting to play Bach's keyboard works, and reading chamber music.



### **Riko Higuma, keyboard**

Versatile pianist, RIKO HIGUMA made her US debut as a soloist with the Fort Worth Symphony. A sought after collaborative pianist, she has shared the concert stages with artists such as Aaron Rosand, Neil Rosenshein, Cho-Liang Lin, Alan Gilbert, Ray Chen, Timothy Eddy and has collaborated (engaged by the New York Philharmonic) with Leonidas Kavakos, Gil Shaham and Michael Tilson Thomas. Performance highlights as the member of the Zodiac Trio include Festival Radio France/Montpellier, Ottawa Chamberfest, Edinburgh Festival, Shanghai Oriental Arts Center. She has been featured in music festivals around the world including Zodiac Music Academy & Festival in France, La Jolla Music Society Summerfest, New DOCTA in Argentina, Lidal North in Norway. Her performances were featured by France 3 Television, Radio France, CBC, WQX.

## Biographies - Orchestra (cont.)



### **Andrew Roitstein, bass**

Musician and educator Andrew Roitstein has developed a multifaceted career performing, producing interactive educational concerts, creating K-12 music curricula, and designing innovative music programs that have reached young people throughout the world.

Andrew is a founding member and bassist of the award-winning Toomai String Quintet, an ensemble whose interactive school concerts and workshops have been presented by institutions such as Carnegie Hall, the 92nd Street Y, Midori

and Friends, and The Juilliard School. He has also performed with the New York and Hong Kong Philharmonic orchestras, and has been a featured chamber musician in Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center. A prolific arranger, his works have been performed by members of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, members of the New York Philharmonic, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, A Far Cry Chamber Orchestra, and Joshua Bell, among others.

Andrew has a strong dedication to performing and arranging Latin American music. With Toomai, he released *Cuerdas Cubanas* (2018) in honor of his Cuban grandmother, pianist Rosalina Guerrero Sackstein. The album features Andrew's arrangements of popular Cuban songs by legendary musicians Ernesto Lecuona, Israel "Cachao" Lopez, and Celia Cruz. Andrew also regularly performs Argentinian tango music with Grammy winners Pablo Ziegler and Hector Del Curto.

He is currently the Director of Education and Community Engagement at Orchestra of St. Luke's, Andrew develops and oversees an annual Free School Concerts series; the Five Borough Community Chamber Music tour; and the Youth Orchestra of St. Luke's (YOSL). From 2014-2018, Andrew was Senior Music Curriculum Specialist for Juilliard Global K-12 Programs, where he designed the conceptual framework, selected the musical repertoire, and developed resources for Juilliard Creative Classroom—an online arts education platform that is now being taught in over 40 schools internationally. Andrew received his Master's and Bachelor's degrees from The Juilliard School.

## Biographies - Dancers



### **Nimbus Dance**

Nimbus Dance bridges the gap between world-class performances and community engagement by presenting work that challenges, speaks to, and elevates the core beliefs of its diverse audience. Founded in 2005 by Samuel Pott and based in Jersey City, Nimbus stands at the forefront of excellence in the arts, civic engagement, and equitable impact, successfully interweaving its mission between Company, School, and Presenting wings. With a repertoire of over 30 works, the Company performs on tour nationally and throughout the greater New Jersey/New York region, impacting 16,000 people each year. Nimbus' community engagement initiatives serve over 7,000 children annually through in-school, movement-based programs, while The School of Nimbus holds 53 classes throughout the week and also offers Youth Ensemble & Pre-Professional Programs. Most recently, Nimbus was a recipient of DanceNYC's Dance Advancement Fund in recognition of the company's demonstrated commitment to diversity, justice, equity, and inclusion. In September 2020, Nimbus relocated to the new state-of-the-art Nimbus Arts Center at the Lively in Jersey City's Powerhouse Arts District.



### **Harumi Elders - choreographer**

Harumi Elders, a Maryland native, received her BFA from the Boston Conservatory with a concentration in performance, pedagogy, and choreography. While studying, she had the privilege to begin her professional dance and teaching career with the City Ballet of Boston. Shortly after graduating she moved to NYC and began dancing with Nimbus Dance Works. She had the honor to dance for Nimbus for three seasons, performing a variety of roles including Sugar Plum Fairy, Strange Fruit (soloist), Patch of Turf (soloist), Shadow of Sound (soloist), Surface Tension, and We Acquiesce (soloist). Post-Nimbus Harumi went on to perform two seasons in the award-winning Christmas show at Disney's Magic Kingdom. She also joined the pre-production cast of The Wizard of Oz at the Media Theater, danced as a featured artist in various commercials, and danced back up for Sofia Carson on the Disney Channel.

As a teaching artist, Harumi has taught Ballet, Theater Jazz, Improvisation, and Modern technique in dance studios throughout the East Coast, including Nimbus Dance Works, City Ballet of Boston, Studio of Ballet Arts, and Londyn Skye Dance Center. Currently, she is completing her 3rd year on the Dance and Musical Theater Staff at High Tech High School. Along with performing and teaching Harumi is a certified Personal Trainer and loves to integrate health and fitness into her teaching style. Harumi is ecstatic to come full circle and rejoin the Nimbus team as the School Director.

As a choreographer Harumi began her choreographic journey at The Boston Conservatory premiering two works produced on the Boston Conservatory main stage theater. Harumi has had the privilege of choreographing on the High Tech High school dance department class of 2022 and 2023 as well as choreographing the 2022 High Tech High School Spring Musical, The Drowsy Chaperone. Along with these projects, Harumi has also choreographed works on The Nimbus Youth Ensemble, Ocean County Vocational Technical High School and is thrilled to continue her journey in this collaboration with Nimbus Dance and Con Vivo Music.

## Biographies - Dancers (cont.)



### **Alyssa Acciavatti**

Alyssa Acciavatti is a NJ/ NYC based dancer from Jersey City, NJ. She has trained in Ballet, Modern, Contemporary, Jazz, Acro, and Hip-Hop. After graduating from County Prep High School as a dance major, she continued her studies at Peridance Center in New York where she trained under many incredible artists and educators, such as Igal Perry and Nikki Holck. In June, 2022, she graduated from the Certificate Program at Peridance in the Ballet/ Contemporary Track. Alyssa has performed on stages in New York and New Jersey such as KnJ Theater, Memorial Auditorium, Centenary Stage, and St. Mark's Church. She has done collaborations with Danspace Project and Kun-Yang Lin/Dancers. She is also a member of the National Arts Society for Dance Arts. Alyssa is currently teaching at The School of Nimbus, and starting her first year as a dancer of the Nimbus2 Company.



### **Catherine Escueta**

Catherine Escueta (she/her) began her dance training at the Academy of Dance Arts under the direction of Nick and Shayne Mishoe. She continued her studies at SUNY Purchase College, graduating summa cum laude with degrees in Dance Performance and Arts Management. While at Purchase, Catherine spent a semester abroad at the Korea National University of Arts in Seoul, South Korea. She has worked with choreographers such as Rosalind Newman, Lamine Thiam, Peter Leung, Sung Hoon Kim, Autumn Eckman, and Jenelle Figgins. Catherine traveled to Guatemala with JUNTOS Collective in 2019 and continued to research dance as an outreach and transformational tool with Rehabilitation Through the Arts. This is her first season with Nimbus2.



### **Miku Hirayama**

Miku Hirayama is from Yamaguchi, Japan. She began her dance training at the age 4. In 2019, she moved to Kanagawa, Japan to train at the Y Dance Company. She trained and performed works by Kazuhiko Yoshimoto, Yumi Hariyama, Mamoru Sakata, Megumi Nakamura and many others. In 2020, she moved to New York to train at the Peridance Center. She has had the opportunity to work with Igal Perry, Richard Chen-See, Nikki Holck, Mike Tyus, Julie Magneville and many others. This is Miku's 1st season with Nimbus 2.

## Biographies - Dancers (cont.)



### **Yanil A. Pabón**

Yanil A. Pabón was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico. She began her training at the age of three. Her passion, dedication and discipline has opened her the doors to train as scholarship recipient student at The Taylor School, Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance and Ballet Hispanico's School of Dance. Yanil has performed with companies like Martha Graham Dance Company and Ballet Hispanico. She has performed works by Anna Lopez-Ochoa, Martha Graham, Ronald K. Brown, Talley Beatty, Eduardo Villaro, Michelle Manzanales, Pedro Ruiz and others. She has been a faculty member of Ballet Hispanico's School of Dance and is also a Teaching Artist with their Community Arts Partnership, teaching in schools all around NYC. Pabon recently joined the faculty of teachers at Brooklyn Ballet and at the School of Nimbus, and is thrilled to perform in the city of New Jersey as a member of Nimbus2!



### **Will Pettigrew**

Will Pettigrew is a dancer and choreographer from Maplewood, New Jersey currently based in the New York City area. As a child, Will competed in all events of gymnastics before finding a love for dance in high school. They first trained at the New Jersey Dance Theater Ensemble working with artists like Nancy Turano, Liz Koeppen, and Alexandra Gonzalez. Will attended George Mason University gaining their B.F.A. in dance, and was awarded the excellence in choreography award from the faculty there. During their time at school, Will had the pleasure of learning and performing works by Rafael Bonachela, Larry Keigwin, Hope Boykin, and Camille A. Brown. Will is now based in the NY/NJ area and is excited to be working and performing with Nimbus 2.



### **Javier Rochel (he/him)**

Javier was born in El Paso, Texas and raised in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua. He received a Bachelor in Dance from Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo, graduating with honors. Rochel started to dance Mexican Folklorico when he was 11 with different local groups, at the same time he did Musical Theatre productions in Mexico City and his hometown. He was an apprentice with Ballet Folklórico de Mexico de Amalia Hernández and a figurant with Mexico's Compañía Nacional de Danza in the Swan Lake 2018 season. He had done summer intensives with Joffrey Ballet School NY and Texas, Complexions Dance Academy, and ChoreoLab with Ballet Hispanico SoD. Rochel trained with JBS TX under the direction of Thelma Flores from 2019-2021 and BH Pa'lante Scholars Professional Studies directed by Rodney Hamilton from 2021-2022. Javier is very proud to be a new company dancer with Nimbus Dance 2 this fall 2022.

# About Con Vivo Music



## Con Vivo Music

Con Vivo Music is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing the communal spirit of chamber music to diverse audiences of all ages in Jersey City through free concerts and educational opportunities in parks, schools and community spaces. The NY Times has describe our music as "delightful & expert playing" and the Jersey City Reporter says we "bring sweet music to the masses".

With 15 years of experience and over 120 concerts performed, CVM has reached thousands of listeners.

Con Vivo Music is a non-profit organization supported by grants, sponsors, and donations from listeners like you. Learn more and support our work at [www.convivomusic.org](http://www.convivomusic.org).



## Zach Herchen. Artistic Director

Saxophonist Zach Herchen performs classical trios, jazz tone poems, multimedia works, and beyond. He has performed as a soloist in Italy, Sweden, Germany, and at American venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and Kennedy Center. Zach has held masterclasses and residencies at schools such as Peabody Conservatory, Berklee, UVA, NYU, Aaron Copland School and more. He is a Bang on a Can Summer Festival Fellow and staff member at the Summer Institute for Contemporary Performance Practice. Zach is a member of New Thread Quartet, director of Con Vivo Music, and has performed with

ensembles such as Talea Ensemble, the String Orchestra of Brooklyn, Ensemble Échappé, The Dream Unfinished, and Rhymes With Opera.

Zach holds a MM and BM in Saxophone Performance (and a BM in Recording Arts Engineering) from The Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University where he was a recipient of the Richard Franko Goldman Prize for performance. Zach has studied with Gary Louie, Gary Thomas, Timothy McAllister, Arno Bornkamp, Vincent David, Jan Schulte-Bunert, and Ties Mellema.