

Puno, Sewing Memories

Papermoon Puppet Theatre

Thursday, September 25
Luth Concert Hall
Prior Presents 2025–26

PRIOR
Performing Arts Center

Welcome

Dear Friends,

We continue our 2025-26 season adventure with our next guests the Indonesian Papermoon Puppet Theatre Company who, both in medium and content, provide us with something completely different.

Over the course of a 4-day residency, the company will explore such expansive questions such as, "how do we experience loss?" and "how can we hold and appreciate what has been left to us?" They will focus their investigation through their latest vehicle *Puno, Sewing Memories*, a story of Tala, a young girl who is coping with her father's passing and learning about life and death.

During their stay, the company will also expose how they have integrated contemporary issues into their works with Professor Jorge Santos's Realism & Contemporary Issues class, navigate their use of process, structure, movement, and puppet construction with Theater, Dance, and Music students in discussions led by Professors Lynn Kremer & I Nyoman Catra, as well as dive into the overall life of an artist on tour and what it takes to bring performance visions to life with Professor Annie Storr.

Aside from their two evening performances, the company is also presenting an offering to students from Worcester's Burncoat and North High Schools as well as the Gerald Creamer Center which will be followed by a discussion plus up-close show-and-tells featuring their puppets and the collaborative magic that brings them to life.

Much gratitude to the layers of individuals and organizations responsible for bringing this articulation to The Prior. A special thanks to the Center Stage initiative, the New England Foundation for the Arts, and the Lisa Booth Management, Inc.

May the company's efforts allow you to bask in their belief that anything can come alive: every creature and object.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey de Caen
Nancy Savage Skinner '79 Director
Prior Performing Arts Center

Program

Puno, Sewing Memories

A Play by Papermoon Puppet Theatre

Conceived and Produced by

PAPERMOON PUPPET THEATRE

Artistic Directors: Maria Tri Sulistyani and Iwan Effendi

Director & Playwright

Maria Tri Sulistyani

Music Director

Iwan Effendi

Technical & Set Engineer

Anton Fajri

Puppet Builders

Anton Fajri, Beni Sanjaya, Pambo Priyojati, Hardiansyah Yoga, Iwan Effendi, Maria Tri Sulistyani

Puppeteers

Pambo Priyojati, Beni Sanjaya, Hardiansyah Yoga, Anton Fajri

Costume Maker

Retno Intiani

Music Composer

Yennu Ariendra

Video and Photography

Rangga Yudhistira

Lighting and Technical Director

Andreas Praditya

Tour Manager

Aulia Anandita

A non-verbal puppet production.

Duration: 60 minutes without intermission.

Please join us near the stage after the show to share your stories and visit with us.

Papermoon Puppet Theatre is on tour as part of Center Stage, a public diplomacy initiative of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs with funding provided by the U.S. Government, administered by the New England Foundation for the Arts in cooperation with the U.S. Regional Arts Organizations. General management is provided by Lisa Booth Management, Inc. CenterStageUS.org

Program Notes



Tala and Puno from *Puno, Sewing Memories*, an original production by Papermoon Puppet Theatre. Photo by Rangga Yudhistira

About *Puno, Sewing Memories*

Death – of those we love, and our own passing – is so hard to make sense of, to cope with, and to talk about. How do we say goodbye? Death is an absolute thing in life, but none of us are ready for it.

The process of grieving can have so many limitations. In a time of loss, people often say “It’s ok. She/he is a better place now. Life must go on.” In Java, Indonesia people sharing condolences often use the word “ikhlas,” encouraging those who are grieving to “let go” and accept loss, to encourage strength and avoid the many pains of grief – the sadnesses, anger, and longings.

Puno, Sewing Memories is the story of Tala, a young girl and only child, who is coping with the death of her father, Puno, a tailor and single parent. As Papermoon stitches the threads and fabrics of their work, they invite us to consider the different ways death shapes our own lives.

In 2014, Papermoon Puppet Theatre’s dear friend collaborator, Filipino puppeteer Don M. Salubaya, died suddenly of an aneurysm. The company created *Surat ke Langit* in his memory, a dedication that helped process their own grief and that of the communities that shared the experience in the theater. In 2018, Papermoon returned to the work, investigating a bit deeper, and employing a broader set of puppetry techniques and larger visual palette. That piece, *Puno: Letters to the Sky*, was shared with audiences of all ages in Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines, and Taiwan. For this 2025 USA tour, Papermoon has once again returned to and reimagined the Puno story and its universal theme of life, love, and loss as *Puno, Sewing Memories*.

With its mix of non-verbal storytelling, puppetry forms, evocative visual environment, and through-composed musical score, *Puno, Sewing Memories* carries the hallmarks of a Papermoon production. It incorporates several puppetry techniques including mask theater. The action of the primary characters is inspired by kuruma ningyo, a bunraku form of manipulation executed on moving carts. Every element, each technique is selected with care to move the story forward.

Biography



Members of Papermoon Puppet Theatre in their Yogyakarta studio workshop. Photo by Josh Kohn.

About Papermoon Puppet Theatre

Papermoon Puppet Theatre was founded in 2006 by illustrator, writer, and theatre performer Maria (Ria) Tri Sulistyani who, together with visual artist Iwan Effendi, leads the company's many activities from a studio and workshop they built outside of Yogyakarta, Indonesia in central Java.

In a country with world-renowned puppetry traditions, the expert artists of Papermoon Puppet Theatre have created a distinct body of work. They have presented 30 mixed-media productions, visual art installations, and exhibitions that tell stories about the choices, circumstances, and conflicts of everyday life. "Our stories are personal and focus on individuals. From there we can see the bigger issues."- Ria Sulistyani

Since their international debut in the USA with Center Stage in 2012, Papermoon has shared their work in more than a dozen countries. They collaborate with other puppeteers around the globe, and welcome artists in residence and audiences to their studio and residency compound in Yogyakarta. In 2008, Papermoon launched Pesta Boneka -- an international puppetry biennale where puppeteers share their work in a community setting; the next edition takes place in 2026. In 2020, responding to the isolation of the global COVID pandemic, Papermoon began creating puppetry works for film; these have been screened widely and featured at international film festivals. In 2021, Papermoon launched the GULALI Festival, the first theater festival for young audiences in Indonesia. At home and on tour they host puppet labs and workshops.

Papermoon Puppet Theatre believes that *anything can come alive*. Every creature, every object, every single thing in the world holds life somewhere inside of it. With their performances, installations, workshops, collaborations, and festivals, they hope to bring those things to life and nurture the good things around and within us. Visit www.papermoonpuppet.com

Papermoon Puppet Theatre's 2025 USA tour includes stops in New York City, Easton PA, Worcester MA, Fairfax VA, and Tucson, AZ.

Biography



Papermoon Puppet Theatre is on tour in the U.S. for five weeks as part of Center Stage, a cultural diplomacy program that hosted the company's U.S. debut tour in 2012. To date, 48 groups from 19 countries have made month-long national tours, hosted by colleges and universities, festivals, music clubs, and cultural centers. Center Stage ensembles reach large cities and small towns.

They engage with communities onstage, offstage, and online through performances, workshops, and discussions, artist-to-artist exchanges, master classes, and community gatherings, and return home to share these experiences with peers and fans. For this last edition of the program, Center Stage has invited alumni groups to return and share their work in communities from coast to coast. These are Khumariyaan (Pakistan), Papermoon Puppet Theatre (Indonesia), Mohamed Abozekry (Egypt & France), and Kurbasy (Ukraine). Visit centerstageus.org for more information.

A package of virtual educational materials, tailored to students in upper elementary through high school, provides a better understanding of the contexts in which these artists thrive. Visit worldcultureincontext.org/artist/papermoon-puppet-theatre-yogyakarta-indonesia

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Center Stage credits

Producer

New England Foundation for the Arts

Adrienne Petrillo, Interim Director of Program Strategy

Kelsey Spitalny, Interim Manager of Program Strategy

General Manager

LBMI, Lisa Booth Management, Inc.

Deirdre Valente, Principal

Robert W. Henderson, Jr., Production Manager

Danielle Dybiec, Nine Muses Travel, Tour Advance

Theresa L Teague, On Tour Company Manager

The Prior Performing Arts Center

An uncommon commons for transformative experiences with the arts

Prior Presents

The keystone of the Prior Performing Arts Center’s public-facing programming, Prior Presents merges thrilling live events by visiting artists with robust educational and outreach activities. Defined by exceptional artistic quality, interdisciplinary impulses, and the potential to spark both wonder and reflection, this annual series celebrates artistic risk-taking and the exchange of ideas and perspectives from around the globe. Short- and long-term visiting artist residencies include performances, artist talks, installations, workshops, and experiential learning opportunities for Holy Cross students and the greater Worcester community.

The internationally acclaimed artists of current and previous seasons embody our vision for artist residencies at The Prior Performing Arts Center. Their performances and lectures offer an exhilarating complement to the creativity and innovation of emerging student artists and Holy Cross faculty and staff also featured in our season this year.



1) Rhiannon Giddens in concert | Spring 2024; 2) Compagnie Hervé Koubi | Spring 2024

Stay in touch!



Scan to sign up for our email list and stay up to date with announcements and upcoming events from The Prior Performing Arts Center.

Upcoming Prior Presents Events



American Patchwork Quartet

A potent symbol of unity in diversity, the American Patchwork Quartet draws influences from American folk, jazz and country as well as West African and East Asian styles to blend tradition and innovation in a celebration of America's cultural mosaic. A co-presentation with historic local arts presenter Music Worcester.

Nov 14 @ 7:30 p.m. | Tickets \$35 | \$45 | \$55



Christine Sun Kim | *Deaf Death*

Christine Sun Kim is a Berlin-based artist who works with sound, language, and the complexities of communication. She uses musical notation, infographics, and language—both in her native American Sign Language (ASL) and written English—to create drawings, site-specific murals, paintings, video installations, and sculptures. In her lecture-performance *Deaf Death*, Kim explores the frequent autocorrection of “deaf” to “death” in text-based technologies. A co-presentation with the Department of Visual Arts.

Feb 19 @ 6 p.m. | Free entry, registration required.



Sunny Jain | *Wild Wild East*

Composer, drummer and dhol player Sunny Jain celebrates cultural diaspora and the interconnectedness of global styles with his band in *Wild Wild East*, a raucous, powerful, and jubilant recognition of a truly American spirit. A co-presentation with the Department of Music.

Mar 12 @ 7:30 p.m. | Tickets \$35 | \$45 | \$55



Scan to purchase tickets and learn more about our schedule of upcoming presentations.

Currently at the Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Art Gallery



The Vietnamese Áo Dài in a Time of War: Fashion, Citizenship, and Nationalism (1954-1975)

This exhibition explores the significance of Vietnam's national costume—the áo dài—during the Vietnam War. Honoring the 50th anniversary of a conflict, the legacies of which continue to haunt us to this day, the exhibition highlights the contributions of Vietnamese women to politics, society, and culture.

Open now through Dec 19

Upcoming Events from the Academic Arts at Holy Cross

Pamela Z: Recital & Lecture-Demonstration

DEPARTMENTS OF MUSIC AND COMPUTER SCIENCE. Pamela Z, a pioneering composer, performer, and interdisciplinary artist, blends live looping, extended vocal techniques, and custom-designed, gesture-controlled music technology to create interactive, multilayered performances that fuse sound, image, and movement. Join us for two public events as of her five-day residency with the Departments of Music and Computer Science as a *Distinguished Visiting Practitioner*.

Lecture-Demonstration: Sep 30 @ 5:30 p.m.

Recital: Oct 2 @ 8 p.m.

Six Characters in Search of an Author

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & DANCE. In this production of Luigi Pirandello's 1921 modern classic from the Department of Theatre & Dance, a theatre company preparing their latest production is disrupted by the appearance of six figures who claim to be characters abandoned by their author.

Oct 30 - Nov 9

Working Writers Series: Ferris Jabr

CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM. Ferris Jabr, New York Times-bestselling author of *Becoming Earth*, will read from and discuss his work followed by a Q&A in this Working Writers Series presentation from the Creative Writing Program.

Nov 13 @ 7:30 p.m.



Scan to purchase tickets and learn more about our schedule of upcoming presentations.

Prior Performing Arts Center Staff

Jeffrey de Caen, *Nancy Savage Skinner '79* Director

ARTIST ENGAGEMENT

Marta Beyer, Manager of Artistic and Engagement Initiatives

PRODUCTION SERVICES

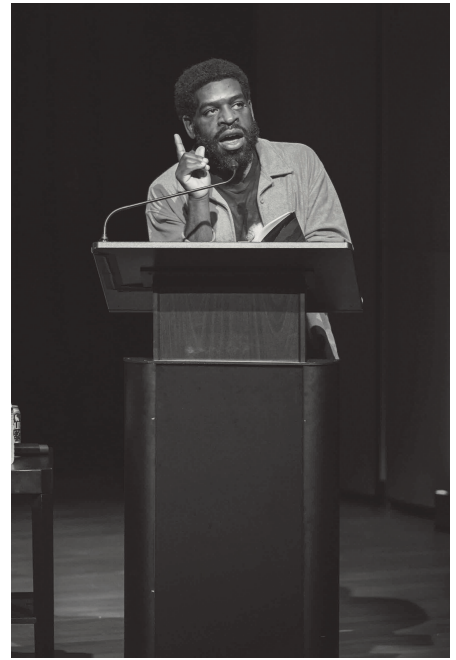
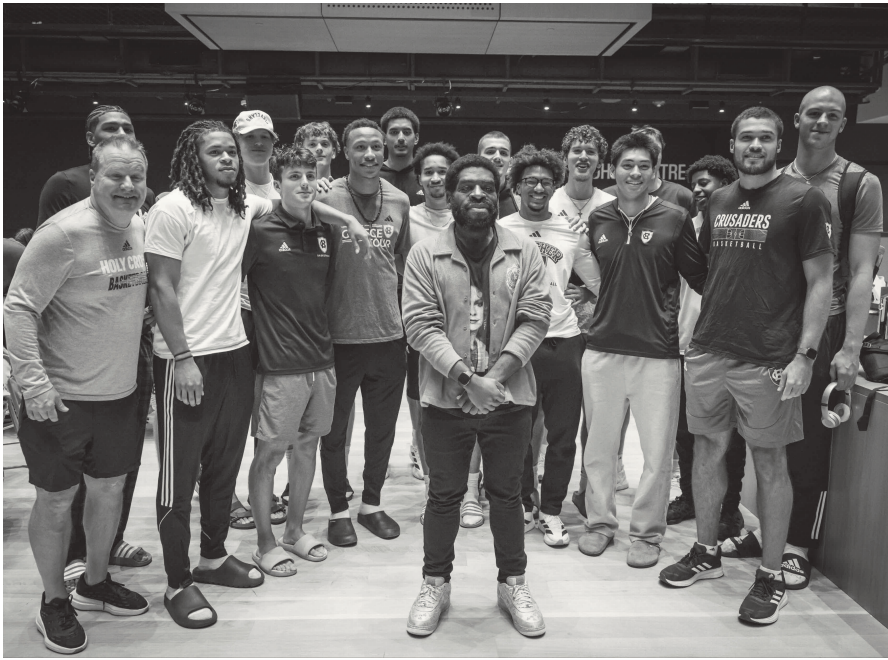
Brenda Shepard, Manager of Production
Matthew Freije, Pro Audio/Video Supervisor
Christine Goguen, Costume Shop Manager
Stephen McGonagle, Technical Director
Judi Olson, Costume Shop Assistant
Mason Parece, Production Technician
Betsy Pierce, Assistant Technical Director

PATRON ENGAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

Katrina Lewonczyk, Manager of Operations & Administration
Ethan Bates, Arts Marketing & Communications Manager
Evan Crocker, Event & Front of House Manager
Morgan Fitzpatrick, Office Coordinator

STUDENT STAFF

Students play a crucial role in the operation of the Prior Performing Arts Center, working as Production Assistants, Front of House Assistants, and more: Adele Feldberg, Alyshia Solomon, Andrea Gomez, Angela Almanza, Anna Rowley, Brigit O'Connell, Camila Müller-Juez, Elise O'Neill, Emily Fox, Emma Buchanan, Frank Amuso, Gabriellie De Gouveia, Gracie Lopez, Jamie Schmid, Jazmin Lopez, Kiera Ryan, Laurel Deneen, Maya Pinto, Morgan Kane, Nadia Frempong, Natalia Salinas, Rose Knoll, Sophia Rowley, Adelaide Abstoss, Alejandro Irizarry, Alexa Rodriguez Villatoro, Atiya Woolman, Billy Suter, Brandon Curtis, Daniel Hickey, Eliza Simpson, Emelia Jones, Emily Karlson, Emma Butler, Fiona Nelson, Gail Durkin, Gracyn Epstein, Irene Mandile, Jake Sidell, Joshua Love, Julia Divine, Katelyn Murphy, Lee (Leah) Varela, Lily Jaramillo, Luis Ramirez, Margaret DeWald, Maxim Tereshchenko, Melina Valencia, Meredith Brady, Meredith Shaw, Natalie Gasowski, Nevaeh Fleming, Osmaly Bonilla, Paige Thomson, Phoebe Wong, Piper Guiney, Savannah Rhodes, Scarlett Dawson, Sebastian Torres, Sofia Corvo, Solar (Ciara) Bello, Sophia Tran, Sophia Suffoletto, Sophie Sundaram, Vivian Higgins, Xiaoyi Wang, Yasmin Fernandez



Snapshots from Prior Presents 2025–26

Hanif Abdurraqib | September 16, 2025 | Photography by Troy B. Thompson

