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The Prior Performing Arts Center Announces Visiting Artists Series for 2023-24 Season

WORCESTER, Mass. - August 7, 2023 - The [Prior Performing Arts Center](#) at The College of the Holy Cross announced today its visiting artists series as part of the 2023-2024 season.

Season highlights include:

Grammy- and Pulitzer Prize-winning musician **Rhiannon Giddens**
Introducing her new solo album, "You're the One"

From France, the dancers of Compagnie **Hervé Koubi**
Returning for the third time to Holy Cross

Photographer **LaToya Ruby Frazier**
On the eve of a major career survey at the Museum of Modern Art

New work commissioned by the **Boston Lyric Opera**
Featuring Boston Poet Laureate Porsha Olayiwola

The Prior Performing Arts Center is thrilled to announce its presenting season, Prior Presents, which runs from Sept. 19 to April 6, 2024. A catalyst for creativity and learning, the Prior Performing Arts Center amplifies the arts at Holy Cross and provides the College, the greater Worcester community, and visiting creative thinkers with an inspiring environment to pursue diverse questions of the human experience.

"This season's internationally acclaimed artists embody our vision for programming at the Prior Performing Arts Center: they possess extraordinary artistry, they defy disciplinary boundaries, and they speak urgently to our shared present," Interim Director Kyle Frisina said. "Tackling subjects from borders to climate, from immigration to incarceration, and from family ties to romantic love, these artists make space for new stories and for challenging ideas. Their performances, artist talks, and installations 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."

Season tickets go on sale on August 17 at priorperformingartscenter.org.

The visiting artists series begins on Sept. 19 and 20 with the region's first public readings of Lloyd Suh's 2023 Pulitzer finalist and off-Broadway hit play "The Far Country," which follows an unlikely family of immigrants in the wake of the Chinese Exclusion Act at the turn of the twentieth century.

At the end of the month, Sept. 30, Brooklyn Rider takes the stage in the Luth Concert Hall with its new "Four Elements" project, an exploration of the four classical elements (earth, air, water, fire) as metaphor for both the complex inner world of the string quartet and the current health of planet Earth.

In mid-October, New England choreographer Deborah Goffe will offer educational and community residency activities based on her new work "Liturgy|Order|Bridge," which was co-commissioned by the Prior Performing Arts Center.

The fall season closes with a public lecture by artist-activist LaToya Ruby Frazier on Nov. 1. On the eve of a major career survey at the Museum of Modern Art, the photographer will discuss her decades-long efforts to capture our cultural blind spots, in particular her documentation of post-industrial cities riven by poverty, racism, healthcare inequality, and environmental toxicity.

The new calendar year opens with dancers of the French company Hervé Koubi performing their signature work, "What the Day Owes to the Night," on Jan. 30 and 31. The piece returns to Holy Cross, one of its first U.S. presenters in 2016, for a pair of intimate performances in the Boroughs Theatre.

Programming continues the following month with a public lecture by Reginald Dwayne Betts on Feb. 26. Author of three acclaimed collections of poetry as well as a celebrated memoir, Betts is also a lawyer and the founder of Freedom Reads, a first-of-its-kind organization working to radically transform access to literature in prison.

From March 11-16 the center presents a performance installation, "Cultural Exchange Rate," by the Lebanese artist Tania El Khoury, whose live art engages audiences in close encounters with narratives drawn from the political realities of borders, displacement, and state violence.

The iconic Rhiannon Giddens makes her Prior Performing Arts Center debut on March 14. Having stretched her inimitable brand of folk music, with its miles-deep historical roots and its contemporary sensibilities, into every field imaginable, she will perform selections from her first album of entirely original songs, "You're the One," alongside other work from her expansive repertoire.

The Prior Performing Arts Center hosts Giddens after presenting a sneak peek of her opera “Omar” with the Boston Lyric Opera in spring 2023, shortly before its sold-out Boston run and the announcement of its Pulitzer Prize win.

The season closes on April 6 with “The Wanderer’s Tethering,” a new work commissioned by the Boston Lyric Opera which unites Boston Poet Laureate Porsha Olayiwola and Boston-based composer Mason Bynes.

The performing arts center will also hold dozens of student performances and exhibitions throughout the year by Holy Cross’ Music, Theatre & Dance, and Visual Art departments. It will additionally host several visiting artists in the “Working Writers” reading series produced by the Creative Writing Program. More details on these events will be shared in a future release.

The center is now home to the College’s Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Art Gallery, which has relocated from O’Kane Hall. The Cantor will host a variety of interdisciplinary exhibits in 2023-2024, beginning with “Always Be Around: Corita Kent, Community, and Pedagogy,” which features the work of pop artist, educator and social justice advocate Sister Corita Kent (1918-1986) in conversation with that of contemporary artists. The exhibition will be on view from Oct. 2, 2023 through Dec. 15, 2023.

The Prior Performing Arts Center offers patrons intimate experiences in the Luth Concert Hall, a 400-seat proscenium theater, and the Boroughs Theatre, a 200-seat flexible theater space.

The 84,000-square-foot, \$110-million facility is named for lead donor and alumnus Cornelius B. Prior, Jr. ’56, whose cornerstone contribution represents Holy Cross’s largest gift in support of the arts.

About College of the Holy Cross:

The [College of the Holy Cross](#), in Worcester, Mass., is among the nation's leading liberal arts institutions. A highly selective, four-year, exclusively undergraduate college of 3,100 students, Holy Cross is renowned for offering a rigorous, personalized education in the Jesuit, Catholic tradition. Since its founding in 1843, Holy Cross has made a positive impact in society by graduating students who distinguish themselves as thoughtful leaders in business, professional and civic life.

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