

LA MAMA⁵⁷
EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE CLUB

in association with Mount Tremper Arts
present

Nicky Paraiso's
now my hand is ready for my
heart: intimate histories

Conceived, written and performed by Nicky Paraiso
Direction and Visual Design by John Jesurun



Ellen Stewart Theatre
66 East 4th Street, NYC, 10003
March 22 - April 7, 2019

Nicky Paraiso's
now my hand is ready for my heart:
intimate histories

Conceived, written and performed by Nicky Paraiso
Direction and Visual Design by John Jesurun
Original Music Composition for Piano by
Nicky Paraiso

Created by Nicky Paraiso in collaboration with
Irene Hultman, Jon Kinzel,
Vicky Shick, Paz Tanjuaquio

Performed by Nicky Paraiso, Irene Hultman,
Jon Kinzel, Vicky Shick, Paz Tanjuaquio

On Video:
Ching Valdes-Aran, Jessica Hagedorn

Set Design: John Jesurun
Lighting Design: Joe Levasseur
Costume Design: Gabriel Berry
Sound Design: John Gasper

Video Programming and Tech: CultureHub
(Billy Clark, DeAndra Anthony, Sangmin Chae)
Theo Cote: Photography and additional video
Nicky Paraiso: Additional #7 train video

Script Development:
Irene Hultman, John Jesurun, George Emilio Sanchez

Assistant Director: Samuel Im
Production Manager: Caleb Hammond
Production Stage Manager: Erika Foley
Stage Manager (April 4-7): Ilana Khanin

Press Rep: John Wyszniowski, Everyman's Agency

For my ancestor spirit guides Laurie Carlos and Ellen Stewart, and for my dear parents.

"An artist is a sort of emotional or spiritual historian. His role is to make you realize the doom and glory of knowing who you are and what you are. He has to tell, because nobody else in the world can tell, what it is like to be alive. All I've ever wanted to do is tell that, I'm not trying to solve anybody's problems, not even my own. I'm just trying to outline what the problems are.

I want to be stretched, shook up, to overreach myself, and to make you feel that way too."
--James Baldwin

"Perhaps creating something is nothing but an act of profound remembrance."
--Rainer Maria Rilke

"Your story is what you have, what you will always have. It is something to own."
--Michelle Obama

***"Tell me, what else should I have done?
Doesn't everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?"***
--from "A Summer Day," by Mary Oliver

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New York Innovative Theatre Awards, celebrating Off-Off-Broadway

NOTE FROM NICKY:

This has been a difficult, though enriching process, trying to sift through the signposts of my life up until now. I suppose it is the stuff of hubris to stand in front of an unsuspecting, though hopefully willing audience seated in a theater and recount one's autobiography for them. I believe in the value of the artist as a chronicler of their times, and I hope that there are more than a few insights into our common humanity and individual life journeys.

I thank all the artists who have collaborated with me on this artistic journey, and thanks especially go to all my collaborative team who have been with me at all the different stages of development for this piece. Special thank go to the performers Irene Hultman, Jon Kinzel, Vicky Shick, Paz Tanjuaquio who are with me onstage during this premiere performance of *now my hand is ready for my heart: intimate histories*. I thank John Jesurun for his artistic rigor and commitment as director and visual designer for this piece, and for his fine-tuning, and script editing for the piece in the final weeks leading up to performance. Many thanks go to both Irene Hultman and George Emilio Sanchez for their early encouragement, support, script development and editing of the performance text.

Thanks to Jodi Melnick for her work during the rehearsal process. All the artists collaborating with me have been so generous and giving of their time and artistry.

The performance you will see tonight has gone through several in-progress versions and has become the particular performance tonight: beautifully executed, rendered and theatricalized by director/visual designer John Jesurun and the collaborative artistic team. This includes designers Joe Levasseur (lighting), Gabriel Berry (costumes), John Gasper (sound), Samuel Im (Assistant Director), Caleb Hammond (Production Manager), Erika Foley and Ilana Khanin (Stage Management). Thanks to Mia Yoo, Bev Petty, Mary Fulham and the La MaMa administrative team, Mark Tambella and the technical production staff of La MaMa.

Thanks to John Issendorf for running the Kickstarter Campaign. Special thanks to Theo Cote Chris Ignacio, Ryan Leach, Amy Rox Surratt, Kiku Sakai, Denise Greber, Joyce Isabelle, Kaori Fujiyabu, Jackie Denny, Melissa Slattery.

Thanks to my many artistic mentors and teachers, especially Jeff Weiss and Richard C. Martinez (aka Carlos Ricardo Martinez), Meredith Monk, Yoshiko Chuma.

Dictator's Speech, from Quarry: an opera in three movements (1976)

Music and Choreography by Meredith Monk

"Quarry: an opera in three movements" composed, directed and choreographed by Meredith Monk, is a mosaic of music, images, movement, dialogue, film, sound and light, and premiered at La Mama ETC in New York City in 1976. It is considered by many to be a masterwork of the 20th Century, with revivals taking place in 1985 and 2003. Monk calls the three movements of the OBIE Award-winning work "Lullaby", "March", and "Requiem". "Quarry" centers on the anguished reverie of a child sick in bed (the role Monk originated), a dream that gradually mutates into a nightmare. The child's illness is a metaphor for the darkness of the world at war.

As described by Alan Kriegsman of The Washington Post, "'Quarry' immerses us in the atmosphere and tenor of the period of World War II, the emergence of Nazism, and the Holocaust...by [evoking] feelings, imagery and sensuous characteristics that are associated with these roots through the power of Monk's multimedia but non-literal treatment. What is most disturbing and urgent about seeing 'Quarry' today is that it resonates with the most fearful anxieties and perils of our time."

The Dictator's Speech is taken from the second movement, "March".

Nicky Paraiso (Creator/Writer/Performer) is an actor, musician, writer, performance artist and curator. He has been Director of Programming for The Club at La MaMa since 2001, and is responsible for its surge of theater, performance, dance and cabaret programming. He is also Chief Curator for the annual La MaMa Moves! Dance Festival, celebrating its 14th season in May 2019. Paraiso is a graduate of Oberlin College / Conservatory and holds an M.F.A. from New York University's Graduate Acting Program. He has been a prolific actor at La MaMa, and in New York downtown theater and performance, since 1979. He has worked as an actor and musical director with playwright/actor/director Jeff Weiss and his partner Carlos Ricardo Martinez since 1979. He has also been a member of Meredith Monk/The House and Vocal Ensemble (1981-1990), touring extensively throughout the US, Europe and Japan, and he has performed with, and been a member of, Yoshiko Chuma and the School of Hard Knocks since 1988. Paraiso has also enjoyed working as a performer with artists/creators as diverse as Anne Bogart, Laurie Carlos, Richard Elovich, Dan Froot, Jessica Hagedorn, Fred Holland, Dan Hurlin, John Jesurun, Jeffrey M. Jones, Robbie McCauley, Susan Mosakowski, Ralph Pena, Mary Shultz, Theodora Skipitares, and many others. Paraiso is also a critically-acclaimed solo performance artist, whose one-man shows *Asian Boys*, *Houses and Jewels*, and *House/Boy* have been presented at La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club, Dixon Place, Performance Space 122, Dance Theater Workshop, and on tour in the US, Europe and Asia. *House/Boy* was presented at the Dublin Theatre Festival in October 2007, and subsequently at the Initiation International Festival 2007 in Singapore. Paraiso's awards include a 1987 New York Dance & Performance "Bessie" Award, a 2004 Spencer Cherashore Fund grant for mid-career actors, and a 2005 New York Innovative Theater Award for his performance in Theodora Skipitares' *Iphigenia*. Paraiso has served on various theater, dance and music panels, including the Village Voice OBIE Judges Panel in season 2013-2014, as well as being a long-standing member of the New York Dance and Performance Awards "Bessies" Selection Committee since 2006. He is serving on the "Bessies" Steering Committee for the current season 2015-2016. Paraiso is a recipient of the 2012 BAX (Brooklyn Arts Exchange) Arts & Artists in Progress Arts Management Award. His writing appears in the anthology *Love, Christopher Street: Reflections of New York City* (Vantage Point, 2012), edited by Thomas Keith.

John Jesurun (Director) Writer/director/media artist integrates text, direction, set and media design. Works include *Chang in a Void Moon*, (Bessie) now in its 61st episode, the media trilogy *Deep Sleep* (Obie), *White Water/Black Maria*, *Red House*, *Everything that Rises Must Converge*, *Firefall* and *Distant Observer*. Varied projects have included Harry Partch's opera *Delusion of the Fury* at Japan Society, Jeff Buckley's *Last Goodbye* music video, *Philoktetes* at Soho Rep, *Faust/How I Rose* at BAM.

Fellowships include Rockefeller, MacArthur, Guggenheim, NEA, Asian Cultural Council, Foundation for Contemporary Arts. His collection *Shatterhand Massacree and other Media Texts* is published by Performing Arts Journal. His works *Deep Sleep* and *Black Maria* have been acquired by MOMA. *Shadowland*, his ongoing web serial can be seen on Vimeo. New projects include his play *Fuel to the Fire* with actor Antonio Cerezo premiering this November in Mexico City, new *Chang* episodes and a new work with choreographer Juliette Mapp. Website: <https://sites.google.com/site/johnjesurun/>

Gabriel Berry (Costume Design) has designed the costumes for dozens of plays at La MaMa. She's happy to be back working with Nicky and John. A long time veteran of Off-Broadway she works mostly on new plays. She has received the silver medal at The Prague Design Quadrennial celebrating her contribution to experimental theater.

Erika K Foley (Production Stage Manager) Originally from South Florida, Erika K Foley has toured around the world as a Production Stage Manager for *Pilobolus* and is the Resident Stage Manager for Lumberyard (formerly ADI). She would like to thank her family & fiancé for their continued love and support.

John Gasper (Sound Design) is a thetermaker, musician, and video & sound designer. He has performed and made designs with Saint Fortune, Royal Osiris Karaoke Ensemble, Advanced Beginner Group, 7 Daughters of Eve Thtr & Perf Co, New Saloon, Trusty Sidekick Theater Company, Bentertainment, Designated Movement Co. and beloved others. He plays synthesizers, saxophone, clarinet and bass with Major Magics, The Witch Ones, Czech Neck, and The Tender Band. MFA: PIMA, Brooklyn College.

Caleb Hammond (Production Manager) is a creator of performance, media and visual art. Places he has performed/directed/exhibited include: The Kitchen, PS122, TSA Gallery, The Public, Highways: LA, The ICA: Boston, The New Haven Festival of Arts and Ideas, The National Theater of Hungary, Maison des Arts: Paris, Nishida Art Museum: Japan, Daegu Art Factory: South Korea, Norte Dance Festival: Portugal, Satellite Art Fair: Miami. Hammond has performed in films and theater directed by Hal Hartley, John Jesurun, Jay Scheib, Shannon Sindelar and Bara Jichova. He has taught theater and art at The New School, Hartford Art School, Carnegie Mellon University, SUNY Purchase and Shanghai Theater Academy. He is currently a lecturer in Theater Arts at MIT.

Samuel Im (Assistant Director) is a New York based actor and director. Performance credits include: *the hollower* (New Light Theater Project), *Distant Observer: Tokyo/New York Correspondence* (La MaMa), and an upcoming production of *Romeo and Juliet* with The Woolgatherers at MITU580. He is currently developing a production of *Othello*, which will be workshopped in May 2019. BFA: NYU Experimental Theater Wing, ITW, RADA.

Joe Levasseur (Lighting Design) has collaborated with many dance and performance artists, including: Big Dance Theater, Jennifer Monson, John Jasperse, Sarah Michelson, Neil Greenberg, Beth Gill, David Dorfman, Donna Uchizono, Tamar Rogoff, and Brian Brooks. He is the lighting designer for the Joyce Theater's NY Quadrille series, and his lighting design work has been seen throughout the United States, Europe, and South America. He has received two Bessie awards and a Knight of Illumination Award. Ongoing projects include lighting for Meredith Monk, John Kelly, and Palissimo. www.joelevasseur.com

George Emilio Sanchez (Script Development) is a writer and performance artist. His new solo performance work, *X/IV*, will premiere at Dixon Place in June. He is a Social Practice Artist in Residence at Abrons Arts. He continues as the Performance Director for Emergenyc as it enters its 12th year of programming.

CAST

Irène Hultman is a native of Sweden and a New York based choreographer and performer. Between 1983-1988 she was a member of the Trisha Brown Dance Company and served as rehearsal director from 2006 to 2009. From 1988 to 2001, Hultman was the Artistic Director of Irène Hultman Dance that toured nationally and internationally with work premiering in New York City at the Joyce Theater, Danspace Projects and PS122. She has choreographed several opera productions, received commissions and participated in artistic collaboration with both individuals and institutions. She is a recipient of grants and awards including the Guggenheim Fellowship and a Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts Award. Hultman is a member of The Bessie Committee and Artist Advisory Board at Danspace Project and serve as faculty at Yale University. She is currently involved in the global discourse of dance and performance.

Jon Kinzel has presented his work, including numerous commissions and solo shows, in a variety of national and international venues. He has served as a mentor, dramaturg, curator, and sound designer, and benefited from residencies at EMPAC, NYLA, BAC, BAX, The Invisible Dog Arts Center, Jacob's Pillow, The Yard, and Gibney Dance Center. He feels fortunate to have participated in recent projects – involving collaboration and performance – with Vicky Shick, Jodi Melnick, Jennifer Miller, Cathy Weis, Elena Demyanenko, Nina Katan, and Jarrod Beck, and contributed to publications such as SCHIZM Magazine, MR Performance Journal, and PAJ: a journal of performance and art. He has taught at many colleges and universities, Merce Cunningham Trust, Lincoln Center Education, and Movement Research.

Paz Tanjuaquio is a choreographer, dancer, curator and visual artist, based in NYC since 1990. Her own work has been presented at La MaMa Moves, Harkness Dance Festival at 92Y, Fisher Landau Center for Art, Danspace Project, among others; nationally, at Kaatsbaan in Tivoli, NY, Operation Unite in Hudson, San Diego Trolley Dances, ADF Int'l Screen Dance; internationally, at Le Commun, Bâtiment d'Art Contemporain in Geneva Switzerland and at residencies in Cambodia, Japan, Korea, and the Philippines, her birthplace. As a dancer, she has performed with Molissa Fenley, Dean Moss, George Emilio Sanchez, Marlies Yearby, Carl Hancock Rux, among others; and has collaborated with visual artists Todd Richmond and Manuel Ocampo. She received her MFA in Dance at NYU Tisch School of the Arts; BA in Visual Arts at UC San Diego. Paz currently teaches Dance at SUNY/Nassau Community College, and has taught at NYU Tisch/Experimental Theater Wing and as guest artist at numerous schools. In 2000, she co-founded TOPAZ ARTS, Inc. with Todd B. Richmond – a creative development space for contemporary performance & visual arts. www.topazarts.org

Vicky Shick has been involved in the NYC downtown dance community since the late 70's. She performs, teaches and makes dances. For six years she was a member of the Trisha Brown Company and received a Bessie Award for performance during that time. Recent collaborations have been with Meg Harper, Eva Karczag, Jon Kinzel, Ralph Lemon, Juliette Mapp, Jodi Melnick, Jimena Paz, Wendy Perron, Sara Rudner, Cathy Weis and Marilyn Maywald Yahel. She was a grant recipient from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, a Guggenheim Fellow, a Movement Research Artist in Residence and this year, a Gibney DiP grant recipient.

Jessica Hagedorn (On Video) is a novelist, playwright, poet, performer and founding member of the feminist street gang, Manila Brujas. Her work for the stage includes adaptations of *Dogeaters* and *The Gangster Of Love*, collaborations with Fabian Obispo (*Felix Starro*), Mark Bennett (*Most Wanted*), Han Ong (*Airport Music*), Robbie McCauley & Laurie Carlos (*Teenytown*), Urban Bushwomen (*Heat*), and Blondell Cummings (*The Art Of War/Nine Situations*), among others. Stalwart downtown treasure Nicky Paraiso has been a guest performer in her theatre, film and video pieces. Mabuhay, Nicky!

Ching Valdes-Aran (On Video) is an OBIE award-winning and Lucille Lortel nominated actress. She has worked intensively in NYC on Broadway, Off Broadway, Off-Off Broadway, and in major regional theaters throughout the U.S. She also has guest starred on TV & appeared in major & indie films. Ching has directed, danced and performed in many international festivals (Berlin, France, Italy, Greece, Vienna, Rumania, Israel, Caribbean & Shoutheast Asia). She is currently on a world tour in Geoff Sobelle's *Home* and in Laika's animation film *Missing Link* with Hugh Jackman and Emma Thompson. Other awards include: FOX Foundation Fellow, MAP Rockefeller Grantee, Asian Cultural Council Fellow, PACCAL Award for Leadership in Arts & Culture, Ma-Yi Award for Artistic Excellence, Lilah Kan Red Socks Award, Charles Bowden Award (New Dramatist), Spenser Cherashore Award, & the U.S. Congressional Award in Arts & Culture. NY Theater Workshop's Usual Suspect, Actors's Center Workshop Company and serves in the advisory board for Ma-Yi Theater Company.

SPECIAL THANKS

Mount Tremper Arts, which so generously offered a three-part residency, thanks go to Mathew Pokoik, Carter Edwards, Crystal Wei.

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The Downstairs Lounge

**La MaMa Kids
The Three Dolls**
March 31 - April 7, 2019
The Downstairs Lounge

**Poetry Electric
April Fools**
April 1, 2019 at 7:30pm
The Downstairs Lounge

COMING SOON

**Coffeehouse Chronicles
John Jesurun**
Sat, April 6, 2019 at 3pm
Ellen Stewart Theatre

The Fever
April 11 - 21, 2019
Ellen Stewart Theatre

Bach & Bleach
April 11 - 21, 2019
The Downstairs

**La MaMa Moves!
Dance Festival**
April 26 - May 26, 2019
Ellen Stewart Theatre
The Downstairs

Stonewall 50 at La MaMa
May 30 - June 30, 2019
Ellen Stewart Theatre