

# ***BARTOK'S MONSTER***

## **DAEDALUS QUARTET WITH SEBASTIENNE MUNDHEIM & PIG IRON SCHOOL**

Conceived by Jay Kirk, Tom Kraines, Sebastienne Mundheim and Dan Rothenberg  
Inspired by *Avoid the Day: A New Nonfiction in Two Movements* by Jay Kirk

### **DAEDALUS QUARTET**

**VIOLINS** Min-Young Kim, Matilda Kaul

**VIOLA** Jessica Thompson

**CELLO** Tom Kraines

**LECTURER** Jaime Maseda

**MOVEMENT ENSEMBLE\*** William Acker, Aiden Ankli, Lyra Butler-Denman, Tenara Calem, Arantxa Chavez, Elizabeth Feinschreiber, Frankie Gormley, Alexis Howland, Grace Lazarz

\*Members of the class of 2024 at the UArts/Pig Iron Devised Performance Program

**INSTALLATION DESIGNER/DRAMATURGY** Sebastienne Mundheim

**COLLABORATING WRITER** Alex Tatarsky

**SOUND DESIGN** Damien Figueras

**LIGHTING DESIGN** Bless Rudisill

**MOVEMENT CONSULTANT** Sebastienne Mundheim

**DIRECTION/SCENARIO** Dan Rothenberg

**STAGE MANAGER** Sydney Hansen

**ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER** Emmie Parker

**WHITE BOX THEATRE FABRICATORS** Sallie Ketcham, Evie Morrel-Samuels, Saria Rosenhaj, Stephen Shuster, Payton Smith, Harlee Trautman, Grayson Winkel

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Harold Prince Theatre

Sunday, January 21 @ 2 PM & 7 PM

There will be no intermission.

**bowerbird** **PIG IRON SCHOOL** 

*Bartok's Monster* is co-presented with Bowerbird and the Pig Iron School.

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UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Support for *Bartok's Monster* has been provided by The Sachs Program for Arts Innovation and the Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia.

## PROGRAM

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- from *Lyric Suite* Alban Berg (1885-1935)  
I. Allegretto gioviale
- from *String quartet no. 12, op. 127* Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)  
II. Adagio ma non troppo e molto cantabile (excerpt)
- Field Recording no. 289* Béla Bartók (1881-1945)
- from *44 Duos for two violins, Sz. 98* Bartók, adapted by Daedalus Quartet  
No. 28: Bánkódás (Sorrow)
- String quartet no. 3 (1927)(Sz. 85)* Bartók  
I. Prima parte: Moderato  
II. Seconda parte: Allegro  
III. Ricapitulazione della prima parte: Moderato  
IV. Coda: Allegro molto
- from *Six Cuts* Laurie San Martin (b. 1968)  
II. Toy Boat
- Excerpts from *Cantata Profana (Sz. 94)* Bartók, adapted by Daedalus Quartet

## PROGRAM NOTE

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Bartók's six string quartets, which span almost his complete mature compositional life, represent a body of work that any string quartet must come to terms with. Thorny, ambitious, frustratingly meticulous in notation and often difficult for performers and listeners, they're also works of stunning originality and mastery. We in the Daedalus Quartet have chosen to present each of the quartets in a different context, feeling that each of the six deserves a place as a centerpiece on its own concert. The context for this, the third quartet, suggested itself through a series of happy accidents.

We met Jay Kirk at a performance we gave in 2015 at Kelly Writers House, at which we were presenting Bartók's second quartet. At the time, he was working on a piece for *Harper's Magazine* on the third quartet, which would soon appear in the magazine under the title *Bartók's Monster*. We talked about the possibility of giving a performance of the third quartet in conjunction with readings from Jay's work and perhaps a showing of the manuscript of the quartet, which in fact resides in the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts at the Penn Libraries. Nothing came of it at the time.

In late 2020, Jay was kind enough to send each of us a copy of *Avoid the Day*, the book that *Bartók's Monster* had grown into. The book is much more (and less) than the straightforward historical account of Bartók's quartet; it's a provocative and entertaining work, simultaneously courageous and evasive, and it goes places we couldn't have foreseen. We were instantly enthusiastic about doing something collaborative around the book and the quartet, but we also realized that a straightforward concert with readings would not fulfill the demands of the book – something more (and less) was required.

Jay had also made contact with Sebastienne Mundheim, of White Box Theatre, and Dan Rothenberg, of Pig Iron Theatre, both of whom were also enthralled by the possibilities of his book. Over the course of many Zoom meetings and workshops, we began to see how we could create something that answered both somewhat intractable sources: Bartók's haunting, aphoristic third quartet and Kirk's expansive, elusive and intensely personal book.

In some ways this is a concert: along with Bartók's third quartet, we will be playing pieces which relate to it, sometimes more explicitly (Berg's *Lyric Suite*), sometimes impressionistically (Laurie San Martin's *Toy Boat*). But this is also much more than a concert: Dan, Sebastienne and the members of the cast are greatly expanding the scope of our usual performance with their visual and theatrical imagination. We hope that you find this event intriguing enough to seek out more encounters with both the book and the piece – both richly deserve your continued engagement.

The involvement and support of Penn Live Arts, Bowerbird and the Sachs Program for Arts Innovation were indispensable in enabling this project to take flight.

— Tom Kraines

### **About *Avoid the Day***

This production was inspired by Jay Kirk's kaleidoscopic memoir, *Avoid the Day: A New Nonfiction in Two Movements*. If you would like to find out more, follow this QR code or visit [harpercollins.com](http://harpercollins.com).



## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

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### **Daedalus Quartet**

Since winning the top prize in the Banff International String Quartet Competition in 2001, the Daedalus Quartet has impressed critics and listeners alike with the security, technical finish, interpretive unity and sheer gusto of its performances. The quartet has performed in many of the world's leading musical venues, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center (Great Performers series), the Library of Congress, the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C. and Boston's Gardner Museum, as well as the Musikverein in Vienna, the Mozarteum in Salzburg, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and the Cité de la Musique in Paris.

The Daedalus Quartet has won plaudits for its adventurous exploration of and commitment to contemporary music. Among the works the ensemble has premiered are Vivian Fung's *Frenetic Memories* (with clarinetist Romie deGuise-Langlois), Laurie San Martin's *Six Cuts*, Joshua Hey's *lens flare from Alpha Centauri* and Anna Weesner's *Love Story in Six Parts* (with oboist James Austin Smith). In the winter of 2024, Daedalus premiered Benjamin Wenzelberg's cantata, *Any of Those Decembers*, on poetry of Jeanne Minahan (with flutist Rayo Furuda, pianist Laura Ward and singers Rebecca Myers, Devony Smith, Stephen Ng and Steven Eddy).

The Daedalus Quartet is the resident quartet at the University of Pennsylvania. The members of the quartet hold degrees from The Juilliard School, Curtis Institute, Cleveland Institute and Harvard University.

### **Damien Figueras** (Sound Designer)

Figueras is a five-time Barrymore nominated sound and video designer. Recent credits include: *Party Face* (Off-Broadway, NY City Center), *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Delaware Theatre Company), *The Winter Wonderettes* (Gulfshore Playhouse), *What the Constitution Means to Me* (Arden Theatre Company), *Kiss* (Wilma Theatre), *The Play That Goes Wrong* (1812 Productions), *Beehive* (Walnut Street Theatre), *Moth* (Azuka Theatre), and *Rose* (The Bearded Ladies). In addition to his design work, Figueras is the Production Manager for Wolf Performing Arts Center and a founding member of Apartment 20 Theatre. As always, he would like to dedicate his work to the memory of his mother. DFigueras.com

### **Jay Kirk** (Author)

Kirk is the author of *Avoid the Day: A New Nonfiction in Two Movements* (Harper Perennial, 2020) and *Kingdom Under Glass*, named one of *The Washington Post's* Best Nonfiction Books of 2010. His widely anthologized award-winning nonfiction has been published in *Harper's Magazine*, *GQ* and *The New York Times Magazine*. He is the recipient of a Whiting Award, a Pew Fellowship in the Arts and teaches in the Creative Writing Program at the University of Pennsylvania.

### **Jaime Maseda** (Lecturer)

Maseda is a performer based in Philadelphia. He has worked across disciplines with various artists and companies, including Pig Iron Theatre Company, Miguel Gutierrez, Lightning Rod Special, Arden Theatre Company, the Wilma Theater, Azuka Theatre, People's Light, Orbiter 3, Magda & Chelsea, Mel Krodman & Kelly Bond, Annie Wilson, and George & Co. as well as in collaborative partnership with NYC-based artist Iris McCloughan as No Face Performance Group.

**Sebastienne Mundheim** (Installation Designer, Dramaturg, Movement Consultant)

Mundheim is a performance-maker, installation artist, thought-partner and educator. Her work integrates visual installation, puppetry, storytelling, dance and theatre. Commissioning organizations include: Rosenbach Museum and Library, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Penn Museum of Art and Archaeology, Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia Live Arts Festival, Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts, Kimmel Center for Performing Arts, Arden Theatre Company, Lantern Theatre Company, Pennsylvania Ballet, ArtYard, Kohler Arts Center, Franklin and Marshall College, Stonington Opera House, Baltimore Theatre Project, Cultural Alliance of Baltimore, Keene State University, Vermont Performance Lab, Marlboro College, MassMOCA and The Irish Ministry of Arts and Culture. Recent projects include: *Kea and the Ark*, Lead Artist, ArtYard, Kohler Arts Center. Puppet Creator/Coach: Theatre Exile, *Wolf Play*; BalletX, *Sidd A Hero's Journey*; and Arden Theatre Company, *The BFG*. Upcoming: *After the Show Comes Home*, an exhibition of performance objects at Delaware Contemporary, January 12 - May 26.

**The UArts/Pig Iron Devised Performance Program**

The UArts/Pig Iron Devised Performance Program is one of the first programs of its kind, marrying ensemble theatre practice with the rigors of graduate education. The program brings together daring and passionate theatre artists from around the globe to train their bodies and imaginations, creating original performance works in response to the world around us. Founded in 2011, the School includes over 125 alumni who have gone on to win OBIE Awards, Pew Fellowships and to perform on stages both local and international. [pigironschool.org](http://pigironschool.org)

**Dan Rothenberg** (Director)

Rothenberg is a co-founder and co-artistic director of Pig Iron Theatre Company. He has directed almost all of Pig Iron's original performance works, including the OBIE Award-winning *Chekhov Lizardbrain* and *Hell Meets Henry Halfway*. Rothenberg directed three critically acclaimed premieres of Toshiki Okada's scripts for the Play Company in NYC, a national tour for The Acting Company and collaborations with the alt-comedy group Berserker Residents, new music outfit Bowerbird, the Penn Program in Environmental Humanities and Sweden's Teater Slava. Rothenberg teaches physical theatre at the Pig Iron/UArts MFA Program. A Pew Fellow and USA Artists Knight Fellow, Rothenberg will direct *The Hatmaker's Wife* by Lauren Yee at Theatre J in Washington, D.C., in June 2024.

**Bless Rudisill** (Lighting Designer)

Rudisill is primarily a lighting designer who aims to use light as a malleable ethereal material in order to explore the spiritual nuances of the human condition.

**Alex Tatarsky** (Collaborating Writer)

Tatarsky makes performances somewhere in between dance, theatre, comedy, performance art and deluded rant — sometimes with songs. Works have been presented by a wide range of venues including Abrons Arts Center, The Kitchen, La Mama, MoMA PS1, Space 1026 and Vox Populi. Their most recent piece, *Sad Boys in Harpy Land*, "a thrilling and frenetic mental breakdown of a show," (*The New York Times*) just completed a sold-out double-extended run at Playwrights Horizons. Tatarsky is grateful to have been a Movement Research artist in residence, Independence Fellow, Pew Fellow and recipient of the Jilline Ringle Solo Performance Award from 1812 Productions.

## **Bowerbird**

Bowerbird is a Philadelphia based non-profit organization that shares music, dance, film and related art forms with audiences at locations across the region. Their mission is to expand public understanding of experimental music, moving away from simplistic tropes such as "cutting edge" or "contemporary," and instead striving to engage with experimentalism as a timeless and recurrent artistic practice. Bowerbird was founded in 2006 and has presented over 600 events at venues across the city.

## **Pig Iron Theatre Company**

Founded in 1995 as an interdisciplinary ensemble, Pig Iron is dedicated to the creation of new and exuberant performance works. Pig Iron has created over 30 original works and has toured to festivals and theatres on four continents, with stops at the Under the Radar Festival, the Humana Festival, TR Warszawa, Woolly Mammoth, Dance Theater Workshop and the Tokyo Performing Arts Market. Creative residencies that have incubated the company's work include Baryshnikov Arts Center, the Public Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, the Orchard Project, EMPAC and the Penn Program in Environmental Humanities. Notable collaborators include legendary director Joseph Chaikin; composers Troy Herion and Cynthia Hopkins; playwrights Toshiki Okada and Will Eno; and musical ensembles ranging from The Crossing to the indie rock band Dr. Dog. The company has been nominated for 50 Barrymore Awards, winning 10, and won two OBIE Awards.

## **PIG IRON STAFF**

**FOUNDING CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND DIRECTOR,**

**UARTS/PIG IRON DEVISED PERFORMANCE PROGRAM** Quinn Bauriedel

**GENERAL MANAGER** Caity Cook

**DEVELOPMENT AND EXECUTIVE COORDINATOR** Shaun Furter

**MANAGING DIRECTOR** Jasmine Jiang

**SCHOOL AND OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR** Anderson Molina

**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSOCIATE** Francesca Montanile

**MARKETING COORDINATOR** Emily Pierattini

**ASSISTANT PRODUCTION MANAGER** Cinco Placencia

**FOUNDING CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTOR** Dan Rothenberg

**FOUNDING COMPANY MEMBER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR EMERITUS** Dito van Reigersberg

**PRODUCTION AND FACILITIES MANAGER** Kate Sparacio

**ARTISTIC PRODUCER** Eva Steinmetz

Special Thanks: Pig Iron MFA Class of Spring 2023 (Brian Bowyer, Heather Hosford, Mary Kate Korbisch, Connor McAndrews, Chelsea Thaler and Rosemary Weiss), Marcia Ferguson, Ain Gordon, Grace Lazarz, Laura Schmidt, Tina Zhong, InterAct Theatre Company



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