



## Friday, June 10, 2022 | 2:30pm

Greenberg Center, Ojai Valley School

### Open Rehearsal

**Open Rehearsal** World Premiere and AMOC\* commission  
Directed by **Bobbi Jene Smith**

*Choreographed and performed by*

**Paul Appleby, Julia Bullock, Julia Eichten, Vinson Fraley, Jonathan Fredrickson, Keir GoGwilt, Conor Hanick, Coleman Itzkoff, Jesse Kovarsky, Yiannis Logothetis, Or Schraiber, Bobbi Jene Smith, and Stephanie Troyak**

#### MUSICAL SELECTIONS:

**Giovanni SOLLIMA**

*Lamentatio* for Solo Cello

**Franz SCHUBERT**

*Ständchen*

**Connie CONVERSE**

*One by One*

(recorded 1954; new arrangement 2017 by Jeremy SISKIND)

**J.S. BACH**

Gigue from Suite No. 2 in D minor for Solo Cello

**Pete SEEGER**

*One Grain of Sand*

**Monique Andrée SERF (“Barbara”)** *La Solitude*

**BACH**

Chaconne from Partita No. 2 in D Minor for Solo Violin

**Jacques BREL**

*Ces Gens-là*

**Frédéric CHOPIN**

Prelude in E minor, Op. 28, no. 4

**HILDEGARD OF BINGEN**

“O rubor sanguinis” for the Feast of St. Ursula, Antiphon D 167r, R 471vb

**Johnny CHANG**

*Hildegard Resonances*

This concert is made possible  
with the generous support of  
**Smith-Hobson Foundation**

There is no intermission  
during the concert.

Repeat performance on  
Sunday, June 12  
at 2:30pm  
at the Greenberg Center.

GREENBERG CENTER,  
OJAI VALLEY SCHOOL  
723 EL PASEO ROAD, OJAI

**Giovanni SOLLIMA** (b. 1962)  
*Lamentatio* for Solo Cello (1998)

**Franz SCHUBERT** (1797-1828)  
*Ständchen* (1828)

**Connie CONVERSE**  
(b. 1924-disappeared in 1974)  
*One by One* (recorded 1954;  
new arrangement 2017 by  
Jeremy SISKIND, b. 1986)

**J.S. BACH** (1685-1750)  
Gigue from Suite No. 2 in D minor  
for Solo Cello (c. 1717-23)

**Pete SEEGER** (1919-2014)  
*One Grain of Sand* (1958)

**Monique Andrée SERF** ("Barbara") (1930-97)  
*La Solitude* (1964)

**BACH**  
Chaconne from Partita No. 2 in D Minor for  
Solo Violin (c. 1717-20)

**Jacques BREL** (1929-78)  
*Ces Gens-là* (1965)

**Frédéric CHOPIN** (1810-49)  
Prelude in E minor, Op. 28, no. 4 (1839)

**HILDEGARD OF BINGEN** (1098-1179)  
"O rubor sanguinis" for the Feast of  
St. Ursula, Antiphon D 167r, R 471vb  
(mid-12<sup>th</sup> century)

**Johnny CHANG**  
*Hildegard Resonances* (2013)

## Rewriting the Script

About a decade ago, references to the so-called "10,000-hour rule" seemed ubiquitous. The promise that world-class expertise in any field will result from consistent practice accrued over so many hours is a temptingly simplistic myth based on a reassuringly predictable reward system. Among other things, it presupposes a stable world in which the relationship between practice and an elusive expertise — between rehearsal and "prime time" — is linear. But what if the parameters are no longer reliable? What happens when the very thing for which we are rehearsing has been called into question? When the world has been broken by an unforeseen catastrophe, like a pandemic?

These are some of the questions lurking behind Bobbi Jene Smith's latest undertaking with her colleagues from AMOC\*, *Open Rehearsal*, and the project from which it evolved, *Broken Theater*. For its 2020-21 season, the experimental theater company La MaMa (in New York's East Village) invited Smith to become a resident artist. Joined by a team of collaborators at the height of the pandemic — including many of the same

artists featured in *Open Rehearsal* — she was given free rein to "just start working," recalls Smith.

In 2019 the acclaimed choreographer and dancer had created her work *Lost Mountain* at La MaMa, described by the *New York Times* as "a dreamlike domestic drama." Amid the pandemic's unprecedented circumstances, Smith and her team began generating material around the concept of a group of people who find themselves in an abandoned theater — an emblem of a world out of joint, in which the usual connection between performers and audience has been disrupted.

The new work, *Broken Theater*, originated as part of a residency at MASS MoCA in the fall of 2020, which described it as a "live cinema dance performance." Smith and her colleagues imagined a "broken theatrics" to convey what was happening in the world. She says the questions forced on everyone by the pandemic were intensified by the scenario of performers coming to terms with these strange conditions: "Where did the script get lost? Where do we go from now? Who is

going to write the new script? All of these questions started to come up, such as what is the difference between the role you think you're playing and the role that you're actually playing — and how is that mirrored in our real lives?" Together, Smith and her team imagined a set of archetypal theatrical characters and the patterns they confront: the Mother, the Brothers, the Actress, the Actor, the Bully...

The relationship between *Broken Theater* and *Open Rehearsal*, Smith explains, is that "they're almost happening in parallel universes. *Open Rehearsal* is like the open rehearsal for *Broken Theater*, where you often can't tell whether it's the performance or the rehearsal, what was written or what was off-book." *Open Rehearsal* also plays with this ambiguity: "It's a very detailed, precise performance that is disguised as a rehearsal."

In the new work, Smith continues to explore the dynamic of multiple identities among her collaborators: "Everyone in this behind-the-scenes theater company has a mirror part. So the mother I represent is also the director. Julia Eichten, one of the dancers, is also the stage manager.

CONTINUED ►►

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

## REWRITING THE SCRIPT

Coleman Itzkoff is also the rehearsal director and timekeeper. Everyone has these reverse roles, as actors and as other characters.”

About her own process, Smith says: “We all are behaving in this space together. So we try to find a common language of performing. The pandemic has been an amazing time to be reassured of the powerful link between music and dance, and how it goes beyond any sort of reasoning or words, and how that meeting point is something sacred. It’s important

for us to discover that meeting place together.”

The eclectic musical selections reflect the ambiguity of roles as well. Coleman Itzkoff, for example, is an actor in the theater company who also plays cello (rather than an “accompanist” with his cello) — identities that are inseparable. His character as the cello player — which company member Or Schraiber (Smith’s husband) developed together with Itzkoff and Yiannis Logothetis in the spinoff piece *The Cello Player* (see p. 72) — prompted

questions of who this person is in the context of *Open Rehearsal*: “Maybe he used to be a star cello player and now he’s stuck in this theater with no audience,” Smith suggests. “What are the pieces that he will play over and over again? And what are the human mechanisms that make someone play the music that they will play?” In relation to the audience, the approach in *Open Rehearsal* is “like taking off the magic veil of a performance. But in doing that, actually, it becomes more magical.”

—THOMAS MAY

*This concert is approximately 60 minutes.*