

**MEDIA CONTACT**

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**Hermitage Artist Retreat Presents**

**October Programs**

**On the Beach at Sunset:**

**“Historical Activism in Song and Print”**

**Friday, October 4, 6 p.m.**

**Fridays @ 5:**

**“Falling Birds, Falling Man”**

**Friday, October 25, 5 p.m.**

(Sarasota County) The Hermitage’s October programs include “**Historical Activism in Song and Print,”** with poet Melissa Range and musician and storyteller Reggie Harris. Range will read from a new collection of poems in progress, “Printer's Fist,” which explores, among other things, the role of print culture in the abolitionist movement. The poems draw upon archival sources—newspapers, pamphlets, petitions, children's books, songbooks, and letters—to bring forward historical activist voices that have much to say to us in our current historical moment. Harris will sing and play songs that catalyzed the 20th-century civil rights movement. The program, part of the “On the Beach at Sunset” series, is Friday, October 4 at 6 p.m. “**Falling Birds, Falling Man**,” part of the “Fridays @ 5” series, features actor and playwright Myxolydia Tyler, who will read scenes from *Falling Birds*, a play she is working on at the Hermitage about black civil rights demonstrators locked up in a confederate barracks. Composer Kenneth Fuchs will show and discuss *Falling Man,* a dramatic scene for baritone voice and orchestra, which was presented at the National September 11 Memorial & Museum, to commemorate the 15th anniversary of 9/11. This program is Friday, October 25, at 5 p.m., in the Palm House at the Hermitage. Audience members are welcome to bring blankets and chairs for the beach event. In case of rain, the event will be moved inside. To secure indoor seating in case of inclement weather, reservations for both programs are required and can be requested at www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org*. For more information about the Hermitage, visit www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org.*

**Melissa Range’s** second book, *Scriptorium*, won the 2015 National Poetry Series, selected by US Poet Laureate Tracy K. Smith. Her first book was *Horse and Rider*. Recent poems have been published in 32 *Poems, Blackbird, Image, and Poetry.* Range is the recipient of awards and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rona Jaffe Foundation, the American Antiquarian Society, the Sewanee Writers’ Conference, and the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, among others. Originally from East Tennessee, she teaches creative writing and American literature at Lawrence University in Wisconsin.

A consummate musician and storyteller, **Reggie Harris** combines a strong folk and gospel legacy with a solid background in classical, rock, and pop music. Years of road and stage experience, and interactions with performers such as Pete Seeger and Tom Paxton, have led him to produce music that entertains and inspires. Audiences at venues such as The Kennedy Center, The Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Smithsonian Institute, as well as international festivals, universities, and schools, have lauded him as an interpreter of history, and cultural advocate. Through his work with the Kennedy Center, Harris has earned wide acclaim for his contributions to the resources and knowledge base—in historical and educational circles—on the Underground Railroad and the modern civil rights movement. In addition to numerous recordings, he is also featured on a number of compilations, films, and educational projects worldwide. Harris continues to write, record, and produce music as a means to promote creativity, education, social responsibility, and understanding in the world community.

**Myxolydia Tyler** is a teaching artist, vocal coach and professional actor. She is a 2005 graduate of the Brown Trinity MFA program. She has 13 years of experience as a teaching artist working for organizations such as Oasis, PowerPlay NYC, CUNY Creative Arts Team, and The Leadership Program. Tyler has taught undergraduate courses in acting, voice and speech at the Acting Co, The New York Conservatory for Film and Dramatic Arts and at the Acting Studio. Tyler was a lead teaching artist, building and implementing curriculum for Mentor-Linc and the Education Department at Lincoln Center Education. As a professional actor she was last seen as Chelle in Dominique Morrisseau's *Detroit '67* in Hartford Stage's 2019 season. Tyler is a Young Patron at the Apollo Theatre.

**Kenneth Fuch’s** fifth Naxos recording with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by JoAnn Falletta won the 2018 Grammy Award in the category Best Classical Compendium. With Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Lanford Wilson, Fuchs created three chamber musicals, “The Great Nebula in Orion,” “A Betrothal,” and “Brontosaurus,” which Circle Repertory Company originally presented in New York City. Fuchs’s operatic monodrama, “Falling Man” (text by Don DeLillo, adapted by J. D. McClatchy) was presented at the National September 11 Memorial & Museum in commemoration of the 15th anniversary of 9/11. His music has achieved significant global recognition through performances, media exposure, and digital streaming and downloading throughout the world. Fuchs serves as a professor of composition at the University of Connecticut. He received his Bachelor of Music degree in composition from the University of Miami (cum laude) and his Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in composition from The Juilliard School.

All programs are subject to change. Please check the Hermitage website or Facebook page for updated program status. The Hermitage Artist Retreat is located at 6630 Manasota Key Road in Englewood. For more information about these free community programs or the Hermitage, visit www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org.

**About the Hermitage Artist Retreat:**

The Hermitage is a nonprofit artist retreat located in Englewood, Sarasota County, Florida. It invites accomplished artists in all disciplines for residencies on its beachfront campus which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Its artists, who are asked to interact with the community, touch thousands of Gulf Coast residents and visitors with unique and inspiring programs. Hermitage fellows have included Pulitzer, Tony, Emmy, Grammy and MacArthur Fellowship award winners. The Hermitage awards the $30,000 Greenfield Prize for a new work of art, and the Aspen Music Festival awards the annual Hermitage Prize in Composition. For more information about The Hermitage Artist Retreat, visit www.HermitageArtistRetreat.org.

**The Hermitage is supported by:**

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