

## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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### **Dear Media Friends:**

As you know, the Hermitage offers the community sneak peeks into our artists' works-in-progress. We promise these artists a safe place to explore and experiment; as such we encourage you to cover the events—but not to critically review these programs. We are very grateful for your interest in our artists and programs and welcome your attendance! **Please RSVP to [SuByron@HermitageArtistRetreat.org](mailto:SuByron@HermitageArtistRetreat.org) and let me know if you plan to bring a guest.**



## **The Hermitage Artist Retreat Announces**

### **Upcoming Outdoor Beach Programs**

#### **“The Making of a Musical”**

**With Composer and Music Director Rona Siddiqui**

**Monday, November 23, 5 p.m.**

*An exploration of the craft of musical theater by one of the nation’s rising musical theater talents, who will be joined by local vocalists.*

#### **“Illuminating the Transcendent”**

**With Composers Krists Auznieks and Robert Pound**

**and Poet Jason Schneiderman**

**Friday, December 4, 5 p.m.**

*Three artists will share how they express complex and transcendent ideas and emotions through music and poetry as the sun sets over the Gulf of Mexico.*

(November 2, 2020) The Hermitage Artist Retreat's popular beachfront series continues with "The Making of a Musical" with composer and music director Rona Siddiqui, Monday, November 23, 5 p.m.; and "Illuminating the Transcendent," with composers Krists Auznieks and Robert Pound and poet Jason Schneiderman, Friday, December 4, 5 p.m. These outdoor, beachside events are at the Hermitage, 6660 Manasota Key Road, Englewood. **Admission is free but registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org.** *Capacity will be limited to accommodate safe social distancing, so early reservations are recommended. Masks are strongly encouraged.*

The relaunch of our Hermitage programs has been received with such appreciation from our audiences," notes Hermitage Artistic Director and CEO Andy Sandberg. "Now that we've found a safe way to move forward with socially-distanced outdoor events – as audiences experienced recently on our beachfront campus as well as our recent event downtown at Selby Gardens – we are honored to continue this series with four more extraordinary artists-in-residence. These renowned Hermitage Fellows provide members of our community with a unique look into the creative process, frequently debuting new works and inviting Hermitage audiences to be the first to experience their works-in-progress."

**Rona Siddiqui** is an award-winning composer, lyricist, orchestrator, and music director based in New York City. The recipient of the Jonathan Larson Grant and Billie Burke Ziegfeld Award, Siddiqui was named one of Broadway Women's Fund's "Women to Watch." Her show, *Salaam Medina: Tales of a Halfghan*, an autobiographical comedy about growing up bi-ethnic in America, had a reading at Playwrights Horizons. Other of her musicals include *One Good Day*, *The Tin*, and

*Treasure*. Siddiqui is the recipient of the ASCAP Foundation Mary Rodgers/Lorenz Hart Award and the ASCAP Foundation/Max Dreyfus Scholarship. She has written pieces for *Wicked's* 16<sup>th</sup>-anniversary commemoration, 24 Hour Musicals, Prospect Theater Company, The Civilians, the NYC Gay Men's Chorus, and 52nd St Project, and has performed concerts of her work at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and Feinstein's/54 Below. Siddiqui has also orchestrated for Broadway Records, Broadway Backwards, NAMT and Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera. *For more information, visit [RonaSiddiqui.com](http://RonaSiddiqui.com).*

The New York City-based Latvian composer **Kristis Auznieks** has been praised for his “exhilarating, stunning and luminous” music (San Francisco Classical Voice), possessing “astonishing complexity and beauty” (Broadway World), and “old-fashioned elegance” (Herald-Tribune). His quintet, “Piano,” was featured in The New York Times among the week’s best classical music moments; he is also a recipient of Aspen Music Festival’s Jacob Druckman Prize and the youngest composer to ever receive the Latvian Grand Music Award for best composition of the year. Recent commissions include works for the Atlanta Symphony and Bang on A Can Marathon; choral pieces for Cappella Amsterdam and Latvian Radio Choir; a guitar concerto for Sinfonietta Riga and JiJi; works for the New York-based new music ensemble Unheard-Of; a multimedia work for Canadian soprano Meghan Lindsay, and a piece for the Los Angeles-based Kaleidoscope Chamber Orchestra. Auznieks’ music has been performed at prestigious concert halls and festivals around the world. He has served on the faculty of Yale School of Music as a lecturer of musicianship and analysis and has taught for NY Philharmonic's Very Young Composers program.

Composer and conductor **Robert Pound's** compositions include works for chamber, orchestra, band, vocal, and choral groups and have been featured by the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Alarm Will Sound, and the Corigliano Quartet. Pound has served as guest conductor of the Atlanta Symphony and the June-in-Buffalo Festival. He is a professor of music at Dickinson College and director of the Dickinson Orchestra. *For more information, visit [RobertWPound.com](http://RobertWPound.com).*

**Jason Schneiderman** is the author of four books of poems: *Hold Me Tight* (2020), *Primary Source* (Red Hen Press 2016); *Striking Surface* (Ashland Poetry Press 2010); and *Sublimation Point* (Four Way Books 2004). He edited the anthology *Queer: A Reader for Writers* (Oxford University Press 2016). Schneiderman's poetry and essays have appeared in numerous journals and anthologies, including *American Poetry Review*, *The Best American Poetry*, *Poetry London*, *Grand Street*, and *The Penguin Book of the Sonnet*. He is an associate professor of English at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY. *For more information, visit [JasonSchneiderman.net](http://JasonSchneiderman.net).*

The Hermitage hosts artists on its Gulf Coast Manasota Key campus for multi-week residencies. Artists come from around the world and across multiple disciplines create and develop new works of visual art, theater, music, literature, and more. As part of their residencies, Hermitage Fellows are asked to participate in community programs, affording audiences in our region the unique opportunity to engage with some of the world's leading artists and to get a "sneak peek" into extraordinary projects and artistic minds before their works go on to major galleries, concert halls, theaters, and museums around the world. These free programs include

performances, lectures, interactive experiences, open studios, school programs, teacher workshops, and more, serving thousands in our regional community each year.

*For reservations (required) or more information about the Hermitage, visit **[HermitageArtistRetreat.org](http://HermitageArtistRetreat.org)**.*

### **About the Hermitage Artist Retreat:**

The Hermitage is a nonprofit artist retreat located in Manasota Key, Florida, inviting accomplished artists across multiple disciplines for residencies on its beachfront campus, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Hermitage artists are invited to interact with the local community, reaching thousands of Gulf Coast residents and visitors each year with unique and inspiring programs. Hermitage Fellows have included twelve Pulitzer Prize winners, along with multiple Tony, Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, and MacArthur Fellowship award winners. Works created at this beachside retreat by a diverse group of Hermitage alumni have gone on to renowned theaters, concert halls, and galleries throughout the world. Each year, the Hermitage awards the \$30,000 Hermitage 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 [HermitageArtistRetreat.org](http://HermitageArtistRetreat.org).

### **The Hermitage is supported by:**

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