

MEDIA CONTACT

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The Hermitage Artist Retreat and The Van Wezel Foundation

announce

“UNSCRIPTED 2.0”

with Hermitage Fellow Hannah Hasan

Wednesday, February 16th @ 5:30 pm

The Lawn at Van Wezel Hall

*UNSCRIPTED is a unique collaboration between the Van Wezel Foundation and the Hermitage Artist Retreat in which audiences share an interactive encounter with an award-winning Hermitage artist, **inviting audiences to be an active part of the experience by responding to a prompt as part of the program.** Following a successful virtual season in 2020-2021, “Unscripted 2.0” launches in person with celebrated poet and storyteller Hannah Hasan.*

(January 20, 2022) The Hermitage Artist Retreat and the Van Wezel Foundation present the first program in the “UNSCRIPTED 2.0” series with poet, storyteller, and master teaching artist **Hannah Hasan** on Wednesday, February 16th at 5:30pm, outdoors and socially distanced on the lawn of the Van Wezel Hall. This interactive series invites audiences to participate in the reflective and creative process of art making with award-winning writers, performers, musicians, composers, choreographers, visual artists, educators, and other Hermitage Fellows from around the globe.

Previous UNSCRIPTED programs have featured celebrated Hermitage Fellows **Claire Chase** (flutist, MacArthur “Genius” recipient, Avery Fisher Prize winner); master teaching artist and Hermitage National Curatorial Council member **Eric Booth** (Americans for the Arts’ Arts Education Leadership Award, co-founder of Lincoln Center’s Teaching Artists Development Labs); singer-songwriter **Reggie Harris** (Kennedy Center teaching artist, music education director for the Living Legacy Project); as well as a collaborative program featuring **Ann Patterson** (visual artist, sculptor, author); **Melissa Studdard** (poet), **Christopher Theofinidis** (composer); and **Patrick Harlin** (composer, visual media artist). **The event is in person, and registration is required at artsUNSCRIPTED.org.**

“We are looking forward to re-launching the UNSCRIPTED series in partnership with the Van Wezel Foundation, building on last year’s virtual experiences and expanding our continued collaborations and community programming throughout the region,” notes Andy Sandberg, Artistic Director and CEO of the Hermitage Artist Retreat. “We are excited to revive this interactive series with 2022 Hermitage Fellow, storyteller, and master teaching artist Hannah Hasan, who will share her talents as an arts educator and invite audiences to actively take part in creating a story.”

UNSCRIPTED 2.0 attendees will be invited to interact with Hasan and learn more about her unique approach to creating narrative that centers ‘home’ and belonging in community. Drawing from her own experiences as a demonstration, Hasan will also lead participants through the process of unearthing and sharing their own stories, beginning with a prompt that all audience members will be asked to prepare prior to the event.

“What is special about this series with the Hermitage is that the audience will come along for the journey and play an active role in the process,” said Cheryl Mendelson, CEO of the Van Wezel Foundation. “As we build the vision for a new Sarasota Performing Arts Center, our goal is to establish even more cultural partnerships that provide these interactive experiences with the arts.”

Hermitage Fellow **Hannah Hasan** is an award-winning spoken word poet, speaker, and storyteller who believes that our stories can set us free. With themes that center home, social justice,

racial justice, women's rights, and more, Hasan is often commissioned to write and perform, present keynote addresses, and facilitate workshops for events, conferences, and meetings. She has been engaged to write, perform, speak, and facilitate by numerous government agencies, non-profit organizations and charities, colleges and universities, start-ups, small businesses, and large corporations such as The Arts for Biden National Campaign, The Office of Community Services, Coffee Cup People, National Alliance of Community Economic Development Associations, Verizon, Levine Museum of the New South, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Promise Neighborhoods of Lehigh Valley, Brown University, Davidson College, the City University of New York Journalism School, and many others. Hasan has a specialized talent for creating safe and brave spaces for audiences. She has been awarded grants, fellowships, awards, and accolades for her work from organizations like The Arts and Science Council, Mobilize.Org, The Knight Foundation, Citizen's University, The Hermitage Artist Retreat, and more. She also serves on multiple community advisory boards for organizations such as The Charlotte Symphony, Levine Museum of The New South, and *The Charlotte Observer*. For a complete bio, visit:

www.HannahHasan.com/

UNSCRIPTED 2.0 continues the partnership between the Hermitage Artist Retreat and the Van Wezel Foundation. In addition to this live outdoor event with Hasan, two additional installments of UNSCRIPTED are anticipated in 2022 – one online event and another in-person event; artists and locations will be announced at a later date. In the spirit of the series name, there is no single venue or stage, and every performance takes place in a variety of forms and locations. Whether it be a virtual Zoom experience, on the Hermitage Beach, at the future home of the Sarasota Performing Arts Center, in a studio, or even in a private living room, each presentation is a one-of-a-kind interactive experience.

To register for UNSCRIPTED, visit *artsUNSCRIPTED.org*.

The Hermitage Artist Retreat:

The Hermitage is a non-profit 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 14 Pulitzer Prize winners, Poets Laureate, MacArthur 'Genius' Fellows, and multiple Tony, Emmy, Grammy, Oscar winners and nominees. 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, the newly announced \$35,000 Hermitage Major Theater Award for an original theater commission, and the Aspen Music Festival's Hermitage Prize in Composition. For more information, visit HermitageArtistRetreat.org.

The Van Wezel Foundation:

The Van Wezel Foundation's mission is to create and sustain a vibrant performing arts center, advance education, and enrich communities by inspiring minds through the power of the arts. The Foundation has partnered with the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall since 1987 to support arts education throughout our region, serving more than 50,000 students and their families annually with enriching arts-based education opportunities and professional development for more than 400 teachers across five counties. The Van Wezel Foundation is leading the vision to build a new Sarasota Performing Arts Center as a public-private partnership with the city, and in collaboration with the Bay Park Conservancy and Van Wezel Hall. To learn more about the new Sarasota Performing Arts Center and get involved, visit vwfoundation.org/SPAC. For more information on the Foundation and its mission, visit vwfoundation.org, or join us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).