

**Hermitage Fellow and 2022 Kleban Prize Winner**  
**César Alvarez to Present “Reimagining the Musical”**  
**as Part of “Hermitage Sunsets @ Selby Gardens” Series**

*“Reimagining the Musical: Past, Present, & Futurity” takes place Wednesday, March 23 at 6pm at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens (Downtown Sarasota).*

February 22, 2022 (Sarasota County, Florida) — A 2022 Hermitage Fellow and the most recent recipient of the prestigious Kleban Prize for “Most Promising Musical Theater Lyricist,” songwriter and theater-maker **César Alvarez** will present a free community program — “Reimagining the Musical: Past, Present, & *Futurity*” — on Wednesday, March 23 at 6pm at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens (Downtown Sarasota Campus). Alvarez will share an informal hour of songs and stories about magic, domesticity, ghosts, and the way the universe works. This is the latest in the popular “Hermitage Sunsets @ Selby Gardens” series, which includes a performance by violinist and Beyoncé collaborator **Lady Jess** this Thursday, February 24 at 6pm. *Events in this series frequently reach capacity quickly, so early reservations are strongly encouraged.*

Alvarez (they/them/theirs) is a composer, lyricist, playwright, and performance maker whose genre-bending work engages the contemporary moment through worlds, ranging from a young girl who encounters a cosmic variety hour at the edge of life in *The Elementary SpaceTime Show* to a Civil War-era machine that creates peace in

*Futurity* (Soho Rep / Ars Nova). *Futurity* was the recipient of the Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding New Musical. With a background as a jazz saxophonist, band leader, and sound artist, Alvarez’s work draws upon theater, music, performance art, and social practice. A 2018–2020 Princeton Arts Fellow and recipient of the Jonathan Larson Award, Alvarez is currently an Assistant Professor of Music at Dartmouth College with a B.Mus. from Oberlin Conservatory and an MFA from Bard College.

“As we continue our ongoing partnership with Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, we are excited to introduce Sarasota audiences to Hermitage Fellow, musical artist, and theater-maker **César Alvarez**,” said Hermitage Artistic Director and CEO **Andy Sandberg**. “I had the pleasure of seeing César’s musical *Futurity* in its acclaimed Off-Broadway run, and look forward to hearing more from this leading voice in the worlds of musical theater and performance art. They bring a truly unique approach to storytelling, and Selby Gardens provides a unique backdrop for experiencing bold and innovative new work.”

*César Alvarez’s Hermitage Residency is generously sponsored by Charlotte and Charles Perret.*

Hermitage outdoor programs like this one are free and open to the public with a \$5/person registration fee. Due to capacity limitations and social distancing, **registration is required at [HermitageArtistRetreat.org](https://HermitageArtistRetreat.org).**

Past artists to present as part of the “Hermitage Sunsets @ Selby Gardens” series have included MacArthur ‘Genius’ and world-renowned flutist **Claire Chase**, internationally acclaimed jazz trumpeter and santur player **Amir ElSaffar**, Pulitzer

Prize-winning musical theater composer **Michael R. Jacson**, and genre-bending cellist and artistic director of ETHEL, **Dorothy Lawson**, among others.

The Hermitage hosts artists on its Gulf Coast Manasota Key campus for multi-week residencies, where diverse artists from around the world and across multiple disciplines create and develop new works of theater, music, visual art, literature, and more. As part of their residencies, Hermitage Fellows participate in free community programs, offering audiences in the region a unique opportunity to engage with some of the world's leading artists and to get an authentic "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 and innovative programs include performances, lectures, readings, interactive experiences, open studios, school programs, teacher workshops, and more, serving thousands in our regional community each year.

### **The program description:**

- **Hermitage Sunsets @ Selby Gardens: "Reimagining the Musical: Past, Present, & Futurity" with Hermitage Fellow César Alvarez, Wednesday, March 23, 6pm:** Hermitage Fellow **César Alvarez**, fresh from winning the 2022 Kleban Prize for "Most Promising Musical Theater Lyricist," brings their boundless imagination to each musical note and every syllable on the page. Their genre-bending work engages the contemporary moment through worlds, ranging from a Civil War-era machine that creates peace in *Futurity* to a young girl who encounters a cosmic variety hour at the edge of life in *The Elementary SpaceTime Show*. Jonathan Larson Award winner César Alvarez shares an informal hour of songs and stories about magic, domesticity, ghosts, and the way the universe works in this exciting edition of the "Hermitage Sunsets at Selby Gardens" series. *Presented in partnership with Marie Selby Botanical Gardens.*

*César Alvarez's Hermitage Residency generously sponsored by Charlotte and Charles Perret. **Registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org** (\$5/person registration fee). Marie Selby Botanical Gardens (Downtown Campus), entrance behind Payne Mansion, 1534 Mound St., Sarasota, FL 34236*

### **About 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](http://HermitageArtistRetreat.org).**

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

Hermitage programs are supported, in part, by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts; by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax Revenues; and by the Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, the Florida Council of Arts and Culture and the State of Florida (Section 286.25 Florida Statutes), as well as the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, and the Community Foundation of Sarasota County.

---

### **PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED HERMITAGE PROGRAMS:**

**Thursday, Feb 24 @ 6pm**, Hermitage Sunsets @ Selby Gardens: "Violin: Dope, Honest, & Evolved," with Hermitage Fellow **Lady Jess** (Live at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Downtown Campus)

**Currently at Capacity / Accepting Waitlist Registrations**

*Presented in partnership with Marie Selby Botanical Gardens*

**Friday, Feb 25 @ 5:30pm**, Hermitage Artists & Thinkers: “Theater Today: Process & Production,” with Tony Award-Winning Broadway Producer **Tom Kirdahy** (Live at the Town Center of Longboat Key)

**Friday, Mar 4, 5:30pm**, “Building a Play: Exploring the Playwright-Director Collaboration”: A Conversation with Pulitzer Prize and Hermitage Greenfield Prize Winner **Martyna Majok**, and Stage Director **Caitlin Sullivan** (Live on the Hermitage Beach)

*Presented in partnership with the Greenfield Foundation and Community Foundation of Sarasota County  
Martyna Majok’s Hermitage Residency generously sponsored by Terry Brackett*

**Saturday, Mar 19, 6pm**, “Ocean Body”: The Live Premiere of the Commission from 2019 Hermitage Greenfield Prize Winner **Helga Davis** (Live at the Hermitage Palm House Studio / Virtual Streaming Event)

*Presented in partnership with the Greenfield Foundation, Community Foundation of Sarasota County, EnsembleNewSRQ, and New College of Florida*

**Wednesday, Mar 23, 6pm**, “Reimagining the Musical: Past, Present, & Futurity” with Hermitage Fellow and 2022 Kleban Prize Winner **César Alvarez** (Live at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Downtown Sarasota Campus)

*Presented in partnership with Marie Selby Botanical Gardens*

**Friday, Apr 8, 6pm**, “A Theater Maker’s Year: What ‘Went Down’” with Playwright & Hermitage Greenfield Prize Winner **Aleshea Harris** (Live at New College of Florida’s campus bayfront)

*Presented in partnership with the Greenfield Foundation and Community Foundation of Sarasota County*

[HermitageArtistRetreat.org](https://HermitageArtistRetreat.org)