

Hermitage Artist Retreat Announces New Live and Virtual Programs in June featuring Internationally Renowned Musicians, Theater-Makers, and Visual Artists

In addition to the previously announced June 7 event with harpist Ashley Jackson at Selby Gardens, newly added programs feature theater-maker Nandita Shenoy on June 2 in partnership with the Van Wezel Foundation, and visual artists Aram Han Sifuentes and Amanda Williams on June 17 in partnership with Art Center Sarasota,

May 17, 2022 (Sarasota County, Florida) — The Hermitage Artist Retreat announces new community programs in June with Hermitage Fellows spanning music, visual art, and theater. These newly added programs are presented at outdoor venues throughout Sarasota County as part of the Hermitage’s partnerships with local organizations, including Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, the Van Wezel Foundation, and Art Center Sarasota.

First, the season’s final installment of the popular “Unscripted” series, “Sparking Creativity,” features Hermitage Fellow and theater-maker **Nandita Shenoy** in a virtual program on Thursday, June 2 at 5pm ET. Lauded playwright and actor Shenoy will offer insight into process and share examples of her work that have resulted from her creative journey. Prior to the program, registered attendees will be given a prompt so that audience members can try this process out for themselves. The interactive “Unscripted” series is presented in a collaboration with the Van Wezel Foundation, and

previous “Unscripted” programs have featured Hermitage Fellows Claire Chase, Eric Booth, Reggie Harris, Ann Patterson, Christopher Theofanidis, Melissa Studdard, Patrick Harlin, Hannah Hasan, and most recently Daniel Gumbiner.

Next, the Hermitage’s June programs continue with the previously announced “Soulful Strings: An Evening of Harp Music” with celebrated musician and composer **Ashley Jackson**. This is the inaugural event in the Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series at the Hermitage, made possible with a generous gift from the Ruby E. and Carole Crosby Foundation. “Soulful Strings” will be presented on Tuesday June 7 at 8pm at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens (Downtown).

Finally, the Hermitage will partner with Art Center Sarasota to present “Visual Art: New Ways of Seeing,” featuring Hermitage Fellows **Aram Han Sifuentes** and **Amanda Williams**, live on the Hermitage Beach. This event will take place at 6:30pm on Friday, June 17.

These programs are in addition to previously announced programs throughout the month of May.

“The Hermitage’s ongoing May and June programming speaks to the expansive diversity and creative range of our renowned Hermitage Fellows, who are all brilliant talents in their respective musical and artistic fields,” said Hermitage Artistic Director and CEO **Andy Sandberg**. “By continuing our programming into the summer months, we also want to celebrate and recognize that there is a growing year-round community of arts appreciators here in our Gulf Coast region.”

Hermitage programs like these 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**.

[See below for complete program details and artist bios.](#)

The newly and previously announced program descriptions:

- **“Hermitage Poet’s Corner: The Contemporary Word,” Friday, May 20 @ 5pm:** Presented in Partnership with Bookstore1, two incredible writers and Hermitage Fellows come together to read and discuss their evocative work. **DaMaris B. Hill** shares selections from her critically acclaimed *Breath Better Spent: Living Black Girlhood*, a Netgalley “Must-Read Books by Black Authors” in 2022. Playwright, performer, and award-winning poet **Kirya Traber** shares selections from her previous works and teases her forthcoming novel. Join these two writers, both deeply engaged with our contemporary moment, for a discussion following their readings. *This event is presented in partnership with Bookstore1. Registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org (\$5/person registration fee).* **Bookstore1, 117 S. Pineapple Avenue, Sarasota, FL 34236.**
- **“Worlds: A Part” with Hermitage Fellows Pauchi Sasaki and Monica Youn, Thursday, May 26 @ 6pm:** Internationally renowned composer and performer **Pauchi Sasaki** and acclaimed poet **Monica Youn**, seem worlds apart. Sasaki is an interdisciplinary artist working on an original opera inspired by NASA’s mission to transport the first woman to the surface of the moon that utilizes a self-designed dress made of speakers. Winner of the Poetry Society of America’s William Carlos Williams Award, Youn’s poems are sharply crafted and weave together historical allusions and cultural references as diverse as Piero della Francesca, Goya, Martha Graham, and Twinkies. Both artists are grounded in their intersectional identities and multifaceted pursuits. Join these two Hermitage Fellows at the cutting edge of their disciplines as they discuss and share work on

the beautiful grounds of the Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast. *This event is presented in partnership with Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast. **Registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org** (\$5/person registration fee). **Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast, 400 Palmetto Avenue, Osprey, FL 34229***

- **“UNSCRIPTED: Sparking Creativity,” Thursday, June 2 @ 5pm ET:**
Presented in partnership with the **Van Wezel Foundation**. In this season’s final installment of the interactive “Unscripted” series, lauded playwright, actor, and Hermitage Fellow **Nandita Shenoy** will give insight into her process and share examples of her work which have resulted from that process. Prior to the program, she will share a prompt question so that audience members can try it out for themselves and share their work as part of the event. No theatrical experience needed – just an open mind and willingness to jump in! **Registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org. Virtual Event (via Zoom).**
Registered attendees will be sent a link 24 hours prior to the event.
- **“Soulful Strings: An Evening of Harp Music,” Tuesday, June 7 @ 8pm:**
Celebrated harpist and Hermitage Fellow **Ashley Jackson** returns to Sarasota to launch the Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series at the Hermitage – a new initiative launched this year by Carole Crosby to honor the legacy of her mother and their shared love of music. Jackson is the winner of the distinguished Theodore Presser Award, which honors musicians dedicated to artistry as well as citizenship. Jackson’s work is spurred on by academic excellence and a commitment to diversifying the classical music canon and audience. Preparing to launch her first solo album, *Ennanga*, and praised by *Musical America* for her “soulful” and “eloquent” playing, this special concert will feature works from across her impressive repertoire. Ashley Jackson is the first Hermitage alumna selected to participate in the Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series at the Hermitage, and her concert will be held outdoors at Selby Gardens. *Ashley Jackson’s concert and Hermitage residency are made possible through the Ruby*

*E. Crosby Alumni Music Series at the Hermitage. **Registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org** (\$5/person registration fee). **Marie Selby Botanical Garden (entrance at 1534 Mound St, Sarasota, FL 34236)***
Extremely limited space remaining.

- **“Visual Art: New Ways of Seeing,” Friday, June 17 @ 6:30pm:** Presented in partnership with **Art Center Sarasota**, two acclaimed visual artists discuss their creative process and share examples of their work. Hermitage Fellows **Aram Han Sifuentes** and **Amanda Williams** create in two different mediums of art. Han Sifuentes, whose work has been described as having “radical power” (*The Guardian*), works with fiber and materials. Williams, a visual artist trained as an architect, uses color in bold and energetic ways. At the center of *both* of their artistic practices is the mission to change the way we see the world around us and forge new communities in shared spaces. **Registration is required at HermitageArtistRetreat.org** (\$5/person registration fee). **The Beach at Hermitage Artist Retreat, 6630 Manasota Key Road, Englewood, FL 34223.**

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.

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 State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture (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:

Friday, May 20 @ 5pm, “Hermitage Poet’s Corner: The Contemporary Word,” with Hermitage Fellows **DaMaris B. Hill** and **Kiryra Traber** (Live at Bookstore1, Downtown Sarasota)

Presented in partnership with Bookstore1

Thursday, May 26 @ 6pm, “Worlds: A Part” with Hermitage Fellows **Pauchi Sasaki** and **Monica Youn** (Live at Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast, Osprey)

Presented in partnership with Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast

Thursday, June 2 @ 5pm, “UNSCRIPTED: Sparking Creativity,” with Hermitage Fellow **Nandita Shanoy** (Virtual Event, Zoom)

Presented in partnership with the Van Wezel Foundation

Tuesday, June 7 @ 8pm, “Soulful Strings: An Evening of Harp Music,” with Hermitage Alumna **Ashley Jackson** (Live at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Downtown Sarasota)

Made possible by the Ruby E. Crosby Alumni Music Series at the Hermitage

Friday, June 17 @ 6:30pm, “Visual Art: New Ways of Seeing,” with Hermitage Fellows **Aram Han Sifuentes** and **Amanda Williams** (Live at the Hermitage Beach, Manasota Key)

Presented in partnership with Art Center Sarasota

Additional summer events to be announced!

COMPLETE ARTIST BIOS

DaMaris B. Hill

Hermitage Fellow DaMaris B. Hill is the author of *A Bound Woman Is a Dangerous Thing: The Incarceration of African American Women from Harriet Tubman to Sandra Bland* (2020 NAACP Image Award nominee for Outstanding Literary Work in Poetry), *The Fluid Boundaries of Suffrage and Jim Crow: Staking Claims in the American Heartland*, *Vi-zə-bəl Teks-chərs* (Visible Textures). Hill is inspired by the anxieties of our contemporary existence, complicated by fears that certain linear narratives of history fail to be inclusive. “I belong to a generation of people who do not fear death, but are afraid that we may be forgotten,” she states. Driven by a keen interest in the work of Toni Morrison and theories regarding ‘rememory’ as a philosophy and aesthetic practice, Hill uses digital material and critical fabulation research methods to write about “America” and geographic place. Similar to her creative process, Hill’s scholarly research is interdisciplinary. Hill is an Associate Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Kentucky. For more information, visit damarishill.com.

Kirya Traber

Hermitage Fellow Kirya Traber is a nationally awarded writer, performer, and cultural worker. Originally from Northern California, she now resides in Brooklyn. She is a collaborating artist with Ping Chong + Company and is Curator-in-Residence with Hi-ARTS. She was New York Stage and Film’s 2020 Founders Award recipient. From 2015-2020, she was Lincoln Center’s lead Community Artist in Residence. She is the recipient of a NY Emmy Nomination (*First Person*, PBS), Robert Redford’s Sundance Foundation award for Activism in the Arts, a California Governor’s Award for Excellence in the Arts, and an Astraea Lesbian Writers Fund Award for Poetry. She has been commissioned by notable New York arts institutions such as the New York Philharmonic, Morgan Library & Museum, Orchestra of St Luke’s, and La Mama, among others. Throughout her ambitious performance and writing career, Traber has continuously utilized her art for social change as a cultural organizer. KiryaTraber.com.

Pauchi Sasaki

Described by *The Wire* as an artist “unafraid of working within different disciplines and stylistic constraints,” Hermitage Fellow Pauchi Sasaki’s interdisciplinary approach integrates musical composition with the design of multimedia performances and the application of new technologies. A Peruvian-Japanese composer, performer, and improviser who collaborates actively with projects linked to film, dance, theater, installation, site specific, and interdisciplinary performances, Sasaki has performed internationally throughout Latin America, Europe, the United States, and Japan. Her compositions involve acoustic, amplified, and electronic instrumentation performed

through ensemble formats influenced by improvisational aesthetics and ethnic musical traditions. An active film scorer, "Pauchi Sasaki's effective scores" (*Variety*) are featured in more than 30 feature and short films. Pauchi is the recipient of four "Best Original Score" awards, the Paul Merritt Henry Prize for excellence in the musical composition of stringed instruments, the Ibermúscicas Latin American Grant for Sound Composition with New Technologies at CMMAS (México), The Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative, selected by American composer Philip Glass, the Goethe-Institut's artist residencies in Brazil and Berlin, Civitella Ranieri Fellowship, and Columbia University's fellowship at the Institute for Ideas and Imagination in Paris. Commissions include ACO/Carnegie Hall, The Silkroad Ensemble, Pan American Games Opening Ceremony Lima 2019, among others. Her work has been presented at international venues and festivals as the Tokyo Experimental Festival, Venice Biennale, Carnegie Hall, Cannes Film Festival, Walt Disney Hall, MET, Museum of Contemporary Art (MAC Lima), The Kitchen, Gran Teatro Nacional del Perú, Festival Cervantino, the Art Basel Miami week, Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival, and John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Monica Youn

Returning Hermitage Fellow Monica Youn is the author of *Blackacre*, which won the William Carlos Williams Award of the Poetry Society of America. It was also shortlisted for the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Kingsley Tufts Award, longlisted for the National Book Award, and named one of the best poetry books of 2016 by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and BuzzFeed. Her previous book *Ignatz* was a finalist for the National Book Award. She has been awarded the Levinson Prize from the Poetry Foundation, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Hermitage Fellowship, a Witter Bytter Fellowship from the Library of Congress, and a Stegner Fellowship, among other honors. The daughter of Korean immigrants and a member of the Racial Imaginary Institute, she teaches at Princeton and in the MFA programs at New York University and Columbia.

Nandita Shenoy

Hermitage Fellow and theater artist Nandita Shenoy is a New York-based writer and actor. Her play *The Future is Female* was recently a Finalist for the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, and her *Rage Play* was named to the 2020 Kilroys List. Her play *Washer/Dryer* has been produced multiple times nationally after its world premiere at LA's East-West Players and an Off-Broadway production at Ma-Yi Theater, in which she also starred. Her first full-length play, *Lyme Park: An Austonian Romance of an Indian Nature*, was produced by the Hegira in Washington, DC. Her one-acts have been produced in New York City and regionally. Nandita won the 2014 Father Hamblin Award in Playwriting. Her acting credits range from dancing on national tours to Shakespeare festivals to world premieres of new plays by living playwrights. She is a proud member of the Ma-Yi Writers Lab, the dtfwaw, Dramatists Guild, Actors Equity Association, and SAG/AFTRA. She also

sits on the Steering Committee of the Asian-American Performers Action Coalition (AAPAC), which won a 2020 Obie for their Advocacy in the Field of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Nandita holds a BA in English literature from Yale University. NanditaShenoy.com

Ashley Jackson

Praised for her “soulful” and “eloquent” playing (*Musical America*), Hermitage alumna and celebrated harpist **Ashley Jackson** enjoys a multifaceted career as a highly sought-after musician and collaborator in New York and beyond. As a soloist, she has performed at Lincoln Center, *Celebrate Brooklyn!* and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. She has also performed with the New York Philharmonic, the Louisiana Philharmonic, the Qatar Philharmonic, and is a regular member of the Harlem Chamber Players. Ashley is currently working on her debut solo album *Ennanga*, an exploration of African-American spirituals and their influence on other forms of American musical expression. She is currently an Assistant Professor and the Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Music Department at Hunter College. Jackson holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from The Juilliard School, a Master of Music degree from the Yale School of Music, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Yale University. AshleyJacksonHarp.com

Aram Han Sifuentes

Returning Hermitage Fellow Aram Han Sifuentes (she/they) is a fiber and social practice artist, writer, and educator who works to center immigrant and disenfranchised communities. Her work often revolves around skill sharing – specifically sewing techniques – to create multi-ethnic and intergenerational sewing circles, which become a place for empowerment, subversion, and protest. Han Sifuentes earned her B.A. in Art and Latin American Studies from the University of California, Berkeley, and her M.F.A. in Fiber and Material Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She has been a recipient of a Hermitage Fellowship, Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship, Map Fund, Asian Cultural Council’s Individual Fellowship, 3Arts Award, and 3Arts Next Level/Spare Room Award. Her project, “Protest Banner Lending Library,” was a finalist for the Beazley Design Awards at the Design Museum in London in 2016. Solo exhibitions of her work have been shown at the Pulitzer Arts Foundation, Chicago Cultural Center, Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, Asian Arts Initiative, and Hyde Park Art Center. Her upcoming solo exhibitions include “Talking Back to Power: Projects by Aram Han Sifuentes” (2022) at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles and “Who Was This Built To Protect?” (2022) at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland, where she is currently the inaugural Getting to Know You Artist in Residence. Han Sifuentes’s art works are included in various public collections including the Renwick Gallery of Smithsonian American Art Museum, Denver Art Museum, Herbert Johnson Museum of Art, DePaul Art

Museum, University Galleries at Illinois State University, and Wing Luke Museum of Asian Pacific American Experience. She also publishes writings and texts including “How Internalized White Supremacy Manifest for My BIPOC Students in Art School,” for the summer issue of Art Journal (2021) for which she was awarded the 2021 Lois Moran Award for Craft Writing. Her monograph, *We Are Never Never Other*, was published in 2021 by University Galleries at Illinois State University. She was the 2020-2021 Artist-in-Residence at Loyola University and is currently an associate professor at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. AramHanSifuentes.com

Amanda Williams

Hermitage Fellow Amanda Williams is a visual artist who trained as an architect. Williams’ creative practice employs color as a way to draw attention to the complexities of race, place, and value in cities. The landscapes in which she operates are the visual residue of the invisible policies and forces that have misshapen most inner cities. Williams’ installations, paintings and works on paper seek to inspire new ways of looking at the familiar and in the process, raise questions about the state of urban space and citizenship in America. Williams has exhibited widely, including the 2018 Venice Architecture Biennale, a solo exhibition at the MCA Chicago, and a public project with the Pulitzer Arts Foundation in St. Louis. She is a 2018 USA Ford Fellow, a Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors grantee, an Efroymsen Family Arts Fellow, a Leadership Greater Chicago Fellow and a member of the multidisciplinary Museum Design team for the Obama Presidential Center. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Art Institute of Chicago. Williams lives and works in Chicago. AWStudioArt.com

HermitageArtistRetreat.org