



THE KIMMEL CENTER
ACADEMY OF MUSIC
MERRIAM THEATER



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#PIFA returns with #TaylorMac's "A 24-Decade History of Popular Music." More info @kimmelcenter.org

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**MACARTHUR 'GENIUS' GRANT WINNER AND PULITZER PRIZE FINALIST
TAYLOR MAC'S *A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC*
MAKES PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE AS PART OF THE
KIMMEL CENTER'S PIFA 2018**

"ONE OF THE GREAT EXPERIENCES OF MY LIFE." – *THE NEW YORK TIMES*

"A MUST-SEE FOR ANYONE WHO WANTS TO SEE A KINDER, GENTLER SOCIETY." – *THE HUFFINGTON POST*

"THE COMMANDING MAC IS A GENUINE LEADER OF OUR TIMES." – *TIME OUT*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Philadelphia, PA, November 09, 2017) — **The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts**, in association with **Pomegranate Arts**, will present **Taylor Mac's** epic ***A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC*** as part of the 2018 Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts (PIFA). This critically-acclaimed, bedazzled mashup of music, history, and theater decodes the social history of the United States—all 240 years—through 246 songs that were popular throughout the country, and in its disparate communities, from 1776 to the present day. The Kimmel Center presents the 24-hour work's Philadelphia premiere, supported by a grant from The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, as two distinct 12-hour performance art concerts, on June 2 & 9, 2018 (1776–1896, and 1896 – present day, respectively)—Mac's longest continuous performances since the work's 2016 world premiere at St. Ann's Warehouse in Brooklyn. Writing for *The New York Times*, Wesley Morris called that performance "one of the great experiences of my life."

Taylor Mac is a New York-based theater artist, playwright, actor, singer-songwriter, cabaret performer, performance artist, director, and producer whose many talents combine in *A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC*, a singular illustration of our nation's diverse and sometimes dysfunctional story. In

performing the spectacular work, Mac is joined by an orchestra—led by Music Director **Matt Ray**, who created new arrangements of all 246 songs—plus an ensemble of “Dandy Minions” and a variety of local special guests, including members of the audience cast as colonial needle workers, World War I soldiers, and Yum Yum from *The Mikado*. Costume designer **Machine Dazzle**, a longtime Mac collaborator, has handmade an outrageously imaginative, world-onto-itself costume specific to each decade. The audience is essential to Mac’s spectacular pop odyssey, participating in immersive moments that are by turns deeply touching and hilarious.

A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC is created, written, performed and co-directed by **Taylor Mac**, with co-direction by **Niegel Smith**. In addition to music direction and arrangements by **Matt Ray** and costume design by **Machine Dazzle**, the work features dramaturgy by **Jocelyn Clarke**, scenic design by **Mimi Lien**, and lighting design by **John Torres**. *A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC* is produced by **Pomegranate Arts** (Executive Producer, **Linda Brumbach**; Associate Producer, **Alisa Regas**) and Mac’s company **Nature’s Darlings**.

Already a 2017 Pulitzer Prize Finalist for Drama and winner of the 2017 Kennedy Prize in Drama, *A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC* just garnered two 2017 New York Dance and Performance (aka Bessie) Awards—for Outstanding Production and Outstanding Visual Design. Mac has now also been named a 2017 MacArthur ‘Genius’ grant winner.

“*A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC* had the distinct honor of being included on an unprecedented three *New York Times* “Best of...” lists in 2016: Performance, Theater and Classical Music,” said **Anne Ewers, President and CEO of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts**. “We are humbled and honored that he will be gracing this year’s Philadelphia International Festival of the Performing Arts with this important work.”

“Performing the entire work in Philadelphia, the meeting place of the Founding Fathers of the United States, will be greatly different from when we perform it in London or Utah...Local histories are incorporated, songs that come from the regions are inserted, local artists become part of our ensemble,” said **Taylor Mac**. “*A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC* is a reenactment of how the individual(s) may lose the long game but communities and movements, if continually brought together, have the potential to thrive while bending towards justice.”

The full lineup announcement for the other PIFA programming is scheduled for January.

TAYLOR MAC: A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC

Merriam Theater

Dates and times:

June 2, 2018, 12:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m., PART 1: 1776-1896

June 9, 2018, 12:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m., PART 2: 1896 – the present day

Tickets

Tickets are available to each of the 12-hour concerts, and for the full 24-hour experience, and can be purchased at 215-893-1999, kimmelcenter.org, and in person at the Kimmel Center Box Office. Group sales are available for groups of 10 or more and can be purchased by calling (215) 790-5883. More information at kimmelcenter.org.

Below is the ticket on sale timeline:

- Group sales tickets are available for groups of 10 or more and can be purchased beginning November 10, 2017
- Member presale begins November 9, 2017. Kimmel Center members receive early access to shows as well as details about newly announced presentations across the Kimmel Center Campus. To become a member, visit kimmelcenter.org/Membership. Membership starts at just \$75.
- General public on sale begins November 20, 2017

The Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts (PIFA) will take place May 31–June 10, 2018.

Taylor Mac

Taylor Mac (who uses “judy”, lowercase *sic*, not as a name but as a gender pronoun) is a playwright, actor, singer-songwriter, performance artist, director and producer. “A critical darling of the New York scene” (*New York Magazine*), judy’s work has been performed at New York City’s Lincoln Center, The Public Theatre and Playwrights Horizons, London’s Hackney Empire, Los Angeles’s Royce Hall, Minneapolis’s Guthrie Theater, Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theatre, the Sydney Opera House, Boston’s American Repertory Theatre, Stockholm’s Sodra Theatern, the Spoleto Festival, San Francisco’s Curran theater and MOMA, and literally hundreds of other theaters, museums, music halls, opera houses, cabarets, and festivals around the globe. Judy is the author of seventeen full-length plays and performance pieces including *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* (2017 Pulitzer Prize Finalist for Drama, Kennedy Prize in Drama), *Hir* (placed on the top ten theater of 2015 lists of *The New York Times*, *New York Magazine*, and *Time Out NY*; published by North Western University Press and in *American Theater Magazine*), *The Lily’s Revenge* (Obie Award), *The Walk Across America for Mother Earth* (named One of the Best Plays of 2011 by *The New York Times*), *The Young Ladies Of* (Chicago’s Jeff Award nomination for best solo), *Red Tide Blooming* (Ethyl Eichelberger Award), and *The Be(a)st of Taylor Mac* (Edinburgh Festival’s Herald Angel Award). Recent acting roles include Shen Teh/Shui Ta in The Foundry Theater’s production of *Good Person of Szechwan* at La Mama and the Public Theater (for which judy received Lucille Lortel and Drama League Award nominations), Puck/Egeus in the Classic Stage Company’s *A Midsummer’s Night Dream*, the title role in various productions of judy’s play, *The Lily’s Revenge*, and opposite Mandy Patinkin in the two-man vaudeville, *The Last Two People On Earth*, directed by Susan Stroman. Mac is currently creating a Dionysia Festival of four original plays (to be premiered separately and eventually performed in repertory), which deal in some way with our cultural polarization and that include: an all-ages play called, *The Fre* (commissioned by the Children’s Theater Company in Minneapolis, premiere date TBD); a kitchen-sink tragedy named, *Hir* (which received its world premiere at the Magic Theater in Feb 2014); a dance-theater play, *The Bourgeois Oligarch*, and a music theatre debate regarding small and large government, set inside an Ezra Pound poem, in the subconscious of Clarence Thomas, during a Supreme Court Hearing. Mac is the recipient of multiple awards including the Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama Inspired by American History, Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, a Guggenheim Award, the Herb Alpert Award in Theater, the Peter Zeisler Memorial Award, the Helen Merrill Playwriting Award and an Obie. An alumnus of New Dramatists judy is currently a New York Theater Workshop Usual Suspect and the Resident playwright at the Here Arts Center.

Commissioning Credits

A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC is commissioned in part by ASU Gammage at Arizona State University; Belfast International Arts Festival and 14 - 18 NOW WW1 Centenary Art; Carole Shorenstein Hays, The Curran SF; Stanford Live at Stanford University; Carolina Performing Arts, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Center for the Art of Performance at UCLA; Hancher Auditorium at the University of Iowa; Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts; Melbourne Festival, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; International Festival of Arts & Ideas (New Haven); New York Live Arts; OZ Arts Nashville; University Musical Society of the University of Michigan.

This work was developed with the support of the Park Avenue Armory residency program, MASS MoCa (Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art), New York Stage and Film & Vassar's Powerhouse Theater, SPACE at Ryder Farm, and the 2015 Sundance Institute Theatre Lab at the Sundance Resort with continuing post-lab dramaturgical support through its initiative with the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

The World Premiere of the complete *A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC* was presented in its entirety at St. Ann's Warehouse (Brooklyn, NY), in a co-presentation with Pomegranate Arts, in September/October 2016.

A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC was made possible with funding by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Theater Project, with lead funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage

The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage is a multidisciplinary grant maker and hub for knowledge-sharing, funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts, and dedicated to fostering a vibrant cultural community in Greater Philadelphia. The Center fulfills this mission by investing in ambitious, imaginative projects that showcase the region's cultural vitality and enhance public life, and by engaging in an exchange of ideas concerning artistic and interpretive practice with a broad network of cultural practitioners and leaders.

Pomegranate Arts

For the past twenty years, Pomegranate Arts has worked in close collaboration with a small group of contemporary artists and arts institutions to bring bold and ambitious artistic ideas to fruition. Founder and Director Linda Brumbach, along with managing director Alisa E. Regas produced the Olivier Award-winning revival of *Einstein on the Beach*, the multi-award winning production of *Taylor Mac's 24-Decade History of Popular Music*, the Drama Desk Award winning production of *Charlie Victor Romeo and Available Light* by John Adams, *Lucinda Childs* and *Frank Gehry* among others. Since its inception, Pomegranate Arts has produced over 30 major new performing arts productions and tours for Philip Glass, Laurie Anderson, Lucinda Childs, Dan Zanes, London's Improbable, Sankai Juku, Batsheva, and Bassem Youssef and collaborated on new productions with the Kronos Quartet, Leonard Cohen, Robert Wilson, and Frank Gehry. Together with Taylor Mac/Nature's Darlings, Pomegranate Arts produced and developed *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music*.

The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

Located in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia, the Kimmel Center's mission is to operate a world-class performing arts center that engages and serves a broad audience through diverse programming, arts education, and community outreach. The Kimmel Center Campus is comprised of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts (Verizon Hall, Perelman Theater, SEI Innovation Studio, and the Merck Arts

Education Center), the Academy of Music (owned by the Philadelphia Orchestra Association), and the Merriam Theater. The Kimmel Center is also home to eight Resident Companies: The Philadelphia Orchestra, Opera Philadelphia, The Pennsylvania Ballet, The Philly POPS, PHILADANCO, The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and Curtis Institute of Music. With nearly 9,000 seats per night, The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts is the region's most impactful performing arts center, and the second largest in the country. TD Bank, America's Most Convenient Bank, is the season sponsor of the Kimmel Center's 2017-2018 Season. American Airlines is the official airline of Broadway Philadelphia. For additional information, visit kimmelcenter.org.

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