

HERE Presents

**HERE** **R**ESIDENT  
**HERE** **A**RTIST  
**HERE** **W**ORKS



**STAGING DECADENCE**

**NORMANDY SHERWOOD**  
**+ NIA O. WITHERSPOON**

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# HERE RESIDENT HERE ARTIST HERE WORKS

Though the pandemic is still very much a reality, we are thrilled to continue supporting artists, and to offer a window into the creative process of our nationally recognized **HERE Artist Residency Program (HARP)**. The 2021 program features workshop presentations at various stages of development that blur the boundaries between theatre, music, dance, new media, and visual art. Whether you can join us physically – masked, distanced, and partially outdoors – or virtually from the comfort of your own home, we look forward to welcoming you to this year's **HERE RAW / Resident Artist Works!**

[HERE.ORG/HERE-RAW/](https://www.here.org/here-raw/)

HERE presents

# STAGING DECADENCE

Co-produced by Adam Alston

Emcee **Murray Hill**

Panelists **Richard Kaye** and **Adam Alston**

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## **Priestess of Twerk: Time Warp 332BC (A Concert Experiment)**

Created by **Nia O. Witherspoon**

Performed by **Synead Cidney Nichols** and **J. Scott**

Musicians **Serena Ebony Miller** (cello), **Malik Washington** (drums),  
and **Spaceman** (guitar)

Projection Design by **Hannah Whisenant**

Wardrobe by **Suzette Bird**

Makeup by **Halima Belnavis**

Audio Engineer **DJ Potts**

Line Producer **Tatiana Baccari** and **Wednesday Derrico** of

**Experimental Bitch Presents**

Production Stage Manager **Caren Morris**

Assistant Stage Manager **Lisette Medina**

*"If God Was a Woman"* produced by **Nathan Nixon** aka *"Gifted on the Track"*

Special thanks to Wazi, Eli, Epic, Tuce Yasak, Roya Abab, Shaa Kettrels,  
Shontae Lewis, and James De Rosa-Farag.

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## **Psychic Self Defense**

Created, Written, Directed, and Design Directed by **Normandy Sherwood**

Composition and Sound Design by **Craig Flanagin**

Scenic / Rigging Design by **Daniel Allen Nelson**

Lighting Design by **Christina Tang**

Video Design by **Nico Schiavone**

Production Manager **Daniel Allen Nelson**

Stage Manager **Hannah Stoffer**

Performed by **Ean Sheehy**

Performed / Puppeteered by **Kate Brehm**, **Juanita Cárdenas**  
and **Daniel Allen Nelson**

## Psychic Self Defense (cont'd)

Conceptual Collaborators

**Nikki Calonge**

**Craig Flanagin**

**Daniel Allen Nelson**

**Ean Sheehy**

**Christina Tang**

Costume Associate **Charlie Collins**

Special Thanks to collaborators: Nikki Calonge, Stefania Bulbarella, Lauren Cordes. Thank you to electricians and riggers - Jon Cottle, Eamon Goodman, Jordan Wiggins, Eden Florence Guill, Alex Donnelly, Jessica and Jennifer Davison. Thank you for support and letting us borrow things and stay places -- Basil Twist, Barbara Busackino, Julie Atlas Muz, Millay Arts — thank you Monika Burczyk and Calliope Nicolas. Thank you so much to HERE-- Kristin Marting, Cole Bonenberger, Cierra Cass, Meredith Lynsey Schade, Brenna Thomas, Wei-ming Liu Egelman, Alex Lee, David, Sam, HARP Artists. Thank you Elyse! Thank you for letting us borrow carriers: Abrons Arts Center (Jon Harper and Lauren Parrish) and The Wooster Group. Thank you Zafir Buraei. Thank you David Glista. Thank you Lisa Clair and Edgar Oliver.

Thank you to Materials for the Arts, which provided about 75% of the fabric, equipment and objects we used to make this show.

*Psychic Self Defense* is supported, in part, by the Mental Insight Foundation, The ART-NY/ Dime Bank Fund, and the NYSCA Individual Artists program.

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HERE pays respect to the Munsee Lenape ancestors past, present, and future. We acknowledge that *Staging Decadence* and *HERE RAW* are situated on the Lenape island of Manhattan (Mannahatta) and more broadly in Lenapehoking, the Lenape homeland.

Inspired by the words of Adrienne Wong: HERE acknowledges the legacy of colonization embedded within the technology, structures, and ways of thinking we use every day. This production is using equipment and high-speed internet, not available in many Indigenous communities. Even the technologies that are central to much of the art we make leave significant carbon footprints, contributing to changing climates that disproportionately affect Indigenous people worldwide. We invite you to join us in acknowledging all this, as well as our shared responsibility to make good of this time and for each of us to consider our roles in reconciliation, decolonization, and ally-ship.

# ARTIST BIOS

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**NIA OSTROW WITHERSPOON** (*Priestess of Twerk*) is a Black Queer theatre maker, vocalist and composer, and cultural worker investigating the metaphysics of Black liberation, desire, and diaspora. Described as “especially fascinating” by Backstage Magazine, and featured by NPR for her curation of BlackARTSMatter, Witherspoon is a Creative Capital Awardee, a Jerome New Artist Fellow, an artist in residence at HERE Arts Center and BAX/Brooklyn Arts Exchange, and was a 2017-18 2050 Playwriting/Directing Fellow at New York Theatre Workshop. Her works, *MESSIAH, YOU MINE, THE DARK GIRL CHRONICLES*, and *PRIESTESS OF TWERK* have been or will be featured by The Shed, JACK, La Mama ETC, Playwright’s Realm, BRIC, HERE, National Black Theatre, BAAD, Movement Research, BAX, Dixon Place, Painted Bride, 651 Arts, and elsewhere. Witherspoon has been recognized by the Mellon Foundation, NYFA, the Wurlitzer Foundation, Lambda Literary, and Theatre Bay Area, and most recently NEFA/NTP. She holds a BA from Smith College and a PhD from Stanford University in Theatre and Performance Studies, and her writing is published in the Journal of Popular Culture; Imagined Theatres; Women, Collective Creation, and Devised Performance; and IMANIMAN: Poets Writing in the Anzaldúan Borderlands. Witherspoon has held tenure-track professorships at Florida State University and Arizona State University, taught at Fordham and University of Massachusetts (Amherst), and is currently working on a manuscript tentatively titled *NATION IN THE DARK: A Black femme spell for justice*. [niawitherspoon.com](http://niawitherspoon.com)

**NORMANDY SHERWOOD** (*Psychic Self Defense*) makes theater. She’s a playwright, costumer, director and performer. Her shows include *Madame Lynch, Tiny Hornets, Permanent Caterpillar*, and *The Golden Veil* among others, and they have been presented in NYC at The New Ohio Theatre, The Public Theater, The Kitchen, Dixon Place, The Brick and more. She and Craig Flanagin make no-wave music driven spectacles with their company, The Drunkard’s Wife. She was a co-Artistic Director of the OBIE-award-winning National Theater of the United States of America (2000-2017, R.I.P.). She was a 2018 Fellow in the Target Margin Theater Institute and has been a resident at the MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, the Millay Colony and more. As a costumer she has designed for Rachel Chavkin, Young Jean Lee, Faye Driscoll (BESSIE Award, 2009) and many more, and her designs have been nominated for Henry Hewes Awards twice. Also, she plays in the band God Is My Co-Pilot and teaches Expository Writing at NYU. [thedrunkardswife.com](http://thedrunkardswife.com)



# HERE ARTIST RESIDENCY PROGRAM

Through the HERE Artist Residency Program (HARP), HERE commissions and develops new hybrid works over a 2-to-3 year period. As part of the HERE community of artists and audiences, our resident artists show works-in-progress, develop workshop productions, and mount full-scale productions. For 2021–22, HERE supports the following artists and projects:

**Gelsey Bell**  
*moxief*

**Shayok Misha Chowdhury**  
*Rheology*

**Ximena Garnica & Shige Moriya | LEIMAY**  
*A Meal*

**Grace Galu & Baba Israel | Soul Inscribed**  
*Cannabis! A Theatrical Concert*

**Maiko Kikuchi & Spencer Townley-Lott**  
*9000 Paper Balloons*

**Minor Theater**  
*Marie It's Time*

**Normandy Sherwood**  
*Psychic Self Defense*

**Sachiyo Takahashi & gamin**  
*The Emotions*

**Imani Uzuri**  
*Songs of Sanctuary of the Black Madonna*

**Nia Ostrow Witherspoon**  
*Priestess of Twerk*

## HERE & BACK

HERE & Back encompasses projects produced by HERE and helmed by established artists with deep connections to HERE. For audiences, HERE & Back provides the chance to experience daring performances by high-profile multidisciplinary artists in our intimate spaces; for the artists, HERE remains a special home for their work and a space open to risk-taking. For 2021–22, the following artists are developing HERE & Back projects:

**Taylor Mac, Resident Playwright**  
*The Hang*

**Kristin Marting & Suzi Takahashi**  
*The Story Box*

# HERE STAFF

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Kristin Marting

PRODUCING DIRECTOR

Meredith Lynsey Schade

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Brenna C. Thomas

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Emily Anderson, FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT MANAGER

Ayumu "Poe" Saegusa, RESIDENT LIGHTING DESIGNER

## AUDIENCE SERVICES

Richard Stauffacher, AUDIENCE SERVICES MANAGER

## PROTOTYPE

Melanie Milton, FESTIVAL PRODUCER

Victoria Preis, MARKETING MANAGER



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Victoria Preis, MARKETING MANAGER

# HERE SUPPORT

HERE is extremely grateful for the support and encouragement of the following group of foundations, corporations, government agencies, elected officials, and dedicated individuals. We would not be HERE without you.

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## GOVERNMENT SUPPORT:

HERE'S programming is made possible with Public Funds from: National Endowment for the Arts; New York State Council on the Arts; New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; the Offices of the Mayor of New York, Speaker Corey Johnson, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, New York State Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick, and State Senator Brad M. Hoylman. We are extremely grateful for the support and advocacy of all of our dedicated elected officials: Senator Charles E. Schumer, Senator Kirsten R. Gillibrand, Representative Jerrold L. Nadler, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo, Mayor Bill de Blasio, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer and the Cultural Affairs Committee of the City Council, State Assembly Member Deborah J. Glick, and State Senator Brad M. Hoylman.

## PRIVATE AND CORPORATE SUPPORT PROVIDED BY:

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HERE, in partnership with Resident Playwright Taylor Mac, is a participant in the Mellon Foundation's National Playwright Residency Program administered in partnership with HowlRound.

**PROTOTYPE: Opera | Theatre | Now** receives major funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and other leadership support from the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation. Additional support is provided by The Amphion Foundation, BMI Foundation, Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University, Fresh Sound Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, Francis Goellet Charitable Lead Trusts, Antonia & Vladimir Kulaev Cultural Heritage Fund, Samuel I. Newhouse Foundation, OPERA America, The Reed Foundation, and The Ted Snowdon Foundation. Additional support is provided by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and the New York State Council on the Arts.

**HERE is extremely grateful to the many generous individuals who support our programming!** (includes donors as of 8/6/21)

**A NOTE ABOUT THE NEW STRUCTURE OF OUR DONOR LIST:**

Community-Centric Fundraising is a fundraising practice that is grounded in equity; it calls on all non-profits to bring principles of racial and economic justice into our development strategies. As one small step towards aligning HERE with this model, we have removed giving levels from our donor list. We hope to celebrate and raise up all of our supporters no matter the size of their contribution and recognize the generosity of our community as a whole. We would like to thank the team of Community-Centric Fundraising for their leadership and their call to action; more information on CCF can be found on their [website](#).

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