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CALARTS'
DOWNTOWN
CENTER
FOR
CONTEMPORARY
ARTS

PRESENT THE WEST COAST PREMIERE OF

TRADE / Mary Motorhead

Composed by Emma O'Halloran
Electronic sound design by Alex Dowling
Libretto by Mark O'Halloran
Directed by Tom Creed
Music direction by Elaine Kelly
Produced by Beth Morrison Projects

FEATURING

Kyle Bielfield, Marc Kudisch and Naomi Louisa O'Connell

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Beth Morrison

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

Carlos Diaz Stoop

SCENIC DESIGNER

Jim Findlay

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Madeline Whitesell

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Christopher Kuhl

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER

Vida Huang

COSTUME DESIGNER

Montana Levi Blanco

ASSOCIATE COSTUME DESIGNER

Jessica Crawford

SOUND DESIGNER

Charles Hagaman

DIALECT COACH

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LA Opera *Off Grand* productions are supported by a consortium of generous donors to LA Opera's Contemporary Opera Initiative, chaired by Barry and Nancy Sanders. *TRADE* is commissioned by Barry Sanders in honor of Nancy Sanders.

LA Opera Orchestra generously underwritten by
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LA Opera's 2022/23 season is generously underwritten by
GROw @ Annenberg

The running time is approximately two hours and five minutes, including one 20-minute intermission.

Audience members are invited to remain inside the theater for a post-performance talk featuring producer Beth Morrison and members of the creative team. These talks will begin five minutes after the end of the performance.

Production by Beth Morrison Projects and Irish National Opera, in association with Trinity Church Wall Street.

Commissioned by Beth Morrison Projects, Irish National Opera, Trinity Church Wall Street, and Nancy & Barry Sanders.

Produced by Beth Morrison Projects and Irish National Opera in association with Trinity Church Wall Street. Additional support provided by Virginia B. Toulmin Charitable Foundation, Antonia and Vladimer Kulaev Cultural Heritage Fund, Inc., Elizabeth Greenberg, Culture Ireland, and Charlotte Isaacs.

Please refrain from talking during the performance, and turn off all cell phones, electronic devices and watch alarms. If you are using an assistive hearing device, or are attending with someone who is, please make sure that it is set to an appropriate level to avoid distracting audio feedback. The use of cameras and recording equipment is strictly prohibited.

UNDERWRITER RECOGNITION

Contemporary Opera Initiative

LA Opera's Contemporary Opera Initiative, chaired by Barry and Nancy Sanders, supports the company's efforts to advance the art form through the cultivation of new voices and new visions. The initiative's generous supporters have provided vital funding for a particularly adventurous range of contemporary works on the main stage and through LA Opera *Off Grand*, including Philip Glass's *Satyagraha* and the world premiere of Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice* at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, David T. Little's *Soldier Songs* at the Ford Theatres, David Lang's *the loser* at the Theatre at Ace Hotel, and the world premieres of *prism* by Ellen Reid and *In Our Daughter's Eyes* by Du Yun at REDCAT. Thanks to the initiative, LA Opera also commissioned and produced 11 Digital Shorts, an initiative launched during the pandemic, while our stages were dark.

Coming up on our main stage, Gabriela Lena Frank's *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*, one of today's most acclaimed operas, opens on November 18, 2023, and Joel Thompson's monodrama *Fire and Blue Sky*, created especially for tenor Russell Thomas, will have its world premiere on June 6, 2024. Continuing our special collaboration with Beth Morrison Projects, *The Book of Mountains and Seas* by composer Huang Ruo and puppeteer Basil Twist will open at the Broad Stage on April 10, 2024.

We invite you to join us in exploring, behind the scenes, how the vision of these artists comes to life.

LA Opera supporters of the Contemporary Opera Initiative

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For information about the Contemporary Opera Initiative, please contact Janneke Straub at 213.972.7665 or jstraub@LAOpera.org.

A NOTE FROM COMPOSER EMMA O'HALLORAN

I have always been fascinated by people. Observing them, figuring out what makes them tick. Before I stepped into the world of music composition, I studied psychology and anthropology, and I loved spending my time thinking about who people are and why they do things. In a way, I was drawn to music as a means of exploring these complicated emotions that I sometimes had trouble capturing in words.

In 2018, as part of the Beth Morrison Projects Next Generation competition, I adapted my uncle's play *Mary Motorhead* into a monodrama, and through that process I began to see that Mark was doing with words what I was doing with music. Mark's work explores people's inner worlds, the often-unseen events in people's lives that shape them and make them who they are. There is a beautiful economy in his use of language—if a line of text can be conveyed through a look or a gesture, it's not needed. His words leave space for the music, for my music, to capture all the complex and messy feelings of what it is to be alive.

The story of *Mary Motorhead* is about a woman in Mountjoy prison serving an 18-year sentence for a violent crime. History is invention, she tells us, a made-up story based on sometimes scant knowledge of the available facts. Each of us has a known history and a secret one. Our secret history, she explains, is made up "of all the small things that happened in your life." This is the history that really happened—the one going on inside—something that regular history, or reportage, or maybe representation, can never really know. So, Mary invites us to hear her secret history—the disappointments and betrayals that shaped her life in the Irish midlands—in the hope that it may shine some light upon the darkness of her actions.

When Mark agreed to adapt his play *TRADE* into an opera, I knew he would make something special. In *TRADE*, we witness an encounter between two men in a guestroom in North Dublin. The men are separated by age but not by much else. They are both fathers, they are both in heterosexual relationships, they are both from working class backgrounds, and they both share a secret—the Older Man visits the Younger Man from time to time to pay him for sex. This particular encounter, however, is different and both men are about to have a conversation unlike anything they've ever had before.

I wrote the majority of this opera during the pandemic lockdowns in Ireland and this text grew roots and lived inside me. I began to see these two men as mirrors for each other, reflecting back aspects of themselves that they may or may not want to see. Slowly, the music began to do that too. Ideas repeat themselves but are refracted back and transformed in various ways over the course of the encounter. I think, in writing this opera, I too have been transformed. I spent every day for over a year thinking that, deep down, all we want in this life is to be seen and loved and accepted for who we are. If even one person resonates with that after seeing this show, I've done my job.

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Emma O'Halloran**COMPOSER**

Freely intertwining acoustic and electronic music, Irish composer Emma O'Halloran has written for folk musicians, chamber ensembles, turntables, laptop orchestra, symphony orchestra, film, and theatre. For her efforts, she has been praised by *I Care If You Listen* editor-in-chief Amanda Cook for writing "some of the most unencumbered, authentic, and joyful music that I have heard in recent years," and has won numerous competitions, including National Sawdust's inaugural Hildegard competition and the Next Generation Award from Beth Morrison Projects. O'Halloran's music aims to capture the human experience, exploring complex emotions felt in specific moments in time. This approach has found a wide audience: her work has been featured at the international Classical NEXT conference in Rotterdam, PROTOTYPE in New York, Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival, and MATA Festival. Additionally, her music has been performed by Crash Ensemble, Contemporaneous, Khemia Ensemble, -Nois Saxophone Quartet, the Refugee Orchestra Project, PRISM Saxophone Quartet, and the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, among others. She holds a Ph.D. in composition from Princeton. (Emma-OHalloran.com)

Alex Dowling**ELECTRONIC SOUND DESIGN**

Alex Dowling is an Irish composer and producer. His current work involves repurposing autotune and other vocal effects to create strange and otherworldly extensions of the voice. Recent work includes a commission from Irish National Opera to create a work for boy soprano as part of its *20 Shots of Opera* project and a theatrical collaboration for *There* at the Philadelphia Fringe Festival. His album of electronic vocal works, *Reality Rounds*, was released on Carrier Records and is described as "an entrancing trance of live-processed vocals and synthesizers" (*The Road to Sound*). His work has been performed by many ensembles and he has also written music for theater and laptop orchestra. He studied composition as a PhD fellow at Princeton University and was recently named a MacDowell Fellow and an artist-in-residence at the Ucross Foundation in Wyoming. (Alex-Dowling.com)

Mark O'Halloran**LIBRETTIST**

Mark O'Halloran is from Ennis, Ireland. As an actor he has worked extensively at the Gate Theatre, Dublin and with the Lyric Theatre, Belfast and Druid Theatre Company, Galway, amongst others. His play *The Head of Red O'Brien* was produced in Stockholm by Teatro Albino in 2003. His other theater work includes *Trade* (2011 Dublin Theatre Festival) and

Beckett's Rooms (Dead Centre as part of Dublin Theatre Festival, 2019). Mr. O'Halloran is also an accomplished screenwriter and has written award-winning screenplays for the films *Adam & Paul*, *Garage* and the RTÉ mini-series *Prosperity*.

Tom Creed**DIRECTOR**

Tom Creed is one of Ireland's leading opera and theater directors. His productions have been seen internationally at the Opéra National de Paris, Edinburgh, Melbourne and Perth International Festivals, Barbican Centre in London, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Public Theater, Irish Arts Center and PS122 in New York. He directed the world premiere of the play *Trade* at the 2011 Dublin Theatre Festival, as well as his most recent play *Conversations After Sex*, presented at the Irish Arts Center in New York this year. Tom was previously festival director of Cork Midsummer Festival, theater and dance curator of Kilkenny Arts Festival and associate director of Rough Magic Theatre Company. He is curator for Ireland's representation at the 2023 Prague Quadrennial, a member of the Expert Advisory Committee of Culture Ireland, and a board member of Theatre Forum (Ireland) and GAZE, Ireland's LGBTQ+ Film Festival. (TomCreed.org)

Elaine Kelly**MUSIC DIRECTOR**

Irish conductor Elaine Kelly is the resident conductor and chorus director of Irish National Opera. An advocate for contemporary opera, she conducted Donnacha Dennehy's *The First Child* at the 2022 Galway International Arts Festival, David Cooney's youth opera *Horse Ape Bird* for Irish National Opera and Evangelia Rigaki's *Old Ghosts* for Irish National Opera and ANU. She conducted nine new works by Irish composers in Irish National Opera's *20 Shots of Opera* in 2020. For Irish National Opera, she conducted a nationwide tour of Ireland with Peter Maxwell Davies' *The Lighthouse*. Upcoming performances include *Così fan tutte* with Irish National Opera. She has conducted the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, RTÉ Concert Orchestra and Cork Concert Orchestra and has held the position of Music Director with the Dublin Symphony Orchestra (2017-19) and the University of Limerick Orchestra (2019-21).

Kyle Bielfield**YOUNGER MAN, TRADE**

A Miami native, tenor Kyle Bielfield is an international recording artist and performer. He has released music with major labels including Sony Music, Universal (Decca) and Delos Music distributed by Naxos Classics. With a master's degree in opera from The Juilliard School and a bachelor of music from New York University, he has won

several awards and had the honor of having his first professional recital engagement at Alice Tully Hall. He originated the role of the Boy Angel in Du Yun's *Angel's Bone*, which won a Pulitzer Prize in 2017. He has performed at Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Avery Fisher Hall and Merkin Hall, and he has worked with New York City Opera, the Metropolitan Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, New York Festival of Song, American Lyric Theater, BOP in Montreal, Philadelphia Opera and Florida Grand Opera. He created roles in Peter Ash's *The Golden Ticket* and Jeremy Howard Beck's *The Long Walk* with American Lyric Theatre and Scott Wheeler's *The Sorrows of Frederick*, commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera. (Bielfield.com)

Marc Kudisch**OLDER MAN, TRADE**

Marc Kudisch's career has spanned Broadway, modern opera, television and film for the past 35 years, most recently wrapping up his costarring turn in *Girl from the North Country*, his 15th Broadway show. He has been nominated for the Tony Award three times, as Trevor Graydon in *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, Baron Bomburst in *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* and Franklin Hart in *9 to 5*, and is a Drama Desk Award winner for his work Off Broadway in A.R. Gurney's *The Wayside Motor Inn*. He can also be seen on such television and film projects as Brian Koppelman and David Levine's *Billions*, David Fincher's *Mindhunter*, Steven Soderbergh's *Unsane*, Mindy Kaling's *Late Night* and Ben Englund's *The Tick*. Previous LA Opera appearances include *A Little Night Music*, *anatomy theater* and *Wonderful Town*, and he has also appeared with New York City Opera and Dutch National Opera. When not at work, you'll find him hanging out with his wife Shannon and their Australian Shepherds Graydon and Flint. (MarcKudisch.net)

Naomi Louisa O'Connell**MARY MOTORHEAD**

A graduate of The Juilliard School, she made her professional debut in 2012 starring on the West End in Terrence McNally's *Master Class*. She recently created the role of Mrs. Van Buren in Ricky Ian Gordon's *Intimate Apparel* at Lincoln Center Theater, seen on PBS *Great Performances*. Notable roles include Monteverdi's *Poppea* (Oper Frankfurt), Mozart's *Cherubino* (Welsh National Opera, Atlanta Opera), Offenbach's *La Périochole* (Garsington Opera), and *Mélanide* in *Pelléas et Mélisande* (the play and the opera) with the Cincinnati Symphony. As a writer, she was a 2022 winner of Music Network's RESONATE Award to develop the libretto for a new opera with Emma O'Halloran. Lauded by *The New York Times* as "a natural in the recital format" for her Carnegie Hall

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debut recital at Weill Recital Hall, her recitals have been featured on WQXR and the Met Live Arts Series. Performances this season include Judith in *Bluebeard's Castle* with Boston Lyric Opera and engagements with Irish National Opera and Dublin Theatre Festival. (NaomiLouisaOConnell.com)

Jim Findlay **SCENIC DESIGNER**

Jim Findlay's recent work includes *Electric Lucifer*, *Vine of the Dead*, *Dream of the Red Chamber*, *Botanica*, the direction and design of *Soundlines* by George Lewis, *Oper&* by John Supko and Bill Seaman and David Lang's *the whisper opera*. His video installation *Meditation*, in collaboration with Ralph Lemon, is in the permanent collection of the Walker Art Center. He was a founding member of the Collapsible Giraffe and in partnership with Radiohole founded the Collapsible Hole, an artist-led performance venue in Manhattan. His work has been seen at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, BAM, Arena Stage and A.R.T. In 2016 he received a Creative Capital Award for *Electric Lucifer* and in 2015 he received the Foundation for Contemporary Art Artist Grant. Other recognition includes two Obie Awards, two Bessie Awards, two Princess Grace Awards, a Lortel and a Hewes Award. (JimFindlayNYC.com)

Christopher Kuhl **LIGHTING DESIGNER**

Christopher Kuhl has developed work at such venues as Santiago a Mil Chile, Queer Zagreb, Sydney Festival, Hebbel am Ufer, Centre Pompidou, Hong Kong Arts Festival, Edinburgh International Festival, Fusebox Festival, Walker Arts Center, Sundance Film Festival and Santa Fe Opera, among others. His work includes *Dog Days*, *anatomy theater*, *The Source* and *Soldier Songs* (LA Opera), *Human Measure* (HOME Manchester, Canadian Stage), *Confederates* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *The Carolyn Bryant Project* (REDCAT), *Voices from the Killing Jar* (Long Beach Opera, LA Phil), *The Hunger* (Abbey Theatre, BAM), *The Object Lesson* (New York Theatre Workshop) and *Home* (BAM). His work has been recognized with two Bessie Awards, two Ovation Awards, and the CTG's Sherwood Award. He is an assistant professor at UC San Diego.

Montana Levi Blanco **COSTUME DESIGNER**

Montana Levi Blanco is a costume designer from Albuquerque, New Mexico. His grandmother, a lamp shade artisan, inspired an early love of fabric, color and beauty. He is a graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music (BM in oboe performance), Oberlin College (BA in history), Brown University (MA in public humanities), and the Yale School of Drama (MFA in design). Prior to attending Yale, he was the Robert L. Tobin

Curatorial Intern at the McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, Texas.

Charles Hagaman **SOUND DESIGNER**

He joined the production team of Brooklyn's National Sawdust in 2015, becoming production coordinator in 2018. During lockdown, he was technical director of digital media for Live@NationalSawdust, an initiative of performances recorded from artists' homes. From 2012 to 2015 he was technical director of the chamber music series Ear Heart Music (NYC). He studied computer science at Lehigh University, music theory and composition at Westminster Choir College, and holds a master's of music technology from New York University.

Madeline Whitesell **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

Madeline Whitesell is a director and designer who has developed work with the Brooklyn Academy of Music, HERE Arts Center, Tank-NYC, Opera on Tap, Opera NEO and ODC Ensemble. Her music videos have been shown at the Montreal Independent Film Festival, Berlin Indie Film Festival, Berkeley Video and Film Festival and Indie-X Film Festival-LA. She recently directed a contemporary, queer adaptation of Handel's *Alcina* at the Philadelphia Fringe Festival. Current projects include *La Voix Humaine* at the Alchemical, Elizabeth Gartman's *The New Motive Power* and an album with musician Emily Blue.

Vida Huang **ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER**

Vida Huang is an MFA candidate in lighting design from Los Angeles. UC San Diego credits: *Blu* (assistant lighting designer), *Dance Nation* (assistant lighting designer), *Late: A Cowboy Play* (lighting designer). Originally from Taiwan, she earned her BA from CSU Long Beach in technical theater. She was assistant stage manager and lighting technician at the National Theatre and Concert Hall in Taipei.

Jessica Crawford **ASSOCIATE COSTUME DESIGNER**

Jessica Crawford is a costume designer from New York City. She received her BFA in theater design and technology at Syracuse University in 2017. Recent design credits include *November* (The Shed), *LORDES* (New Ohio Theater) and *Crave* (Egg & Spoon Theatre Collective). (JessicaTCrawford.com)

Amanda Quaid **DIALECT COACH**

Opera: *Der Freischütz* (Heartbeat). Theater: *Becky Nurse of Salem* (Lincoln Center Theater), *The Butcher Boy*, *Made by God and A Touch of the Poet* (Irish Rep), *Sense and Sensibility* (Portland Center Stage), *Molly Sweeney* (Keen

Company), *The Approach* (Shakespeare & Co). Television: *The English* (Amazon), *Echo* (Disney+), *NOS4A2* (AMC). (TalkShopNYC.com)

Laurel McIntyre **STAGE MANAGER**

Laurel McIntyre enjoys working for a variety of companies across the country, especially for new work. Opera credits include *Hometown to the World*, *This Little Light of Mine*, *Sweet Potato Kicks the Sun* and *The Pigeon Keeper*. Theatrical credits include *A Year with Frog and Toad*, *Wit*, *Night of the Iguana*, *Evil Dead: The Musical* and Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*.

Beth Morrison Projects

Beth Morrison Projects (BMP) is one of the foremost creators and producers of new opera-theater and music theater, with a fierce commitment to leading the industry into the future, cultivating a new generation of talent, and telling the stories of our time. Founded by "contemporary opera mastermind" (*LA Times*) Beth Morrison, honored as one of *Musical America's* Artists of the Year/Agents of Change in 2020, BMP has grown into "a driving force behind America's thriving opera scene" (*Financial Times*), with *Opera News* declaring that the company, "more than any other... has helped propel the art form into the 21st century." Operating across the U.S. and internationally, with offices in Brooklyn and Los Angeles, BMP's unique model offers living composers the support, guidance and freedom to experiment, allowing them to create singularly innovative and impactful projects. Since forming in 2006, the company has commissioned, developed, produced and toured over 50 works in 14 countries around the world, including the Pulitzer Prize-winning chamber operas *Angel's Bone* and *prism*. In 2013, BMP co-founded the PROTOTYPE Festival with HERE Arts Center, "one of the world's top festivals of contemporary opera and theater" (*Associated Press*). (BethMorrisonProjects.org)

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