



BETH GILL NAIL BITER

FISHER
CENTER
20

MARCH 31 - APRIL 2
LUMA THEATER

Bard

20TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

WELCOME TO **BREAKING GROUND**

Twenty years ago the Fisher Center's founders—the late Richard B. Fisher chief among them—envisioned a landmark building that would be a cultural beacon in the fast-changing Hudson Valley: a home to the Bard Music Festival, the newly formed SummerScape Festival, and Bard's academic programs in the performing arts. They made a commitment to great architecture and performance without knowing what might be created in the building. In 2002, the Fisher Center was a blank canvas, a story waiting to be discovered.

Over the past two decades, that story has been written by the artists, faculty, and students who have created new and groundbreaking performances in the building, and by the audiences who have experienced them, in Annandale and around the world. Hundreds of remarkable works have premiered in the LUMA and Sosnoff Theaters—and beyond those formal stages—and performances have also taken place on Gehry's steel roof, in storage rooms and backstage corridors, and even in the bathrooms. Collectively, the Fisher Center's professional and academic programs have formed an institution that is unique in the American cultural landscape—a creative home for artists across disciplines, where the priority is on artistic research and development. The Fisher Center isn't a presenting house; that is, we don't book performances that already exist. Instead, we develop new work, and offer artists the resources to explore their ideas from inception to production. Performances made here often travel widely across the country and around the world.

This 20th Anniversary Season is a celebration of the artists, audiences, students, faculty, and communities that have written the Fisher Center's story for its first two decades and will imagine it into the future. It includes a rich and diverse program of world premieres and special events emblematic of the artistic range and innovation for which the center is renowned.

As we celebrate two decades of artistry, we are also looking to the future. The 20th Anniversary Season will culminate in the groundbreaking for a new studio building, designed by Maya Lin, which will perfectly complement the Gehry building's stages, augmenting and enriching this world-class creative home for artists and audiences for generations to come.

Thank you for being part of the Fisher Center community and breaking ground with us. We can't wait to celebrate our first 20 years together!

Best wishes,
Gideon Lester
Artistic Director and Chief Executive

Fisher Center at Bard 20th Anniversary Season: *Breaking Ground*

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Fisher Center LAB presents

NEW COMMISSION/WORLD PREMIERE

BETH GILL NAIL BITER

In memoriam Rose-Marie Menes

Beth Gill *Choreographer*
Jon Moniaci *Composer*
Baile Younkman *Costume Designer*
Thomas Dunn *Lighting and Scenic Designer*
Angela F. Kiessel *Production Stage Manager*
Michelle Fletcher *Manager*

Performers: Maggie Cloud, Jennifer Lafferty, Jordan Demetrius Lloyd, Marilyn Maywald Yahel and Beth Gill

Voice: Sarah Daniels, Emily Eagen, Jeremy Lydic, Peter Sciscioli

Thrown Materials: Peter Kerlin and Jon Moniaci

Choir: Abby Ahmad, Ray Barr, Frank Bolton, Karen de Chabert, Layla Cobrinik, Hannah Fairchild, Louise Guerin, David Luther, Dan Morrow, Gabby Sherba, Netania Steiner

LUMA Theater
March 31 at 7:30 pm
April 1 at 5 pm
April 2 at 5 pm

Running time for this performance is approximately 60 minutes with no intermission.

FROM THE CHOREOGRAPHER

My first dance teacher Rose-Marie Menes passed on from this world on September 9th, 2011, while I was in the early stages of dreaming *Nail Biter*. In her youth, Rose trained under George Mellinoff of the Imperial Ballet and later Madame Maria Swoboda, formerly of the Bolshoi Ballet. She was a principal dancer for the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, under the direction of Leonid Massine, and performed with Chicago Opera Ballet, New York City Opera, and American Festival Ballet.

Rose's school, Westchester Ballet Center, was my other home growing up in the suburbs outside of NYC. It was a sanctuary space for me and so many girls. On weeknights, we squeezed into the small dressing room above the office to shed our daytime clothes and become ballerinas. We shuffled into the beautiful large dance studio and found our spots at the barre. I can be back there in my mind in an instant...

The wooden floor beneath my slippered feet, worn and polished. The smooth wooden barre under my left hand. The other girls holding the barre, too, in front and behind me. No talking, just preparing. Small adjustments to my tights and leotard. Tuck the laces of my shoes in. Be ready to begin. Rose enters, and everyone watches her. She is the center, the source, the idol, both loved and feared. She inserts a cd into the cd player, presses buttons, and then turns around to face us. Class, our ritual, has begun.

What I think about now as a professional choreographer and teacher is how unwavering Rose's dedication to dance was. This field is not easy, and yet she always found ways to do more. She ran a company as well as the school and made multiple productions with hand-painted sets and costumes that she hand-sewed. She created epic worlds and romantic storylines for us to inhabit. She passed on to us the same traditions and legacy that transformed her as a young girl from Miami, Florida, into a principal ballerina who toured the world.

I was lucky to study with Rose. She gave me dance and so much more: tradition, discipline, professionalism, obsession, creativity, romanticism, grace, power, and self-determination. She set the course of my career and my life. This piece is in honor of her.

—Beth Gill

SPECIAL THANKS FROM BETH GILL

To Gideon Lester, Caleb Hammons, and Aaron Mattocks for hosting the world premiere of *Nail Biter* and believing in my work. To Jessica Myers, Carter Edwards, Moe Schell, Richard Reiser, Jason Collins, Jason Wells, Timothy Duffy, Dávid Bánóczy-Ruof, Rachael Gunning, Madie Reilly, and the entire Fisher Center staff and crew for taking such good care of us.

To Sonia Werner and Dance Theater in Westchester for generously loaning us a drop from their repertoire.

To Barbara Pillsbury and King's Fountain for their uplifting generosity and continued support.

To Emily and Marty Taffet, Maria & Tom Gill, Brian Gill, Mary Anne Gill, Julia Gill, and Resa Gill for their ongoing support and meaningful financial contributions to this project.

To Lili Chopra, Shana Crawford, and LMCC for supporting the first iteration of *Nail Biter*. To Philip Bither and Walker Arts Center for remaining committed to this project despite the chaos of recent years. To Alexandra Rosenberg, Anna Muselmann, and the Center For Performance Research for providing a nurturing workspace for the dancers and me.

To Stuart Singer, Joyce Edwards, Heather Lang, John Jasperse, Gwen Welliver, Wendell Gray II, Maya Lee-Parritz, Gwendolyn Knapp, and Ryan Seaton for visiting the studio and sharing feedback. To Michelle Fletcher for making everything possible even when it feels impossible. To Angela Kiessel for her expertise and enthusiasm. To Thomas Dunn for bringing grand vision. To Baille Younkman for her incomparable taste and open heart. To Jon Moniaci, for decades of working together, pushing each other and always making the work feel right. To my remarkable talented dancers Jennifer, Jordan, Maggie, and Marilyn, for holding and caring for these tender imaginings with such focus and dedication. You inspire and make this work possible.

To my family, Ryan and Lucas Seaton, for love, laughter, and endless chaos.

Nail Biter is co-commissioned by the Fisher Center at Bard, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, and Walker Art Center.

The development of Nail Biter was supported by funding from the King's Fountain and by CPR – Center for Performance Research's Artist-in-Residence Program, which is made possible, in part, through Dance/NYC's Rehearsal Space Subsidy Program made possible by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the New York State Council on the Arts. This project was supported, in part, by a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant. Beth Gill is fiscally sponsored by the Foundation for Independent Artists, Inc., a non-profit organization administered by Pentacle (DanceWorks, Inc). Pentacle is a non-profit management support organization for the performing arts.

The Fisher Center is generously supported by Jeanne Donovan Fisher, the Martin and Toni Sosnoff Foundation, the Advisory Boards of the Fisher Center at Bard and Bard Music Festival, and Fisher Center and Bard Music Festival members, the Ettinger Foundation, the Thendara Foundation, and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature. The 23-24 season of Fisher Center LAB has received funding from members of the Live Arts Bard Creative Council, the Lucille Lortel Foundation, and the Fisher Center's Artistic Innovation Fund, with lead support from Rebecca Gold and S. Asher Gelman '06 through the March Forth Foundation.

WHO'S WHO

Beth Gill is an award-winning choreographer based in New York City since 2005. Her multidisciplinary works are captivating, cinematic timescapes, the product of long-term collaborations with celebrated artists. Gill is the proud recipient of the Herb Alpert, Doris Duke Impact, Foundation for Contemporary Art, and two "Bessie" awards. She has produced eight commissioned evening-length works, toured nationally and internationally and has been honored with (among others): Guggenheim Fellowship, NEFA's National Dance Project grant, Princeton's Hodder Fellowship, and Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Extended Life Artist in Residence. Gill's dances are serious, slow-moving, and chiseled, meditative experiences poised between performance and visual art. They feel like pressurized objects sustaining tension and seeking release. Paradoxically her work is both intimate and alienated, sensual and ascetic. She dreams and visualizes her dances, transforming her unconscious into iconographic choreography. The imagery and symbolism resonate, inviting audiences into associative thought. In this way, her work is in dialogue with contemporary psychology and folk traditions.

Jon Moniaci is a composer, performer, and computer programmer. Interested in improvisation and live electro-acoustic performance, he has collaborated extensively with dance and performance makers. A frequent collaborator of choreographer Beth Gill, his score for her dance *Electric Midwife* received a 2011 Bessie New York Dance and Performance Award. He has also worked with Chase Granoff, Andrew Dinwiddie, Jeff Larson, Peter Kerlin, Anna Sperber, Marissa Perel, Alex Escalante, Mark Jarecke, Dean Moss, and Peter Jacobs. He plays music with Stephen Rush and Chris Peck in their project Crystal Mooncone.

Baille Younkman is an artist, designer, and educator from Columbus, Ohio. After having studied fashion design and sculpture, Baille received her B.F.A from the Savannah College of Art and Design. She currently lives in Columbus, OH, where she is building her eco-art practice. Baille is an advocate for creative thinking, emotional intelligence, and slowing down to spend more time outside.

Thomas Dunn designs lighting internationally, treating it as both a sculptural medium and a facet of stage design. Previous works with Beth Gill include *Brand New Sidewalk*, *Catacomb*, and *New Work for the Desert*. Recent credits with other artists include *Difficult Grace* with Seth Parker Woods; *Mud/Drowning* with JoAnne Akalaitis and Philip Glass; *Most Happy in Concert* with Daniel Fish; *Epochal Songs* with Muna Tseng and (posthumously) Keith Haring; *Ocean Filibuster* with Katie Pearl and Lisa D'Amour, and *Is This A Room* with Tina Satter. Other credits include works with: Jonathan Bepler, Wally Cardona, Steve Cosson, Annie Dorsen, D.D. Dorvillier, Trajal Harrell, Ted Hearne, Jennifer Lacey, Noémie Lafrance, David Levine, Molly Lieber, Ong Keng Sen, Zeena Parkins, Jay Scheib, and Eleanor Smith. Thomas is the recipient of a Kevin Kline Award for Outstanding Lighting Design as well as a Bessie Design Award for Outstanding Visual Design.

Angela F. Kiessel Broadway: *A Christmas Carol* with Jefferson Mays, *Frozen*, *Once on This Island*, *The Humans*, *Tuck Everlasting*, *Honeymoon in Vegas*. Selected Off-Broadway: *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Space Dogs* (MCC), *Joan of Arc: Into the Fire* (The Public Theater), *Shear Madness*, *The Laramie Project Cycle* (BAM). University of Michigan '09. Love & thanks to Mike, Judy, Justin, Nancy, & my family.

Maggie Cloud is a performer and acupuncturist based in New York City. She has been seen in the choreographic work of Moriah Evans, Beth Gill, John Jasperse, Neal Medlyn, Sarah Michelson, Pam Tanowitz, Gillian Walsh, the Merce Cunningham Trust, and The Metropolitan Opera. Maggie has taught at Chen Dance Center, Brooklyn Arts Exchange, and at the University of the Arts.

Jennifer Lafferty is from Southern California. She started working with Beth Gill in 2010. She has been in the work of Sarah Michelson, Rebecca Lazier, Vicky Shick, Yasuko Yokoshi, Christopher Williams, Michou Szabo, Renée Archibald, Anna Sperber, Nina Winthrop, and Marilyn Maywald-Yahel. She has been involved with programming at Roulette (2014–17) and Weis Acres (2018).

Jordan Demetrius Lloyd is a dance artist based in Brooklyn, NY. He studied at The College at Brockport after growing up in Albany, NY. He has collaborated with and performed for Karl Rogers, Beth Gill, Netta Yerushalmy, Monica Bill Barnes, Joanna Kotze, Tammy Carrasco, Catherine Galasso, Ambika Raina, and David Dorfman Dance. He is currently teaching at Rutgers University and his work has been produced by: New York Live Arts, BRIC, ISSUE Project Room, Baryshnikov Arts Center, BAADI, Movement Research at Judson Memorial Church, and The Center for Performance Research. Recently he received the 2021–23 Jerome Hill Artist Fellowship. For more, please head to jordandlloyd.com.

Marilyn Maywald Yahel is a dance artist and Feldenkrais teacher based in New York City. She has worked with Maggie Bennett, Milka Djordjevich, Beth Gill, Melanie Maar, Yin Mei, Steven Reker, Melinda Ring, Vicky Shick, and Katie Workum. She has presented her own works-in-progress and short-form solos throughout NYC. Marilyn is originally from Nashville, TN, and attended Arizona State University. She lives with her family in Putnam Valley, NY.

ABOUT FISHER CENTER

The Fisher Center develops, produces, and presents performing arts across disciplines through new productions and context-rich programs that challenge and inspire. As a premier professional performing arts center and a hub for research and education, the Fisher Center supports artists, students, and audiences in the development and examination of artistic ideas, offering perspectives from the past and present as well as visions of the future. The Fisher Center demonstrates Bard's commitment to the performing arts as a cultural and educational necessity. Home is the Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, designed by Frank Gehry and located on the campus of Bard College in New York's Hudson Valley. The Fisher Center offers outstanding programs to many communities, including the students and faculty of Bard College, and audiences in the Hudson Valley, New York City, across the country, and around the world. Building on a 163-year history as a competitive and innovative undergraduate institution, Bard is committed to enriching culture, public life, and democratic discourse by training tomorrow's thought leaders.

The Center presents more than 200 world-class events and welcomes 50,000 visitors each year. The Fisher Center supports artists at all stages of their careers and employs more than 300 professional artists annually. The Fisher Center is a powerful catalyst of art-making regionally, nationally, and worldwide. Every year it produces 8 to 10 major new works in various disciplines. Over the past five years, its commissioned productions have been seen in more than 100 communities around the world. During the 2018–2019 season, six Fisher Center productions toured nationally and internationally. In 2019 the Fisher Center won the Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical for Daniel Fish's production of *Oklahoma!* which began life in 2007 as an undergraduate production at Bard and was produced professionally in the Fisher Center's SummerScape Festival in 2015 before transferring to New York City.

ABOUT FISHER CENTER LAB

Fisher Center LAB is the Fisher Center's artist residency and commissioning program, providing custom-made and meaningful support for innovative artists across disciplines. Since its launch in 2012, Fisher Center LAB has supported residencies, workshops, and performances for hundreds of artists, incubating new projects and engaging audiences, students, faculty, and staff in the process of creating contemporary performance.

ABOUT BARD

Founded in 1860, Bard College is a four-year residential college of the liberal arts and sciences located 90 miles north of New York City. With the addition of the Montgomery Place estate, Bard's campus consists of nearly 1,000 park-like acres in the Hudson River Valley. It offers bachelor of arts, bachelor of science, and bachelor of music degrees, with majors in nearly 40 academic programs; graduate degrees in 13 programs; eight early colleges; and numerous dual-degree programs nationally and internationally. Building on its 163-year history as a competitive and innovative undergraduate institution, Bard College has expanded its mission as a private institution acting in the public interest across the country and around the world to meet broader student needs and increase access to liberal education. The undergraduate

program at our main campus in upstate New York has a reputation for scholarly excellence, a focus on the arts, and civic engagement. Bard is committed to enriching culture, public life, and democratic discourse by training tomorrow's thought leaders. For more information about Bard College, visit bard.edu.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR BARD COLLEGE IN ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON

Developed in Cooperation with the Stockbridge-Munsee Community

In the spirit of truth and equity, it is with gratitude and humility that we acknowledge that we are gathered on the sacred homelands of the Munsee and Muhheaconneok people, who are the original stewards of this land. Today, due to forced removal, the community resides in Northeast Wisconsin and is known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. We honor and pay respect to their ancestors past and present, as well as to future generations and we recognize their continuing presence in their homelands. We understand that our acknowledgement requires those of us who are settlers to recognize our own place in and responsibilities towards addressing inequity, and that this ongoing and challenging work requires that we commit to real engagement with the Munsee and Mohican communities to build an inclusive and equitable space for all.

For more information about the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, please visit mohican.com.

Support for the Fisher Center and Bard Music Festival is provided by the following individuals, corporations, and foundations, among many others. We thank you for joining the late Richard B. Fisher with your generosity and partnership.

Special thanks to those who are supporting our programs with their commitments to the Bard College Endowment Challenge. Thank you for ensuring Bard's continuity as a beacon for higher education, bolstering the development of innovative programs that offer access to rigorous, high-quality education for new populations around the world.

If you wish to become a member or make a contribution in support of vital arts experiences, please call 845-758-7987 or visit fishercenter.bard.edu/support. Thank you!

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Irene Zedlacher

Artistic Directors
Leon Botstein
Christopher H. Gibbs

Associate Director
Raissa St. Pierre '87

Scholars in Residence 2023
Byron Adams
Daniel Grimley

Program Committee 2023
Byron Adams
Leon Botstein
Christopher H. Gibbs
Daniel Grimley
Richard Wilson
Irene Zedlacher

Director of Choruses
James Bagwell

Vocal Casting
Joshua Winograde

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