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Experience history like never before in #TaylorMac “A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC” at #PIFA2018 June 2 (Part I) and June 9 (Part II) at the @KimmelCenter. Tickets on sale now! More info @kimmelcenter.org/pifa

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**KIMMEL CENTER ANNOUNCES LOCAL ARTISTS WHO WILL PERFORM WITH
MACARTHUR GENIUS TAYLOR MAC
IN MAC’S GROUNDBREAKING POP ODYSSEY
A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC DURING THE
2018 PHILADELPHIA INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS**

Philadelphia Engagement, June 2 & 9 at the Kimmel Center, In A Co-Presentation with Pomegranate Arts, Is the Last Time Taylor Mac Will Perform the Full 24-Hour Work in the U.S.

“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, May 14, 2018) — **The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts**, in a co-presentation with **Pomegranate Arts**, is thrilled to announce the special guest artists who will perform in **Taylor Mac’s** ambitious, internationally acclaimed work *A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF*

POPULAR MUSIC. Local Philadelphia performance artists and musicians will join Mac in these final U.S. performances of the full, 24-hour-long pop odyssey, June 2 & 9 at the Kimmel Center's Merriam Theater, as part of the 2018 Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts (PIFA). Mac will perform *A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC* as two distinct 12-hour concerts, Saturday, June 2 (1776-1896) and Saturday, June 9 (1896-present day) — Mac's longest continuous performances since the work premiered at St. Ann's Warehouse in Brooklyn in 2016.

Iconic Philadelphia-based artists including **Martha Graham Cracker**, **Tangle Movement Arts**, and **Cynthia Hopkins** will be part of the performance of this genre-defying, critically-acclaimed mashup of music, history, and theater. *A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC* decodes the social history of the United States – all 240+ years – through 246 songs that were popular through the country and in its disparate communities from 1776 to present day. Other prominent artists performing in the work include acclaimed singer-songwriter **Toshi Reagon** and Grammy-winning **Dan Zanes** on mandolin. Also, **Jawole Willa Jo Zollar**, an American dancer, teacher, choreographer, and founder of the groundbreaking company **Urban Bush Women**, who has long been a member of the *24-Decade* creative team, as choreographer. She will be joined by ensemble members **Chanon Judson** and **Love Muwwakil**.

"We continue to draw more talented musicians, dancers, and performers from our region to collaborate and perform with international stars in PIFA 2018. Taylor Mac's bold and ambitious work will engage and challenge Philadelphia's arts community," said Anne Ewers, President and CEO of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. "We are humbled that Taylor Mac has chosen PIFA 2018 for what will be the last time Taylor Mac will perform the full 24-hour work in the U.S."

Local Philadelphia guests will include former Kimmel Center Theater Resident **Martha Graham Cracker**, a totally unpredictable force of nature whom *The Philadelphia Inquirer* hailed as "Drag Queen King of Philadelphia"; an all-female innovative aerial dance theater group, **Tangle Movement Arts**, whose performances tell a multi-dimensional story through a mix of trapeze and acrobatics with dance, theater, and live music; internationally acclaimed composer, multi-instrumentalist, and musical performance artist **Cynthia Hopkins**, whose work intertwines truth and fiction while blurring the lines between edification and entertainment; and the **Camden Sophisticated Sisters/Distinguished Brothers**, a non-profit organization disguised as a drill team that motivates, educates, and empowers youth through step dancing and drum corps.

Local Philadelphia musicians include well-known saxophonist, composer, producer, and former Kimmel Center Jazz Residency Artist **Korey Riker** (Alto Sax). Composer, percussionist, and current Kimmel Center Jazz Residency Artist **Doug Hirlinger** will join the group. Also performing are beloved Philadelphia jazz musician **Matt Cappy** (Trumpet); West Philadelphia Orchestra member, **Larry Toft** (Trombone); CEO and Founder of Philly Music Lab, **Alexandra Cutler-Fetkewicz** (Violin), who performs regularly with Opera Philadelphia, the Academy of Vocal Arts Orchestra, and The Philly POPS; chamber violinist **Samuel Thompson** (Violin), who appears regularly with the Black Pearl Chamber Orchestra and the Delaware Symphony; international prize-winning musician **Aisha Dossumova** (Violin); and West Philadelphia Orchestra member **Dan Nosheny** (Tuba).

There will also be a local ensemble of burlesque performers and **Dandy Minions** – performers who extend the show on stage and into the audience. To make the 24-hour journey a true community experience, members of the Philadelphia audience will be essential to this interactive performance and are cast in roles as varied as colonial needle workers, World War I soldiers, and Yum Yum from *The Mikado*.

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

Music Director **Matt Ray**, who created new arrangements of all 246 songs in *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music*, performs throughout the work. Costume designer **Machine Dazzle**, a longtime Mac collaborator, has handmade an outrageously imaginative, world-onto-itself costumes specific to each decade. His work is currently on display in the windows of Macy's downtown Philadelphia location.

"*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 and bend toward justice," said Taylor Mac. "I'm not a teacher. My job is to be a reminder. I'm reminding the audience of the things they've forgotten, dismissed or buried — or that others have buried for them. In this time of obstacle, of political cynicism, amnesia, polarization, oppression, and upheaval, we are in desperate need of a physical, emotional, sensorial, and intellectual reminder that we can use the obstacles to strengthen our bonds and communal actions."

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**.

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

Other featured upcoming performances at the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus include: ***Cristal Palace*** (June 1-10, 2018, Banks of the Schuylkill), ***Water on Mars*** (June 1-3, 2018, Perelman Theater), ***The Fever*** (June 6-10, 2018, SEI Innovation Studio) and ***Men Are From Mars – Women Are From Venus LIVE!*** (June 23, 2018, Perelman Theater).

TAYLOR MAC: A 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC

Merriam Theater

June 2, 2018, 12:00 p.m. PART I: 1776-1896

June 9, 2018, 12:00 p.m. PART II: 1896-Present Day

Tickets

Tickets are on sale now and start at \$45.00. Tickets can be purchased by calling 215-893-1999, online at www.kimmelcenter.org/pifa, or 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. See www.kimmelcenter.org/pifa for more information.

Here's the list of local and national artists who will perform with Taylor Mac, listed in alphabetical order. Click on the blue links for more information.

Tangle Movement Arts

Tangle Movement Arts is a circus arts company with a contemporary twist, whose performances mix traditional circus like trapeze and acrobatics with dance, theater, and live music to tell a multi-dimensional story. Tangle's work is devised collaboratively by its all-female ensemble, and reflects individuals of diverse identities, with an emphasis on queer and female experience. Based in Philadelphia, Tangle has been a Philly FringeArts Festival favorite since its inception in 2011. For more information, click [here](#).

Matt Cappy

New Jersey native Matt Cappy is a critically acclaimed trumpeter who has played with Michael Jackson, The Roots, and Jay Z. Cappy attended the highly regarded Overbook High School in Pine Hill, NJ and is an established and beloved Philadelphia-area jazz musician. For more information, click [here](#).

Martha Graham Cracker - Dito van Reigersberg

Dito van Reigersberg has been hailed by *The Philadelphia Inquirer* as the "Drag Queen King of Philadelphia" for his vixen drag alter ego, Martha Graham Cracker. A 2015 Kimmel Center Theater Resident, van Reigersberg is a cultured force of nature. He is a graduate of Swarthmore College and co-founder of Pig Iron Theater. For more information, click [here](#).

Aisha Dossumova

Violinist Aisha Dossumova is an international prize-winning musician. The Temple University graduate has toured and performed in many countries including Austria, Italy, France, United Kingdom and Russia. Dossumova has been a member of iPalpiti Chamber Orchestra since 2004. For more information, click [here](#).

Alexandra Cutler-Fetkewicz

Alexandra Cutler-Fetkewicz is a classically trained violinist who holds a tenured position with the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, an esteemed Resident Company of the Kimmel Center. Fetkewicz is also the CEO and Founder of Philly Music Lab, and performs regularly with Opera Philadelphia, the Academy of Vocal Arts Orchestra, and The Philly POPS. She has shared the stage with John Williams, Branford Marsalis, and Jill Scott. For more information, click [here](#).

Cynthia Hopkins

Philadelphia's Cynthia Hopkins is a composer and multi-instrumentalist who sings and plays the accordion, guitar, piano, and the musical saw. As a musician, Hopkins has self-produced five full-length albums. She has performed with the South Carolina Philharmonic and the Augusta (Ga.) Symphony Orchestra since 1998. For more information, click [here](#).

Doug Hirlinger

Doug Hirlinger is a multi-faceted musician whose diverse history includes extensive experience as a drummer, composer, educator, and producer. Hirlinger is a current Kimmel Center Jazz Residency artist and recently premiered his new work entitled "Dear Philadelphia," a musical commentary on gentrification in Philadelphia neighborhoods. For more information, click [here](#).

Dan Nosheny

Dan Nosheny is a member of the West Philadelphia Orchestra. He is a highly sought after multi-instrumentalist in Philadelphia who has been featured on tuba, accordion, sousaphone, and baritone. He has recorded with Gordon Gano and Brian Richie of the Violent Femmes on their solo projects. For more information, click [here](#).

Yared Portillo

Philadelphia-based community activist and jarana musician, Yared Portillo, is a voice for immigration activism and community building in the U.S. During protests, Portillo punctuates chanting by strumming a jarana – a small, eight-string instrument, patterned after a 16th century, Spanish guitar. Portillo is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania. For more information, click [here](#).

Toshi Reagon

Critics consider Toshi Reagon one of the most compelling performers on the modern-rock scene. She opened for Lenny Kravitz on his first world tour and graced the stage with performers including [Ani DiFranco](#), [Elvis Costello](#), and [Meshell Ndegeocello](#). For more information, click [here](#).

Korey Riker

Korey Riker is a well-known saxophonist, composer, producer, and former Kimmel Center Jazz Residency Artist based in Philadelphia. He has toured with John Legend, Freddie Jackson, Eric Robertson, and others. His next release “PTSD Volume 2” is due out this summer. For more information, click [here](#).

Camden Sophisticated Sisters/Distinguished Brothers

Camden Sophisticated Sisters is a non-profit organization disguised as a drill team. Its mission is to motivate, educate, and empower youth through step dancing, drum corps, and performing arts. For more information, click [here](#).

Samuel Thompson

Chamber violinist Samuel Thompson appears regularly with the Black Pearl Chamber Orchestra and the Delaware Symphony. He has performed with the Harrisburg Symphony, Lancaster Symphony, Peabody Concert Opera and Washington Dc’s Great Noise Ensemble. Thompson is currently a member of the Colour of Music Virtuosi, a 20-member chamber orchestra comprised of African-American instrumentalists from across the United States. For more information, click [here](#).

Larry Toft

West Philadelphia Orchestra member, Larry Toft, plays the trombone and baritone horn. The Temple University graduate is well versed in traditional Jazz, Bebop, Avant-Garde, Salsa, Reggae, Rhythm and Blues, Funk, Classical, and Balkan Brass Band styles. He has performed with notable musicians such as Johnny Pacheco, Jimmy Heath, Lalo Rodriguez, Jon Faddis, Dave Burrell, and Marshall Allen. Toft has his own 1920s Hot Jazz group, Red Hot Ramblers. For more information, click [here](#).

Urban Bush Women

Jawole Willa Jo Zollar is an American dancer, teacher, choreographer, and founder of the groundbreaking ensemble *Urban Bush Women* in Brooklyn, NY. Urban Bush Women, uses live music, a cappella vocalizations and movement to interpret the religious traditions and folklore of the African Diaspora. She will be joined by ensemble members Chanon Judson and Love Muwwakil. For more information, click [here](#).

Dan Zanes

Grammy Award-winner Dan Zanes was the founding front man of the popular 1980s folk rock band The Del Fuego's. For the last 15 years, he has toured with his own band Dan Zanes and Friends, sharing handmade 21st century social music with enthusiastic crowds of kids. *Time Magazine* calls him "the family-music genre's most outspoken and eloquent advocate." For more information, click [here](#).

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.

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 www.kimmelcenter.org.

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