

ABRONS
ARTS
CENTER

HENRY STREET
SETTLEMENT

@ ABRONS SERIES

The @ Abrons Series is a subsidized
performance space rental program

February 22-23, 2019

JU-EH + HWARG
THE LIVING DYING OPERA

THE LIVING DYING OPERA

Ju-Eh (Juecheng Chen)

Hwarg (Howie Kenty)

François-Thibaut Pencenat, visual artist

Peichao Lin, photography and videography

How can the art of opera relate to you? Maybe your experience has been dressing up nicely to attend the Met in New York, or seeing an opera at Milan's *La Scala*. Maybe it seems like something foreign and exclusive to the wealthy, or simply old-fashioned and too difficult to understand. Voice artist **Ju-eh** and composer **Hwarg** present a brand-new work with powerful singing and delicate electronics that makes the art of opera directly relatable to your emotions and experiences: *The Living Dying Opera*.

In our fast-paced, technologically saturated world, we are surrounded by 'micro-dilemmas': I am in the subway and someone next to me is so smelly! Should I stay, or get off the train? My alarm rings and rings and I snooze and snooze; should I wake up, or sleep for 2 more minutes? I have had 9 cups of coffee already; should I have the 10th to make it an even number?

The fundamentals of opera are drama and *bel canto* (beautiful singing). Ju-eh, who has studied opera for over a decade, dramatizes his personal dilemmas through voice. Hwarg, an expert in electronics and sonic arts, creates an immersive and intriguing sound world.

As historical opera speaks for the people of its time, Ju-eh+Hwarg present a theatrical musical drama that speaks for now, investigating space, memory, and personal identity. While their work is layered and complex, it is also easily accessible to those without musical training.

THE LIVING DYING OPERA

ABOUT

THE LIVING DYING OPERA

Ju-eh (Juecheng Chen) is a conceptual virtuosic countertenor from Canton, China. With 10 years of classical singing training in Europe, he specializes in presenting what classical music can be today. Ju-eh is known for his musicality, delicacy and his powerful high pitch voice. His recent performance highlight includes Improvised Opera Salon series in New York City and his performance with Sylva Dean and Me at Venice Biennale; his future engagements include Meredith Monk's opera Atlas with LA Phil in 2019 among others. Artist website: juechengchen.com

Hwarg (Howie Kenty) is a Brooklyn-based composer and performer. His music, called "remarkable" with "astonishing poetic power" by the International Compendium Prix Ars Electronica, is stylistically diverse, encompassing contemporary classical, electronic, rock, sound art, and everything in between, occasionally with theatrical elements. Recent recognition includes a 2017 Copland House residency, a 2018 Virginia Center for the Creative Arts residency, first prize commission in the 2017 Null-state Chaosflöte competition, competition winner for the 2018 Open Space Festival of New Music, competition winner for the 2018 RED NOTE New Music Festival Composition Workshop, and an ASCAP Plus+ award. Artist website: hwarg.com

François-Thibaut Pencenat is a French visual artist from Paris, now based in New York City. His work uses the idea of staging to establish a relationship between reality and fiction. Through his working process, he refines his artistic materials and their staged settings to reach the simplest and most visually effective forms. Notions of absence and erasure recur in his work, raising questions about visual memory and the permanence of certain forms in art history. Artist website: francoisthibautpencenat.com

New York Chinese Culture Salon is a 501(c)(3) organization registered in New York. The organization is for educational purposes. It offers a multi-disciplinary platform where experts in various areas share voluntarily their knowledge and thoughts with the general public. Attendees are mainly graduate students and young professionals. The audience has various degrees of background about the domain. The mission of the salon is to enhance this open-source, high quality, multi-disciplinary, thought-provoking knowledge-sharing platform, where people with curiosity and an open mind have access to the areas they are interested in but that they may have little knowledge of.

JU-EH + HWARG

THE LIVING DYING OPERA

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FUNDING

The Living Dying Opera's presentation at The Abrons Arts Center is made possible by The New York Chinese Culture Salon.



THE LIVING DYING OPERA

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to Peichao Lin, photography and videography.

ABOUT ABRONS

Abrons Arts Center is a home for contemporary interdisciplinary arts in Manhattan's Lower East Side neighborhood. A core program of the Henry Street Settlement, Abrons believes that access to the arts is essential to a free and healthy society. Through performance presentations, exhibitions, education programs and residencies, Abrons mobilizes communities with the transformative power of art.

Abrons Arts Center values freedom of expression and creativity, ever striving to provide creative communities with a space that celebrates diversity of thought and experience. Abrons aims to be an anti-oppressive home to people from all backgrounds and does not discriminate on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, citizen status, ancestry, age, religion, disability, sex or gender identity. As definitions of expression and inclusion evolve, Abrons is committed to continually revising this statement in collaboration with our communities.

Indigenous Land Acknowledgment

Abrons Arts Center is situated on the Lenape island of Manhahtaan (Mannahatta). We pay respect to Lenape peoples and ancestors past, present, and future, and acknowledge our reliance on the land and waters of Lenapehoking, the Lenape homeland. We offer our care and gratitude to Lenapehoking, and are committed to resisting colonialism through the support of Indigenous-led programming and Indigenous artistic practices.

You are welcome here.

For tickets and show times:

abronsartscenter.org

Support neighborhood businesses! As a thank you for supporting our programming, we're offering discounts to some of our favorite Lower East Side hangouts. For more information, click on

abronsartscenter.org/plan-your-trip/dining-and-attractions

And get a discount when you bring this program!

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Abrons Arts Center
Henry Street Settlement
466 Grand Street
New York City 10002
212.598.0400
abronsartscenter.org

Social: @abronsartscenter & #AbronsArtsCenter
Email: audienceservices@abronsartscenter

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