



NEXT MOVEMENT – CENTERING COMMUNITY VOICE
SEPTEMBER 12, 2023 – 12:00PM

The following organizations and representatives will present at Next Movement hosted by The Presser Foundation:

- **Ars Nova Workshop** – Celeste DiNucci, Director of Strategy & Development
- **The Mann Center for the Performing Arts** – Naomi Gonzalez, Chief Education, Community Engagement Officer & Vice President
- **Opera Philadelphia** – Veronica Chapman-Smith, Vice President of Community Initiatives
- **PRISM Quartet** – Matthew Levy, Executive and Co-Artistic Director

ARS NOVA WORKSHOP

Organization Overview: Founded in 2000 by Mark Christman, [Ars Nova Workshop](#) (ANW) presents new jazz and contemporary music. ANW has presented music across Philadelphia in a variety of sites, including bars, clubs, theaters, social clubs, architectural landmarks, and more, creating unique cultural experiences as a result. Well-known jazz artists such as Cecil Taylor, Anthony Braxton, and Nicole Mitchell have all performed for ANW, as well as rising stars.

Since transitioning from a volunteer-run organization to one with a professional staff in 2015, ANW has increased and scope and ambition of its offerings, including launching creative residencies, publications, recording releases, exhibitions, and a groundbreaking festival, in addition to presenting 100-120 performances per year in the venue space of the back of Solar Myth, a new bar/café that has taken over the old Boot & Saddle space.

Community Voice: As ANW transitions from a nomadic presence across the city to a permanent residence in South Philadelphia, it sees new possibilities for deeper artist engagement (e.g., multi-night engagements, residencies, etc.), stronger coalition-building (with, perhaps, the Clef Club and similar organizations in South Philly and/or along Broad Street, etc.), and more of a “neighborhood” presence.

The organization has hired Anthony Tidd, as Chief Creative Catalyst to advise on strategies and programs, provide input on curatorial approaches, and connect ANW with musicians and other professionals who can help fulfill ANW’s vision. Tidd is an international touring bassist, composer/band leader, a Grammy Award winner, and a leader in creative music education.

Staff and Board has also recently engaged the consultant group Sadao/Ghosh to develop a new strategic and operational plan, which will launch the organization into the next phase of its work. The planning grant helps support a process whereby ANW will be forming a careful, planned approach to establishing the need for resources (and the approach to finding those resources) to ensure that the lessons of community, participation, and inclusion are at the core of its future operations.

THE MANN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Organization Overview: [The Mann Center for the Performing Arts](#) was built in 1976 as an outdoor amphitheater with four stages featuring a variety of performing arts experiences in West Philadelphia. In addition to presenting many musical performances throughout the year, the Mann also has several education and community-based initiatives including its year-round, out-of-school time program, its workforce development program, and its creative placemaking initiative.

Community Voice: The Mann frequently collaborates with its Parkside neighborhood, a predominantly African American community that boasts significant advancements and has a notable musical history. The Mann partners with Parkside community leaders and area schools to bring about year-round, positive artistic experiences and career awareness opportunities to address these neighborhood challenges.

In 2023, the Mann began its [Community Artist-in-Residence](#) program, with West Philadelphia-based hip hop artist and lyricist Chill Moody selected as its first Resident. His Residency focuses on several areas of engagement across the Mann’s campus – including enriching the Mann’s year-round arts education, community engagement, and workforce development programs serving West Philadelphia students and families. Chill Moody has shared his artistic voice by curating concerts and events, including a one-of-a-kind show that featured an orchestra, a rapper, a choir, and a DJ, to celebrate the worldwide 50th Anniversary of hip-hop. He also influenced and performed in the Mann’s [“Downstage at the Mann”](#) 2023 series.

OPERA PHILADELPHIA

Organization Overview: Since 1975, [Opera Philadelphia](#) has been Philadelphia’s professional opera company, performing at the historic Academy of Music, Perelman Theater, and across the city during their annual festival, O, launched in the fall of 2017. The Opera strives to deliver outstanding productions of both traditional and exciting new works that resonate with the community; to identify, cultivate, and cast rising young talent alongside internationally acclaimed singers; and to present innovative programs that educate, broaden, deepen, and diversify the opera audience, both in Philadelphia and beyond.

In a variety of ways, the Opera seeks to center community voice into its programming and operations. The Opera has created a commissioning practice and Composer in Residence program, where they have elevated the participation of female and BIPOC creators who are both emerging composers and established creators. It’s through these avenues, as well as through extensive [community and educational programming](#), that the Opera will engage with established audiences and new ones, program the traditional canon as well as new pieces, work to increase its digital presence, and engage with opera-adjacent artists, particularly BIPOC and female-identifying creators.

Opera Philadelphia also seeks to center community through its operational practices, including beginning a [Community Advisory Council](#) (CAC) during its 2020/21 season. The CAC, comprised of individuals from the Asian community, provides insight and guidance regarding education curriculum and community engagement opportunities, marketing materials and audience development, and artistic practice. In the future, the Opera intends to experiment with new approaches, interrogate established learning systems, and find ways to create and deliver opera to both established audiences and new ones.

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PRISM QUARTET

Organization Overview: Formed in 1984, [PRISM Quartet](#) is a saxophone quartet that engages composers, students, and audiences through its commissioning, performing, and recording efforts.

PRISM's work is divided into five programmatic centers:

1. Commissioning composers at all career stages, and from diverse backgrounds, to create standalone saxophone quartets as well as works for saxophones and other instruments.
2. Presenting new works on our annual concert series in Philadelphia.
3. Bringing new music for saxophones to the widest possible audience through national/international touring engagements.
4. Recording, including for its XAS Records label.
5. Teaching and producing educational, entrepreneurship, and mentorship programs, now presented under the umbrella of PRISM Quartet Institute

Community Voice: Ten years ago, as it transitioned from a volunteer-run nonprofit to one with paid staff, PRISM became more strategic about how to foster diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in its programming and operations. To do so, the organization created an Artistic Advisory Board in 2022 to engage with leading artists, composers, curators, and producers in developing new programmatic concepts, and identifying a diverse pool of prospective collaborators. All the Advisory Board members have longstanding ties to the Quartet, share PRISM's commitment to experimentation and boundary-crossing, and represent extraordinary standards of practice in their own creative work. The AA Board is majority POC and will serve as a pipeline for PRISM to diversify its mostly white board of directors.

PRISM Quartet has also found ways to integrate community voice into other parts of its programming, including prioritizing commissions/collaborations with composers and performers of color, work across musical cultures, and strive for gender balance; documenting that work and expand the audience through recording projects; seeking out new audiences by presenting free concerts in community spaces such as Philadelphia parks and libraries; and creating opportunities for young artists from diverse backgrounds through PRISM Quartet Institute's training and mentorship services.