

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 8, 2020

millertheatre.com

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“If you’re a fan of the Greenwich Village Halloween Parade, you’ve probably wondered how those amazing puppets are created and brought to life. This is your chance not just to see behind the scenes but also to participate in the process.”

— *The New York Times*

**Arts Initiative and Miller Theatre
at Columbia University School of the Arts**

present year nine of a beloved tradition that connects community through art

MORNINGSIDE LIGHTS

This year's theme is the Langston Hughes poem

"Harlem Night Song"

Free as always • Virtual this year

Concept and direction by **PROCESSIONAL ARTS WORKSHOP**

Through distribution of "make-your-own" lantern kits, plus video tutorials and virtual workshops, the public will collectively illuminate the night with their one-of-a-kind lanterns, connecting to the spirit of Harlem.

September 17-19

"Create your own lantern at home" kits will be distributed to registrants at a socially-distanced pick-up location outside of Miller Theatre.

Monday, October 26, 7:00 p.m.

Watch the Video Celebration!

Tune in to morningside-lights.com to watch the live premiere that includes user-generated content of the lantern-making process.

Sign up at morningside-lights.com



Morningside Lights participants from past years create and prepare their lanterns.

**From Melissa Smey, Executive Director
Arts Initiative and Miller Theatre:**

"I believe that art has the power to heal and bring communities together, and no project illustrates this more than the beloved tradition of *Morningside Lights*. This year we bring people together virtually for hands-on art making, facilitating community among participants in a time when togetherness is hard to achieve. Through the words of Langston Hughes in his poem *Harlem Night Song*, we celebrate the neighborhood roots of this project and illuminate virtually the magic and creativity of our community. I hope you join us."

The favorite neighborhood tradition **MORNINGSIDE LIGHTS**, presented by the **Arts Initiative** and **Miller Theatre at Columbia University**, returns virtually this year with **Harlem Night Song**, inspired by Langston Hughes' **1926 poem**. Ever since *Morningside Lights* first set off through Morningside Park in Upper Manhattan nine years ago, the core mission has been to bring people together in a shared act of artistic expression. And while this year's events are virtual, the common bond remains the same, and the results are expected to be just as awe-inspiring.

The *Morningside Lights* community will digitally contribute their assembled text, images, and voices to create a shared work of art, allowing their lanterns to illuminate Hughes' poem and embody its spirit of togetherness in dark times.

A limited number of "create your own lantern at home" kits will be made available to the general public, with reservations required on morningside-lights.com. Kits will be distributed to registrants at a socially-distanced pick-up location outside of Miller Theatre (Broadway at 116th Street) on **September 17, 18, and 19**. Kit recipients will be assisted in the creation of their lantern through a video tutorial with **Processional Arts Workshop**, and will have access to virtual workshops to build their lanterns with the rest of the community via Zoom.

There are two additional ways to participate in this year's *Morningside Lights*: Build a mini lantern (aka nano-lantern) with materials likely found in one's home (**details will be announced September 26**); or submit one's recitation of the poem, *Harlem Night Song*.

All participants are encouraged to share photo and video of their experience and progress, culminating in a video celebration on **Monday, October 26 at 7PM** that will feature all of the shared content in a single captivating film.

Information and kit reservations are available at www.morningside-lights.com.

[Click here](#) to watch a video of *Morningside Lights* 2019.

[Click here](#) to view photos of previous *Morningside Lights*.

“This twilight parade of handmade paper lanterns is a gorgeous welcome to fall. It's a remarkably creative undertaking—New York's Got Talent!—and everybody is invited to join in. Morningside Lights is magical, even if you're just a spectator.”

— **Time Out Kids**

Morningside Lights concept and direction by Processional Arts Workshop.

Co-produced by the Arts Initiative and Miller Theatre

at Columbia University School of the Arts.

Harlem Night Song, by Langston Hughes

Come,
Let us roam the night together
Singing.

I love you.

Across
The Harlem roof-tops
Moon is shining.
Night sky is blue.
Stars are great drops
Of golden dew.

Down the street
A band is playing.

I love you.

Come,
Let us roam the night together
Singing.

Processional Arts Workshop

www.superiorconcept.org



Alex Kahn and Sophia Michahelles, PAW Artistic Directors
with workshop participants; Photos by Karli Cadel

Processional Arts Workshop (PAW), under the direction of Alex Kahn and Sophia Michahelles, creates site-specific parades, processions, and immersive theatre happenings worldwide. Inspired by diverse, global traditions of Carnavalesque street theatre, largescale puppetry, and ritual pageant, PAW uses processional art as means to build and sustain community spirit and awareness, designing original works for established public events and festivals, as well as seeding site-specific pageant traditions in communities where no such events may have existed before. Drawing on regional cultures, history, folklore, ethnicity, and current sociopolitical concerns, PAW engages local residents in every stage of production, empowering them to identify and express the narratives that uniquely define “local” in their own community, against the modern tide of global homogenization.

The Arts Initiative

artsinitiative.columbia.edu

The Arts Initiative at Columbia University is a pioneering venture to make arts and culture a meaningful part of every Columbian's experience. Founded in 2004, the Arts Initiative's diverse programs encourage students, faculty, and staff to experience the creative life of the campus, engage the cultural riches of New York City and the wider world, and create arts and performance. Under the auspices of the Arts Initiative, Columbia students, faculty, and staff attend cultural events across New York City, benefit from ticket discounts and subsidies, and connect to one another through the Arts Initiative's vibrant programming. At its core, the Arts Initiative creates and facilitates opportunities for cross-disciplinary exchange and is integral to the fabric of campus life. Its programs benefit from engagement with Columbia's world-class faculty, especially those of the School of the Arts, of which it is a part.

Miller Theatre

millertheatre.com

Miller Theatre at Columbia University is the leading presenter of new music in New York City and one of the most vital forces nationwide for innovative programming. In partnership with Columbia University School of the Arts, Miller is dedicated to producing and presenting unique events, with a focus on contemporary and early music, jazz, opera, and multimedia performances. Founded in 1988, Miller Theatre has helped launch the careers of myriad composers and ensembles over the years, serving as an incubator for emerging artists and a champion of those not yet well known in the United States. A four-time recipient of the ASCAP/Chamber Music America Award for Adventurous Programming, Miller Theatre continues to meet the high expectations set forth by its founders—to present innovative programs, support the development of new work, and connect creative artists with adventurous audiences.

*Columbia University's Miller Theatre is located north of the Main Campus Gate
at 116th St. & Broadway on the ground floor of Dodge Hall.*

For further information, press tickets, photos, and to arrange interviews,
please contact Aleba & Co. at 212/206-1450 or aleba@alebaco.com.

For photos, please contact Lauren Bailey Cognetti, lrb2113@columbia.edu.



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