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## ARTSEMERSON ANNOUNCES 2022/23 SEASON

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**TWELFTH SEASON OF PRESENTING CONTEMPORARY WORLD THEATRE  
TO INCLUDE 7 IN-PERSON AND 2 VIRTUAL EVENTS**

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**STEP AFRIKA!, MANUAL CINEMA, AND RAPHAËLLE BOITEL RETURN TO  
ARTSEMERSON WITH BOSTON PREMIERES OF DRUMFOLK, FRANKENSTEIN,  
AND SHADOWS CAST**

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**ARTSEMERSON BRINGS OTHER ARTISTS FOR THE FIRST TIME:  
BILL IRWIN (ON BECKETT), WANG CHONG (MADE IN CHINA 2.0), DELANNA  
STUDI (AND SO WE WALKED), AND NORA CHIPAUMIRE (NEHANDA)**

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**SEASON PACKAGES AND GROUP TICKETS ON SALE NOW FOR ALL IN-  
PERSON EVENTS**

**[Boston, MA – Monday, May 23, 2022]** – ArtsEmerson, Boston’s leading presenter of contemporary world theater and film and the professional presenting and producing organization of Emerson College, is proud to announce its 2022/23 Season, featuring seven live in-person events. The new season continues ArtsEmerson’s commitment to international work with an emphasis on uplifting marginalized voices by supporting the presentation and development of work created by artists of color.

The 22/23 Season consists of seven in-person performances: **Drumfolk** (Step Afrika! / Washington DC), **On Beckett** (Bill Irwin / New York City), **Made In China 2.0** (Wang Chong / China), **Frankenstein** (Manual Cinema / Chicago), **Shadows Cast** (Raphaëlle Boitel & Julien Couzy / France), **And So We Walked** (DeLanna Studi / USA), and **Nehanda** (Nora Chipaumire / USA/Zimbabwe).

In addition, ArtsEmerson will bring two live virtual performance experiences – **Theatre For One: We Are Here** (Octopus Theatricals / Kenya) and **Cointelshow: A Patriot Act** (Mondo Bizarro / New Orleans) – both of which will go on sale later, with Package Holders receiving first access to secure tickets at the same discount as their Package purchase.



## **Drumfolk**

Photo: Rachel Papo

## **On Beckett**

Photo: Carol Rosegg

“Since its inception, ArtsEmerson has been committed to pushing the boundaries of theatre and expanding whose stories get told,” says ArtsEmerson Executive Director David C. Howse. “We’re leaning into this commitment even more intentionally in our second decade as Boston’s leading presenter of contemporary theatre from around the globe. That is why as we enter our twelfth season, we are so excited to uplift an incredible lineup of performers and productions that spark important conversations and inspire us to build a better world together. We believe in artists who boldly celebrate our differences, reflect the vital diversity of our city, and deepen our connection to each other.”

“Stories don’t just entertain,” offers ArtsEmerson Director of Artistic Programming Ronee Penoi. “They inform how we see ourselves as individuals, how we see each other, how we see our country, and how we imagine our future. They help maintain structures of power, of wealth, and of who matters. And they are the backbone to the decisions we make.”

Penoi continues, “If we want to change our world, we need to change our story. **Re-storying** is the act of re-writing our shared history, mythology, and values so that it is fully truthful, representing all people – especially those whose voices have been silenced by those who fear losing power and privilege. Only when our history is re-storied can we understand who we are and where we are going. I’m excited for audiences to experience these incredible works; each production asks a unique question about our understanding of ourselves and each other.”

### **22/23 ArtsEmerson Season Packages**

ArtsEmerson Season Packages are available for purchase now, providing the public with access to the best seats at the best prices. Package buyers save up to 40% on the cost of single tickets, and packages start at just \$99 for four shows. Priority access is also available now to those wishing to purchase a group of 10+ tickets for any single performance. To purchase, visit [ArtsEmerson.org](https://www.ArtsEmerson.org) or call the ArtsEmerson Box Office at 617-824-8400 (open Tue-Sat from 12:00PM ET - 6:00PM ET). Those desiring walk-up service may visit the Paramount Center Box Office (559 Washington Street, Boston) Thu-Sat from 12:00PM ET - 6:00PM ET.

ArtsEmerson’s 22/23 Season will kick off October 05 - 16, 2022 with the thrilling return of Step Afrika! and **Drumfolk**, a percussive exploration of American history, placing a spotlight on the rhythmic cycle of life that bonds all of us together. Through music, stepping, and ring shouts, the remarkable performers of Step Afrika! recreate histories too often subordinated, and achieve a musical and movement-filled celebration of the human spirit that is perfect for the entire family to share together.

Later that month, October 26 - 30, 2022, is **On Beckett**, in which world renowned actor and clown Bill Irwin explores a performer’s relationship to the works of legendary playwright Samuel Beckett incorporating passages from various works by the Irish writer in an intimate, fun-filled performance. Irwin is a 5-time Tony Award nominee (winning Best Actor in a Play for 2005’s *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*) whose original works include *The Regard of Flight*, *Largely New York*, *Fool Moon*, *Old Hats*. Television credits include FX’s *Legion*, HBO’s *Confirmation*, NBC’s *This Is Us*, and Mr. Noodle in *Elmo’s World*. His film credits include *Rachel Getting Married*, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *Eight Men Out*, and *Interstellar*.

From February 08 - 12, 2023, ArtsEmerson is thrilled to welcome back Chicago’s Manual Cinema (**Ada Ava** in 2018, **The End of TV** in 2019) with its thrilling version of the classic Gothic tale, **Frankenstein**. Using more than 500 handmade puppets, dozens of old school projectors, as well as live actors and cinematic elements, the Emmy-award winning troupe shares its explosive, layered interpretation of the classic horror novel, where real-life and fictional narratives of Mary Shelley, Victor Frankenstein, and Frankenstein’s monster expose how family, community, and education shape personhood – or destroy it by their absence.

Provocative and experimental director Wang Chong will take audiences on a journey deep inside his personal experiences of creating theatre in China and around the globe, when ArtsEmerson presents his newest work,

**Made In China 2.0**, February 01 - 12, 2023. Along the way, he challenges us to ask, what are the stereotypes we hold about what is made in China? Do we think of gadgets? Or stories? In unpacking the global expectations of what China brings to the world stage, Mr. Wang brilliantly places himself into the role of solo performer, becoming one of the show's most intriguing, compelling charms.

Following her Boston debut in 2019 (**When Angels Fall**), which became a word-of-mouth sensation, Raphaëlle Boitel returns to ArtsEmerson March 30 - April 02, 2023, this time partnering with Julien Couzy on a brand-new vision, exploring the human psyche in **Shadows Cast**. A potent mix of dance, circus and cinema. **Shadows Cast** is a journey into one's most intimate thoughts, highlighting the perilous dangers of lying to ourselves and others, while finding light in the shadows and the truths in the unspoken, all while delivering a visual feast for the eyes.

From April 26 - 30, 2023 comes **And So We Walked** from acclaimed Cherokee actress, writer and activist DeLanna Studi. A frank, heartwarming and inspiring one-woman show illuminating and reckoning with one of the darkest corners of American history, this engagement marks the first time ArtsEmerson has featured the work of a Native American artist on its stages. When Studi and her father embark on an incredible 900-mile journey along the Trail of Tears, she comes to truly understand her own identity and the conflicts of her nation. Recounting the six-week journey, which retraced the path her great-great grandparents took in the 1830s during the forced relocation of 17,000 Cherokee from their homelands, **And So We Walked** is a powerful, multi-faceted dramatic memoir.

The 22/23 Season closes out May 17 - 21, 2023 with **Nehanda**, which explores the legend of Nehanda, a powerful spirit venerated by the Shona people, native of Zimbabwe and central Mozambique, who inhabits only women. Conceived as an opera by nora chipaumire, but featuring musical forms, melodies, and instruments that wholly subvert the form—like turntables, Ngoma drums, and field recordings—Nehanda's music casts an entrancing, powerful spell. The performance is designed as an immersive, participatory, and durational spectacle where participants can collectively perform and investigate the process of law-making and its crucial role in the European colonial project.

### **Live Virtual Experiences**

Between November 04 - 20, 2022, ArtsEmerson will present **Theatre For One: We Are Here (Nairobi Edition)**. The vision of New York-based artistic director Christine Jones, **Theatre for One: We Are Here (Nairobi Edition)** is a virtual theatrical experience that showcases six micro-plays by female writers/performers from Kenya. All of their stories find a way to question the link between ancestry and civilization, the real and the surreal, the inner being, and our external existence. In **We Are Here**, one performer and one audience member will journey together in search of the answers through these deeply personal works that unfold in an intimate, shared moment.

From March 08 - 12, 2023 comes a second live virtual play experience, **Cointelshow: A Patriot Act**, a political satire, from New Orleans theatre company Mondo Bizarro, about an FBI counterintelligence program (COINTELPRO) through which the organization sabotaged, disrupted, and repressed domestic groups like the Black Panther Party, the American Indian Movement and individuals like Dr. Martin Luther King and Fred Hampton. Using actual COINTELPRO artifacts and transcripts, creator/performer L.M. Bogard takes audiences behind the curtain of heavily-censored documents into the secrets that the U.S. government holds over its own people. Join Special Agent Christian White on a cheerfully creepy, and often grimly funny, tour of the FBI's notorious Counterintelligence Program.

### **Commitment to Film and Engagement Programming**

The 22/23 Season will continue ArtsEmerson's mission of using the expanded programming of film offerings, screening events both in person at the Emerson Paramount Center's state-of-the-art Bright Family Screening Room, and online with on-demand content streamed in the virtual venue. Film programming will include narrative and documentary work screened as part of **Shared Stories** (in partnership with Boston Asian American Film Festival, Boston Latino International Film Festival, and Roxbury International Film Festival),

**Projecting Connections: Chinese American Experiences** (in partnership with Boston Asian American Film Festival), and the **Bright Lights Film Series** (in partnership with the Department of Visual and Media Arts at Emerson College).

ArtsEmerson will also continue its longstanding partnerships with many of New England's premiere film festivals, hosting screenings of **Boston Asian American Film Festival**, **Boston Latino International Film Festival**, **Roxbury International Film Festival**, and **Wicked Queer: the Boston LGBTQ+ Film Festival**.

The **Play Reading Book Club**, a dynamic theatre literacy and community education program that provides unique and radical access to scripts, artists, and conversations, will also be returning for ArtsEmerson's twelfth season. PRBCs will take place at the Roxbury branch of Boston Public Library and other neighborhood locations and following successful reimagining of these gatherings to take place virtually over the past year, there will also be opportunities to join and participate in virtual clubs during the 22/23 Season.

In addition, ArtsEmerson is bringing back **Welcome to Boston Cast Parties**, designed in the tradition of visionary arts leader, humanist and Emerson College alumna, Ms. Elma Lewis, who would have marked her 100th birthday on September 15th of this year. Co-hosted by ArtsEmerson and community partners, the parties celebrate the arrival of national and international artists to Boston, with acclaimed local artists offering performances that serve as a cultural gift of welcome.

ArtsEmerson's mission is not only to present extraordinary artists and performances from around the world, but to engage diverse multi-generational Boston audiences in thinking and talking about issues that address the concerns and challenges of the contemporary moment. Art is the prompt, and conversation is the point. The 22/23 Season will include signature ArtsEmerson Public Dialogue events. ArtsEmerson will also continue to use its public-facing platforms – venue marquees, email communications, social media networks and its online journal, [ArtsEmersonBlog.org](https://www.artsemerson.org/blog), to expand public discourse around topics of urgency to our city, our nation, and our world.

Specific programming and scheduling for these and additional civic engagement activities will be announced at a later date.

For production stills and other media kit assets for the 2022/23 season, click [here](#).

## 22/23 SEASON THEATRE EVENTS

October 05 – 16, 2022

### **Drumfolk**

Step Afrika!

C. Brian Williams - Lamar Lovelace - Mfoniso Akpan

Live In-Person Event

Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre

When Africans lost the right to use their drums, the beats found their way into the body of the people. Inspired by the Stono Rebellion of 1739 and Negro Act of 1740, **Drumfolk** is a percussive exploration of American history, placing a spotlight on the rhythmic cycle of life that bonds all of us together.

Step Afrika! have been called "masters of stepping" by the New Yorker and "electrifying talents" by the New York Times. Through music, stepping, and ring shouts these remarkable performers recreate histories too often left in the margins. After their celebrated prior visits to Boston (**The Migration**, **Step Afrika!**), the troupe returns this fall with a celebration of the human spirit perfect for the entire family.

Step into history, step into **Drumfolk!**

October 26 – 30, 2022

## **Bill Irwin On Beckett**

Bill Irwin

Live In-Person Event

Emerson Paramount Center – Robert J. Orchard Stage

In **On Beckett**, world renowned actor and clown Bill Irwin explores a performer's relationship to the works of legendary Irish playwright Samuel Beckett - incorporating passages from various works such as *Waiting for Godot*, *Texts for Nothing*, and *Watt*. Irwin's physical approach to the comic and tragic sides of Beckett's writing invites audiences to experience the writer's language as they never have before. This intimate, fun-filled performance has been called "utterly delightful!" by *New York* magazine and "captivating...radiant, living theater" by the *New York Times*.

Bill Irwin's original stage works include *The Regard of Flight*, *The Happiness Lecture*, and *Old Hats*. He won Broadway's Best Actor Tony Award for *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, and picked up a second statue for *Fool Moon* (created with David Shiner) which earned four Tony nominations. His many television credits include *Elmo's World* (as Mr. Noodle), *Legion* (Mr. Loudermilk), and his film credits range from *Rachel Getting Married* to *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas*. His many awards include one of the MacArthur Foundation's "genius" grants.

November 04 - 06 & November 17 - 20, 2022

## **Theatre For One: We Are Here (Nairobi Edition)**

Christine Jones | Octopus Theatricals

Virtual Event

The vision of New York-based artistic director Christine Jones, **Theatre For One: We Are Here** is a virtual theatrical experience that showcases six micro-plays by female writers/performers from Kenya, the Middle East, and the U.S. All of their stories find a way to question the link between ancestry and civilization, the real and the surreal, the inner being, and our external existence. In **We Are Here**, one performer and one audience member will journey together in search of the answers through these deeply personal works that unfold in an intimate, shared moment.

February 01 – 12, 2023

## **Made in China 2.0**

Wang Chong

Live In-Person Event

Emerson Paramount Center – Jackie Liebergott Black Box

Provocative and experimental director Wang Chong takes audiences on a journey deep inside his personal experiences of creating theatre in China and around the globe. Along the way, he challenges us to ask, *what are the stereotypes we hold about what is made in China? Do we think of gadgets? Or stories?* In unpacking the global expectations of what China brings to the world stage, Mr. Wang brilliantly places himself into the role of solo performer becoming one of the show's most intriguing, compelling charms.

An immersive combination that strides the line between a pop-culture lecture and dramatic performance, the World Premiere tour of *Made in China 2.0* incorporates vivid video footage—a signature of the artist's work from Théâtre du Rêve Expérimental—a company he founded in 2008.

February 22 – 26, 2023

## **Frankenstein**

Manual Cinema

Live In-Person Event

Emerson Paramount Center – Robert J. Orchard Stage

Love, loss, and creation merge in unexpected ways in this thrilling version of the classic Gothic tale, **Frankenstein**. Using more than 500 handmade puppets, dozens of old school projectors, as well as live actors

and cinematic elements, Emmy-award winning troupe Manual Cinema returns to ArtsEmerson (**Ada/Ava, The End of TV**) to share its explosive, layered interpretation of the classic horror novel, *Frankenstein*.

In this eye-popping visual feast, the Chicago-based performance collective imaginatively stitches together the classic tale of *Frankenstein* with the biography of its author, Mary Shelley, to create an unexpected story about the beauty and horror of creation. The real-life and fictional narratives of Shelley, Victor Frankenstein, and Frankenstein's monster expose how family, community, and education shape personhood – or destroy it by their absence.

March 08 – 12, 2023

**Cointelshow: A Patriot Act**

Mondo Bizzaro

Virtual Event

**Cointelshow: A Patriot Act** is a political satire about an FBI counterintelligence program (COINTELPRO) through which the organization sabotaged, disrupted, and repressed domestic groups like the Black Panther Party, the American Indian Movement and individuals like Dr. Martin Luther King and Fred Hampton. Using actual COINTELPRO artifacts and transcripts, creator/performer L.M. Bogard takes audiences behind the curtain of heavily-censored documents into the secrets that the U.S. government holds over its own people.

Join Special Agent Christian White on a cheerfully creepy, and often grimly funny, tour of the FBI's notorious Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO).

March 30 – April 02, 2023

**Shadows Cast**

Raphaëlle Boitel & Julien Couzy

Live In-Person Event

Emerson Paramount Center – Robert J. Orchard Stage

When Raphaëlle Boitel premiered her show **When Angels Fall** in Boston in 2019, it became a word-of-mouth sensation, with audiences spellbound and jaws dropped as her surreal, beautiful world darkly bloomed on stage. Now Boitel returns with a brand new vision, exploring the human psyche with **Shadows Cast**.

Family represents the ultimate cocoon where we seek protection from a very young age. But what if this cocoon is also where we find trauma? What goes unsaid? These secrets and unspoken truths become like ghosts hiding in the shadows of ourselves and our families. A potent mix of dance, circus and cinema, **Shadows Cast** is a journey into one's most intimate thoughts, highlighting the perilous dangers of lying to ourselves and others. Drawing inspiration from cinematic visionaries like David Lynch, Fritz Lang, and Alfred Hitchcock, this triumphant return to Boston from director/performer Raphaëlle Boitel promises to find light in the shadows and the truths in the unspoken, all while delivering a visual feast for the eyes.

April 26 – 30, 2023

**And So We Walked**

DeLanna Studi

Live In-Person Event

Emerson Paramount Center – Robert J. Orchard Stage

From acclaimed Cherokee actress, writer and activist DeLanna Studi comes **And So We Walked**, a frank, heartwarming and inspiring one-woman show illuminating and reckoning with one of the darkest corners of American history.

In Studi's story, she and her father embark on an incredible 900-mile journey along the Trail of Tears to truly understand her own identity and the conflicts of her nation. Recounting the six-week journey, which retraced the path her great-great grandparents took in the 1830s during the forced relocation of 17,000 Cherokee from their homelands, **And So We Walked** is a powerful, multi-faceted dramatic memoir that draws on extraordinary

interviews, historical research, and the artist's personal experience to convey the complexities and conflicts with which the Cherokee wrestle.

May 17 – 23, 2023

### **Nehanda**

nora chipaumire

Live In-Person Event

Emerson Paramount Center – Robert J. Orchard Stage

**Nehanda** explores the legend of Nehanda, a powerful spirit venerated by the Shona people, who inhabits only women. nora chipaumire, the visionary creative artist/performer behind this genre-bending musical performance, once described Nehanda as “a Zimbabwean Joan of Arc.” Conceived as an opera but featuring musical forms, melodies, and instruments that wholly subvert the form—like turntables, Ngoma drums, and field recordings—**Nehanda**'s music casts an entrancing, powerful spell. Designed as an immersive, participatory, and durational spectacle where participants can collectively perform and investigate the process of law-making and its crucial role in the European colonial project, **Nehanda** offers a legal and philosophical defense for the first heroes of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle.

## PRESENTER INFORMATION

### **ArtsEmerson**

ArtsEmerson is the professional presenting and producing organization at Emerson College, and its mission is to bring people together to experience powerful performances that delight, provoke, and inspire, celebrating both our differences and common humanity. Founded in 2010 by Robert J. Orchard — the year the U.S. Census confirmed there was no single cultural majority in Boston — ArtsEmerson is committed to building a cultural institution that reflects the diversity of our city. Our imaginative and globe-spanning live and virtual performances, films, and conversations invites each of us to be part of a Boston that is more creative, equitable, and connected. ArtsEmerson is led by Executive Director, David Howse. For more information visit [ArtsEmerson.org](https://ArtsEmerson.org).

### **Emerson College**

ArtsEmerson and HowlRound Theatre Commons both operate from within the Emerson College Office of the Arts. Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theater District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,700 undergraduates and 1,400 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic as well as its new Global Portals. The College has an active network of 51,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the arts. For more information, visit [Emerson.edu](https://Emerson.edu). For media inquiries specific to Emerson College, please contact Michelle Gaseau (E: [Michelle\\_Gaseau@emerson.edu](mailto:Michelle_Gaseau@emerson.edu), O: 617-824-3547, C: 617-429-2624).

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