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LARGER THAN LIFE PUPPETRY AND A POLYPHONIC CHORUS COME  
TOGETHER IN A BREATHTAKING THEATRICAL EVENT

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ARTSEMERSON PRESENTS

## BOOK OF MOUNTAINS AND SEAS

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FROM AWARD-WINNING COMPOSER HUANG RUO & MACARTHUR  
FELLOW PUPPETEER/ARTIST BASIL TWIST  
PRODUCED BY BETH MORRISON PROJECTS  
THREE PERFORMANCES ONLY  
EMERSON PARAMOUNT CENTER  
APRIL 19 – 21, 2024

**[Boston, MA – Wednesday, March 27, 2024]** – ArtsEmerson, Boston’s leading presenter of contemporary world theater and film and the professional presenting and producing organization of Emerson College, is excited to present the **Book of Mountains and Seas** at the Emerson Paramount Center from April 19 – 21, 2024. A daring new work by award-winning composer Huang Ruo and MacArthur Fellow puppeteer/artist Basil Twist, this pitch perfect collaboration, the show takes on ancient Chinese creation myths—first transcribed in the 4th Century BC—which are strikingly relevant to our current climate change emergency.



### **Book of Mountains and Seas**

*Photo credit: Teddy Wolff*

An ensemble of massive puppets, as beautiful as they are intimidating, and the chorus of Ars Nova Copenhagen harness music and a stunning visual tableau to offer a portrait of the natural world and our relationship to it. Basil Twist is a third-generation puppeteer and object theater artist, renowned globally for his visionary adaptations of opera, dance, and theater. Chinese-born American composer Huang Ruo has been called “one of the world’s leading young composers” and was formerly Composer in Residence at the

Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. era, dance, and theater. **Book of Mountains and Seas** is a 21st-century adaptation through the lens of our modern-day relationship with the natural world.

Immediately following the Friday, April 19, 2024 8PM ET performance, ArtsEmerson's Director of Artistic Programming Ronee Penoi will host an on-stage post show discussion with creators Basil Twist, Huang Ruo, and Creative Producer Beth Morrison. The conversation will last approximately 25-30 minutes.

Tickets for **Book of Mountains and Seas** may be purchased 24/7 at [ArtsEmerson.org](https://ArtsEmerson.org), or by calling 617-824-8400 (Tue-Sat from 12:00PM ET - 6:00PM ET). The Paramount Center Box Office (559 Washington Street, Boston) is open for walk-up service Thu-Sat from Noon - 6:00 PM ET. Tickets start at \$25. Groups of 10+ attending a performance save up to 30%.

Thanks to generous support from Rockland Trust, a limited number of \$10 Mobile Rush tickets will be available at 9:00 AM ET each performance day on a first-come, first-served basis, exclusively through the TodayTix mobile app. For more information, please click on "General Public" when you visit [ArtsEmerson's Offers web page](#).

**For production stills and other media kit assets, click [here](#).**

## LISTINGS INFORMATION FOR BOOK OF MOUNTAINS AND SEAS

### Dates:

April 19 – 21, 2024

### Venue:

Emerson Paramount Center  
Robert J. Orchard Stage  
559 Washington Street  
Boston, MA 02111

### Performance Schedule:

<i>Friday, April 19, 2024</i>	<i>8:00PM ET</i>	<i>Press Performance</i>
<i>Saturday, April 20, 2024</i>	<i>8:00PM ET</i>	
<i>Sunday, April 21, 2024</i>	<i>2:00PM ET</i>	

### Ticket Information:

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### Content:

Recommended for Ages 14+

### Running Time:

75 minutes, no intermission

### Public Health Information:

Mask-wearing is strongly encouraged at all times while indoors at the theatre but is no longer required for most\* performances and events.

For folks who require a socially distanced seating location or who have other questions or concerns, please contact the Box Office by phone at 617.824.8400 or by emailing [tickets@artsemerson.org](mailto:tickets@artsemerson.org) to arrange seating that accommodates your needs. Masks and face shields will also be available at the theatre upon request.

If you or a member of your party is feeling sick, experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, or has been in contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 10 days, please stay home. Our box office will allow you to refund or exchange performance tickets at any time prior to the event. No one should come to the venue if they are not feeling well.

It is within our values to create a safe space for everyone, full stop. All staff at the Theatres of Emerson College are working to ensure the health and safety of all who are sharing these spaces. Maintaining our community's health and safety requires the effort of all involved. By committing to this Shared Code of Conduct, you are not only protecting yourself, but fellow guests, artists, and staff. Please do all you can to help keep all of us safe. We cannot wait to see you at the theater! [Click here to review full info on Health and Wellness information.](#)

## CREDITS

### COMPOSER & LIBRETTIST

Huang Ruo

### DIRECTOR & PRODUCTION DESIGNER

Basil Twist

### CONDUCTOR

Paul Hillier

### LIGHTING DESIGN

Ayumu "Poe" Saegusa

### AUDIO ENGINEER

Daniel Newman

## BIOGRAPHIES

### Beth Morrison Projects

Beth Morrison Projects (BMP) is one of the foremost creators and producers of new opera-theatre and music theatre, with a fierce commitment to leading the industry into the future, cultivating a new generation of talent, and telling the stories of our time.

Founded by "contemporary opera mastermind" (LA Times) Beth Morrison, who was honored as one of Musical America's Artists of the Year/Agents of Change in 2020, BMP has grown into "a driving force behind America's thriving opera scene" (Financial Times), with Opera News declaring that the company, "more than any other... has helped propel the art form into the twenty-first century."

Operating across the US and internationally, with offices in Brooklyn and Los Angeles, BMP's unique model offers living composers the support, guidance, and freedom to experiment, allowing them to create singularly innovative and impactful projects. Since forming in 2006, the company has commissioned, developed, produced and toured over 50 works in 14 countries around the world, including the Pulitzer Prize-winning chamber operas *Angel's Bone* and *p r i s m*.

In 2013, BMP co-founded the PROTOTYPE Festival with HERE Arts Center, which has been called "utterly essential" (The New York Times), "indispensable" (The New Yorker), and "one of the world's top festivals of contemporary opera and theater" (Associated Press).

### Huang Ruo

Huang Ruo has been lauded by the New Yorker as “one of the world’s leading young composers” and by the New York Times for having “a distinctive style.” His vibrant and inventive musical voice draws equal inspiration from Chinese ancient and folk music, Western avant-garde, experimental, noise, natural and processed sound, rock, and jazz to create a seamless, organic integration using a compositional technique he calls “Dimensionalism.”

Ruo’s diverse compositional works span from orchestra, chamber music, opera, theater, and dance, to cross-genre, sound installation, multi-media, experimental improvisation, folk rock, and film. His music has been premiered and performed by the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Seattle Symphony, National Polish Radio Orchestra, Kiel Philharmonic Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Washington National Opera, Houston Grand Opera, New York City Opera, Opera Hong Kong, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, Asko/Schoenberg Ensemble, Remix Ensemble, Nieuw Ensemble, Quatuor Diotima, and Ethel Quartet, and conducted by Wolfgang Sawallisch, Marin Alsop, Michael Tilson Thomas, James Conlon, Dennis Russell Davies, Ed Spanjaard, Peter Rundel, Alexander Liebreich, Xian Zhang, and Ilan Volkov. Huang Ruo’s opera *Dr. Sun Yat-Sen* had its American premiere at the Santa Fe Opera in 2014 and will receive its Canadian premiere by the Vancouver Opera for its future season.

His opera *Paradise Interrupted* received its world premiere at the Spoleto Festival USA in 2015 and was performed at the Lincoln Center Festival in 2016, before going on tour to Asia and Europe. In addition, Huang Ruo was recently named the composer-in-residence for Het Concertgebouw Amsterdam and National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan.

### **Basil Twist**

Basil Twist is the sole American to graduate from the *École Supérieure Nationale des Arts de la Marionnette* in Charleville-Mezieres, France. Basil’s showmanship was spotlighted in New York by “The Jim Henson International Festival of Puppetry” with his award winning “The Araneidae Show.” Coupled with the critically & popularly praised and multiple award-winning “Symphonie Fantastique,” Twist was revealed as a singular artist of unlimited imagination. Highlights of Twist’s subsequent work have included “*Petrushka*” (commissioned by Lincoln Center) and “*Dogugaeshi*” (The Japan Society), “*Behind the Lid*” (Silver Whale Gallery) with Lee Nagrin and “*Arias with a Twist*” (HERE) co-created with nightlife icon Joey Arias. “*Symphonie*” and these productions have toured throughout the world.

Twist is currently represented on Broadway with “*Charlie and The Chocolate Factory*”. Other credits include: “*Oh, Hello! On Broadway*,” the puppetry in “*The Addams Family*” for which he won a Drama Desk Award, and staging of the puppetry for the beloved “*Pee-Wee Herman Show*.”

Basil’s work is deeply musical in nature. He has conceived and directed two successful operas, Ottorini Respighi’s “*La Bella Dormiente Nel Bosco*” with the Gotham Chamber Opera at the Lincoln Center and Spoleto USA Festivals, and Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel* for the Houston and Atlanta Operas. “*Master Peters Puppet Show*” with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He has adapted his “*Petrushka*” to concert hall staging with full orchestra for the Fort Worth and Phoenix Symphonies.

In dance most recently, he created the sets and puppetry for the world premiere of “*Dorothy and The Prince of Oz*” for The Tulsa Ballet and collaborated on a new “*Nutcracker*” with Christopher Wheeldon for The Joffrey Ballet. Also with Wheeldon, “*Cinderella*” at the Dutch National Ballet & San Francisco Ballet, and “*A Winter’s Tale*” for the Royal Ballet. He created “*Darkness and Light*” with Pilobolus and created the title role in “*Wonderboy*” with The Joe Goode Dance Company. In drama; Twist created the unforgettable siblings in Paula Vogel’s play “*The Long Christmas Ride Home*” at Trinity Repertory and The Vineyard Theatre (including directing and designing the West Coast Premiere at The Magic Theatre), the play within the play for Oskar Eustis’ “*Hamlet*” at Shakespeare in the Park and Des Macnuff’s “*Yoshimi Battles the Pink Robots*” at the La Jolla Playhouse.

## **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 Interim Executive Director, Ronee Penoi. For more information visit [ArtsEmerson.org](http://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](http://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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