

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, PLEASE

Media Contacts:

Darren DeLuca | darren@luca-pr.com | 603-489-7624

Alex DeLuca | alex@luca-pr.com | 603-557-7742



ARTSEMERSON ANNOUNCES 2026/27 SEASON

**EIGHT BOLD THEATRICAL EVENTS
INCLUDING ONE U.S. PREMIERE**

A SEASON EXPLORING MEMORY, TRANSFORMATION, AND THE STORIES THAT SHAPE US:
FROM QUEER SPECTACLE TO INDIGENOUS RE-STORYING TO SHAKESPEARE WITH TONY
AWARD® NOMINEE AND GRAMMY AWARD® WINNER

PATRICK PAGE

FEATURING WORKS FROM THE U.S., (**TAYLOR MAC AND MATT RAY: SONGS
FROM BARK OF MILLIONS, ALL THE DEVILS ARE HERE: HOW SHAKESPEARE
INVENTED THE VILLAIN, SCOTT SILVEN: WONDERS, DREAM FEED, THE
CARLISLE PROJECT**), IRELAND (**WAKE**), CANADA (**2021**), AND SOUTH AFRICA
(**KUNENE AND THE KING**)

PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF FORM, PERFORMANCE, AND STORYTELLING

[Boston, MA – Wednesday, May 20, 2026] – ArtsEmerson, Boston’s leading presenter of contemporary world theater and the professional presenting and producing organization of Emerson College, is proud to announce its 2026/27 Season. Featuring eight extraordinary live stage events from across the globe, the new season continues ArtsEmerson’s commitment to presenting bold, innovative work that challenges, inspires, and connects audiences through shared experience. From electrifying large-scale performance to intimate theatrical encounters, the 2026/27 season brings together artists who are redefining the possibilities of live storytelling; exploring identity, memory, culture, and what it means to be human.



All the Devils Are Here
Photo by Julieta Cervantes



Dream Feed
Photo by Daniel Vasquez

“For ArtsEmerson, this season is about the ways we make meaning -- through memory, through storytelling, and through our shared humanity,” said Interim Executive Director of the Office of the Arts & ArtsEmerson Director of Artistic Programming Ronee Penoi. “Each of these works invites us into a distinct world, but

together they reflect something universal: our desire to understand ourselves and one another more deeply. From bold spectacle to intimate reflection, these artists are pushing the boundaries of form while asking urgent questions about identity, legacy, and connection. We're honored to bring these extraordinary voices to Boston and to continue creating space for stories that challenge, inspire, and bring us closer together."

The 26/27 season consists of eight theatrical events: A co-presentation with The Huntington of **Taylor Mac and Matt Ray: Songs from Bark of Millions** (Pomegranate Arts, USA), **All the Devils Are Here: How Shakespeare Invented the Villain** (Octopus Theatricals, USA), **WAKE** (THISISPOPBABY, Ireland), **2021** (Cole Lewis, Patrick Blenkarn, and Sam Ferguson, Canada), **Scott Silven: Wonders** (USA), **Dream Feed** (HERE Arts Center, USA), **Kunene and the King** (Octopus Theatricals, USA), and **The Carlisle Project** (Octopus Theatricals, USA).

To purchase ArtsEmerson Season Packages, visit 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.

26/27 ArtsEmerson Season Overview

The 2026/27 season launches in October with a Huntington Theatre co-presentation of **Taylor Mac and Matt Ray: Songs from Bark of Millions** (October 15–18, Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage), a dazzling rock opera spectacle from Taylor Mac, Matt Ray, and Machine Dazzle that celebrates queerness through music, drag, and radical performance. Later that month, acclaimed actor **Patrick Page** takes the stage with **All the Devils Are Here: How Shakespeare Invented the Villain** (October 28–November 1, Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage), a virtuosic solo performance exploring Shakespeare's most iconic villains.

In November, audiences are invited into a surreal sonic landscape with **Dream Feed** (November 19–22, Emerson Paramount Center, Jackie Liebergott Black Box), a genre-defying live concept album from Grammy Award-winning band The HawtPlates that blurs the boundary between dreams and waking life.

The season continues kicking 2027 off in February with two works that push theatrical form in entirely different directions. The U.S. Premiere of **WAKE** (February 11–14, Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre), from Irish company THISISPOPBABY, transforms the traditional wake into a high-energy celebration of life through music, dance, and spectacle. Later that month, **2021** (February 25–28, Emerson Paramount Center, Jackie Liebergott Black Box) offers an interactive performance where theater, video games, and artificial intelligence converge to explore memory, grief, and digital resurrection.

In March, internationally acclaimed illusionist **Scott Silven** brings **Wonders** (March 10–14, Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage), a *New York Times* Critic's Pick, to Boston—an intimate and mind-bending evening of storytelling and psychological illusion.

The spring season continues with **Kunene and the King** (April 1–11, Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre), a powerful and deeply human two-hander by South African playwright John Kani, examining race, reconciliation, and shared humanity in a post-apartheid world.

The season concludes with **The Carlisle Project** (April 30–May 2, Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage), a moving multidisciplinary work by **Ronee Penoi** and **Annalisa Dias** that explores the legacy of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School through music, storytelling, and ritual; inviting audiences into a collective act of remembrance, healing, and re-storying.

Commitment to Film and Engagement Programming

The 26/27 Season will continue ArtsEmerson's mission of using the expanded programming of film offerings and screening events at the Emerson Paramount Center's state-of-the-art Bright Family Screening Room. Film programming will include narrative and documentary work screened as part of **Shared Stories** (in partnership with Boston Asian American Film Festival, CineFest Latino Boston, and Roxbury International Film Festival)

and **Projecting Connections: Chinese American Experiences** (in partnership with Boston Asian American Film Festival).

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

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 our contemporary moment.

The Point is a conversation series that returns during the 26/27 Season, where audiences can explore big questions in intimate settings. Hosted by a member of the ArtsEmerson team, local and national luminaries will offer their points of view on the urgent questions surfaced by the artists on ArtsEmerson stages. The Point series is built on years of public dialogues addressing the challenges and concerns of our moment.

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 2026/27 season, click [here](#).

26/27 SEASON THEATRICAL EVENTS

Taylor Mac and Matt Ray: Songs from Bark of Millions

October 15 – 18, 2026

A co-presentation with The Huntington

Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage

Pomegranate Arts, USA

A powerhouse collective of international artists ignite an electrifying collision of performance, live music, and drag spectacle in the latest from theater-making renegades Taylor Mac, Matt Ray, and Machine Dazzle. The team unleashes their creativity in a rock opera meditation on queerness, featuring 55 original songs by Mac and Ray and a bevy of costumes by Dazzle. With the fierce elation of a pride parade, ***Bark of Millions*** is a luxuriant, provocative spectacle unlike any other.

Taylor Mac (a MacArthur Fellow, Ibsen Award winner, and Pulitzer Prize finalist) and Obie Award-winning composer Matt Ray are the masterminds behind this extraordinary event, which was commissioned and produced by Pomegranate Arts. Co-directed by visionaries Niegel Smith and Faye Driscoll and showcasing the extravagance of Machine Dazzle's costume design, ***Bark of Millions*** is brought to life by an international ensemble of 22 artists.

As in his legendary retelling of American history [A 24-Decade History of Popular Music](#), Mac and his artistic community use music, dance, and drag to subvert and deconstruct conventional narratives and joyfully, transgressively celebrate queerness in all its forms.

Bark of Millions is a transformative experience that celebrates the power of individuality and human connection.

All the Devils Are Here: How Shakespeare Invented the Villain

October 28 – November 1, 2026

Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage

Octopus Theatricals, USA

Dubbed “The villain of Broadway” by Playbill, Tony Award® Nominee and Grammy Award® Winner Patrick Page has never shied away from exploring his dark side. Now, with this tour-de-force solo performance, he turns his attention to the twisted motivation and hidden humanity at the heart of Shakespeare’s greatest villains. Moving swiftly through the Shakespeare canon, Page illuminates the playwright’s ever-evolving conception of evil by delving into more than a dozen of his most wicked creations. Thrilling, biting, hilarious, and enlightening, what Page delivers is a masterclass on the most terrifying subject of them all: human nature.

Dream Feed

November 19 – 22, 2026

Emerson Paramount Center, Jackie Liebergott Black Box
HERE Arts Center / The HawtPlates, USA

Drop into ***Dream Feed***, the latest electro-acoustic vocal work from two-time Grammy Award® Winning theatrical family band The HawtPlates. Can we remember our own dreams? Can we share the dreams we have in common? Can we awaken ourselves to the origin of our aspirations?

In this shared dream sequence and live concept album, The HawtPlates metabolize the surreal allure of the active mind within a slumbering body through trip-like lullabies and bold reverie. A 2023 HERE Artist Residency Program (HARP) commission with additional co-commissioning support from the Under the Radar Festival, this psychedelic live concept album invites audiences into a hypnotic journey through the subconscious.

WAKE

U.S. Premiere

February 11 – 14, 2027

Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre
THISISPOPBABY, Ireland

Experience ***WAKE***, the electrifying Irish variety phenomenon that remixes traditions in an high-octane, heart-thumping celebration of life and connection.

In ***WAKE***, customs collide with club anthems, creating a euphoric soundtrack for a night filled with aerial artistry, Irish tap, cabaret, slam poetry, pole-dancing and more.

Best known as an ancient funeral rite, the Irish wake is actually a celebration of transformation, of moving from one realm to another. Ushering in fabulous change—caterpillar to butterfly— the ***WAKE*** is a timeless reminder to live fully.

Acclaimed Irish theatre company THISISPOPBABY invites you to witness an anthemic spectacle with the spirit of an epic traditional music session and the ecstatic energy of a stadium concert. After acclaimed runs in Dublin, London, Manchester and Sydney, this theatrical phenomenon is going global.

Expect joy, connection, release...and, of course, glitter.

Touring supported by Culture Ireland.

2021

February 25 – 28, 2027

Emerson Paramount Center, Jackie Liebergott Black Box
Cole Lewis, Patrick Blenkarn, and Sam Ferguson, Canada

2021 is a live performance where theatre, AI, and video games converge, blurring the boundary between human remembrance and machine logic. An audience member steps into the role of Brian, an unhoused veteran reliving his final weeks inside a looping digital hospital encountering a labyrinth of corridors,

bureaucratic dead ends, and fleeting human contact. Guided by his daughter's narration, fragments of data become playable memory. Each decision glitches reality a little more. How do we provide dignity in death to those we fundamentally disagree with? Part elegy, part experiment, **2021** exposes the tenderness and terror of digital resurrection. It asks not whether machines can think, but whether memory itself is a kind of simulation.

2021 premiered at Under the Radar in 2026 and is supported by the National Arts Centre of Canada's National Creation Fund.

Scott Silven: Wonders

March 10 – 14, 2027

Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage

Scott Silven, USA

Scott Silven is a master of illusion and imagination, blending mind-bending mystery with profound insight. Named a "Critic's Pick" by *The New York Times* and praised by *Vogue* as a "world-renowned mentalist," Silven's **Wonders** takes audiences on an unforgettable journey far beyond traditional magic.

Inspired by his childhood in the wind-swept isles of Scotland, where mystery shaped his earliest sense of wonder, Scott Silven's **Wonders** invites you to experience the power of your own imagination and ultimately, understand how the wonders in your own life can bring everyone closer together.

From an acclaimed off-broadway run to a sold-out world tour, **Wonders** has mesmerized audiences across the globe. Do not miss this rising star's debut performance in Boston!

Kunene and the King

April 1 – 11, 2027

Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre

Octopus Theatricals, USA

South Africa, 2019. Twenty-five years since the first post-apartheid democratic elections, two men from contrasting walks of life are thrust together to reflect on a quarter century of change. Jack Morris is a celebrated classical actor who's just been given both a career-defining role and a life-changing diagnosis. Besides his age, Jack has seemingly little in common with his at-home nurse Lunga Kunene, but the two men soon discover their shared passion for Shakespeare, which ignites this 'rich, raw and shattering head-to-head' (The Times).

Written by, and starring, South African actor, activist and playwright John Kani, this critically acclaimed, refreshingly funny, and vital new play is as entertaining as it is thought-provoking.

The Carlisle Project

April 30 – May 2, 2027

Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage

ArtsEmerson / Octopus Theatricals, USA

The Carlisle Project blends song, satire, and ceremony into a powerful musical song cycle reckoning with the legacy of Carlisle Indian Industrial School. In the 19th century, Carlisle was founded to "Kill the Indian, and Save the Man," becoming the blueprint for government-sponsored assimilation that would continue for over a century. Now, Ronee Penoi (Laguna Pueblo, Cherokee, and a Carlisle descendant) as composer/lyricist and Annalisa Dias as lyricist/book-writer have woven an evocative theatrical feast, weaving stories of the past, present, and future, building pathways for hope and healing for Native peoples. Directed by Madeline Sayet

(Mohegan) and performed by an all-Native cast of music theater artists, this highly-anticipated new work also serves as a critically needed re-storying for non-Native Americans today.

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. In 2025, under the leadership of President Jay Bernhardt, the college launched their strategic plan, Extraordinary Emerson 2030, which lays out a powerful vision for the future of Emerson. ArtsEmerson's work is aligned with the mission and values of this plan, and our impact in Boston and across the globe brings that vision to life. ArtsEmerson is led by Interim Executive Director of the Office of the Arts & ArtsEmerson Director of Artistic Programming, Ronee Penoi. For more information ArtsEmerson.org.

Emerson College

Emerson College is an institution uniquely dedicated to the arts and communication, Emerson educates and elevates extraordinary artists, communicators, scholars, and professionals for the betterment of humanity through world-class teaching, practice, performance, and discovery that are experiential, innovative, and inclusive. Emerson creates storytellers and artists who impact and advance creative industries and media throughout the world. Based in the world-class city of Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theater District, the College offers experiential learning programs in Boston and across the globe: at Emerson Los Angeles, located in Hollywood, at its 14th-century castle, in the Netherlands, and at 28 global programs. For more information, visit emerson.edu. For media inquiries specific to Emerson College, please contact mediarelations@emerson.edu.

###