Wednesday, March 2, 2022
6 p.m. | Virtual Premiere
University of Southern California

Igor Stravinsky’s *The Soldier’s Tale* is a timeless work of musical theater that examines the human struggle to live in balance.
The Soldier’s Tale

Created and directed by Nathan Farrington and Catherine Farrington Garcia
Written and illustrated by Catherine Farrington Garcia
Produced by Hazard Productions, Catherine Farrington Garcia, Alexis Gallardo, and Teddy Abrams
Filmed and edited by Drama 3/4 Productions
Conducted by Molly Xiu Turner

Cast
The Soldier (and violin solo): Lucia Micarelli
The Devil: Nathan Farrington
The Narrator/God: Eboni Adams
The Soldier (dancer): Stephanie Kim
The King: Derek Schiesel

Production Team
Creative Producer: Teddy Abrams
Choreography: Kitty McNamee
Lighting Design: Azra King-Abadi
Sound Design: E. M. Gimenez
2D Animation: Mackenzie Bigley
3D Animation: Mikel Casado Iriarte
Producing Partner: Meghan Laughlin
Stage Manager: Jennifer Rose Franco
Theater Manager: Michael Latimer
Assistant Technical Theater Manager: Joe Shea

The Orchestra
Violin: Adam Millstein
Bass: Ted Botsford
Percussion: Gabriel Globus-Hoenich
Clarinet: Gerbrich Meijer
Bassoon: Elena Mateo Sáez
Trumpet: Ryan Darke
Trombone: Dillon MacIntyre

Special Thanks
Meghan Laughlin
Mario Garcia
Mary Farrington
Steven Hackman
Lucas Almeida
Jeff Kleeman and Studio Sereno
Joe Pereria and the USC Thornton School of Music Percussion Department
Melisandra Dunker
Eboni Adams
Before acting, Eboni Adams was a successful dancer who worked with Celine Dion, Cirque du Soleil, LA Opera, and choreographer with the Fort Worth Opera, Cincinnati Opera, and Atlanta Opera. With acting in mind, she wrote and starred in an award-winning short film entitled Grace. Whether she’s dancing or acting, Eboni’s passion for the performing arts is evident, and she is thrilled to perform alongside a team of talented artists in the reimagination of The Soldier’s Tale.

Nathan Farrington
Nathan Farrington has been the principal bassist for LA Opera since 2016. He regularly appears in the bass sections of many of America’s top orchestras. His Los Angeles–based audio company, Hazard Productions, composes for TV and film, connects top classical minds with artistic opportunities in movie and TV production, and stages original concerts and plays around the country.

Catherine Farrington Garcia
Catherine Farrington Garcia is an actress, director, and creative producer. A BFA graduate of the USC School of Theatre (now called the USC School of Dramatic Arts) and the British American Drama Academy, she was honored to receive the Lipinsky, Aileen Stanley Memorial, and the Jack Nicholson Awards for outstanding performance. She currently works with DreamWorks Animation and is also a creative producer for Hazard Productions.

E. M. Gimenez
E. M. Gimenez is an L.A.–based sound and video designer whose work spans opera, theatre, rock, installation art, and dance. Selected designs include Crescent City (The Industry), Invisible Cities (The Industry), I Dream (Opera Carolina), In Our Silence (Chautauqua Opera), American Buffalo (Deaf West Theatre), and Bernstein’s Mass (Indiana University Opera Theatre). He holds degrees from Indiana University School of Music (now called the Jacobs School of Music) and CalArts.

Stephanie Kim
Stephanie Kim is an electric artist who expresses herself through any medium that presents itself to her. She is ever dancing through life.

Azra King-Abadi
Azra King-Abadi is the assistant lighting designer at LA Opera. This production of The Soldier’s Tale is her first opportunity to work with Hazard Productions. Prior productions include Madama Butterfly (Opera Santa Barbara), Angels in America (The Los Angeles Philharmonic), Wonderful Town (LA Opera), The Breasts of Tiresias Long Beach Opera), Poor Clare (Echo Theatre), and several streamed concerts with LA Opera Connects. She has also worked with the USC Opera Department and the Colburn School.
Kitty McNamee
Kitty McNamee is an artist, creator, and collaborator, whose unique approach to direction and choreography was declared by Dance Magazine to possess “an outsize talent for that most elusive gift, originality.” Her early years in L.A. were spent honing her craft as artistic director of Hysterica Dance Co., where highlights include Minimalist Jukebox with the LA Phil at the Disney Concert Hall, hysterica x (celebrating the company’s 10th anniversary) at the Ford Amphitheatre, and performances at REDCAT, LACMA, the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, and Highways.

Lucia Micarelli
Immersed in the arts since birth in Queens, NY, Lucia Micarelli debuted as a violin soloist with the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra at six. Going on to attend the prestigious Juilliard School of Music’s Pre-College Division and the Manhattan School of Music, she started moonlighting with jazz and rock bands in New York clubs. Her diverse projects have included touring with the Trans-Siberian Orchestra, Josh Groban, and Chris Botti; releasing two solo studio albums; starring in HBO’s critically acclaimed Treme; and appearing in a PBS concert special, which spawned the live album An Evening with Lucia Micarelli.

Derek Schiesel
Originally from Minneapolis, MN, Derek Schiesel has spent the past 20 years training in ballet, jazz, contemporary, and modern dance techniques. After graduating from the University of Minnesota with a BS in Biology, Derek has performed for major recording artists such as Mariah Carey, Christina Aguilera, The Chicks, The Weeknd, Beck, Jason Mraz, Meghan Trainor, and Sigur Ros. In addition to working in the commercial realm, Derek has enjoyed performing in the concert dance world, appearing in numerous shows with the LA Philharmonic and Hysterica Dance Collective.

Molly Xiu Turner
Molly Xiu Turner conducts and composes music. She is currently a Salonen Fellow at the Colburn Conservatory. Recently, she was featured conducting the Dallas Opera Orchestra, The Juilliard Orchestra, Rice Campanile Orchestra, and the Eastern Festival Orchestra. In her own music, she is interested in the balance between strictly dictated elements and more aleatoric notation. She also has a strong interest in contemporary art, and as the artistic director for New Art / New Music at the Moody Center for the Arts from 2017–2019.
KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- This production is a reimagining of *The Soldier’s Tale*, a 1918 work by Igor Stravinsky (music) and C. F. Ramuz (libretto).
- Igor Stravinsky was one of the most important composers of the twentieth century.
- Catherine Farrington Garcia (director) is an actress and producer. A graduate of the USC School of Dramatic Arts and the British American Drama Academy, she currently works with DreamWorks Animation and is a producer for Hazard Productions.
- Nathan Farrington (creator, actor and producer) has been the principal bassist for LA Opera since 2016. His company, Hazard Productions, composes for TV and film and stages concerts and plays.
- Teddy Abrams (Creative Producer) is the music director of the Louisville Orchestra and music director and conductor of the Britt Festival Orchestra.

THE SOLDIER’S TALE

*The Soldier’s Tale* is a 1918 work of music, theatre, and dance by Igor Stravinsky and C. F. Ramuz.

“We were particularly drawn to the cycle of legends dealing with the adventures of the soldier who deserted, and the Devil who inexorably comes to carry off his soul,” Stravinsky said, reflecting on the creation of *The Soldier’s Tale*. The story was based on a Russian folk tale collected by Alexander Afanasiev, with Faustian themes.

*The Soldier’s Tale* was created during World War I, and premiered right after the Russian Revolution.

The music involves frequent changes of time signature, which makes the conductor’s role especially important. The composition also reflects a range of musical influences, including Russian folk music, ragtime, klezmer, tango, military marches, and church chorales. While many of Stravinsky’s famous works were written for a large orchestra (*The Firebird, The Rite of Spring*), *The Soldier’s Tale* was composed for a small chamber group to perform as a traveling theatre piece. The original version was for a seven-member musical ensemble, with two actors, a narrator, and a dancer. Stravinsky also arranged the trio version.

The first tour of *The Soldier’s Tale* was cut short by the 1918 influenza epidemic.
IGOR STRAVINSKY (1882–1971)

Igor Stravinsky was one of the most important composers of the twentieth century. His most famous work, the rhythmically surprising, dissonant Rite of Spring, was a revolutionary disruption of classical music that provoked an audience riot when it premiered in Paris in 1913. The Rite of Spring was ultimately perhaps one of the most influential pieces of twentieth-century music.

Stravinsky grew up in Russia and later lived in France, Switzerland, and the United States. He started out in the classical Romantic tradition, composing for the Ballets Russes, and became famous after the celebrated premiere of The Firebird at the Paris Opera in 1910. In subsequent decades Stravinsky radically departed from tradition and explored diverse musical styles, experimenting and influentially innovating in modernist, Neoclassical, and avant-garde directions.

Stravinsky lost his property in Russia, and associated income, as a result of the Russian Revolution of 1917. That, combined with difficulties receiving royalty payments during World War I, meant he had to earn a living through performing. Yet the war made large productions difficult if not impossible. The Soldier’s Tale, with its small ensemble, was created intentionally as a traveling performance piece during this period.

C. F. RAMUZ (1878–1947)

Charles-Ferdinand Ramuz was a Swiss novelist and one of the most well-known French-Swiss writers of the twentieth century. He became friends with Stravinsky during a stint in Paris before World War I, but was back in Switzerland by the time the two collaborated on The Soldier’s Tale. His most famous works were written later: Terror on the Mountain (1925), Beauty on Earth (1927), When the Mountain Fell (1934).

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- What is the moral of The Soldier’s Tale?
- How did events of the time—the Russian Revolution, World War I, and the influenza epidemic—affect the creation of The Soldier’s Tale?
- What recent works of art have you encountered whose creation has been influenced by current events?
- The Soldier’s Tale was originally performed with a male protagonist. Do you think anything changes with the casting of a soldier of a different gender?
- The Soldier’s Tale both addresses timeless human struggles and was shaped by the specific historical context in which it was created. How do you think today’s context shaped this reimagining of The Soldier’s Tale? How does it affect your understanding or interpretation of it? Do you think the Faustian themes are as relevant today as ever? Why or why not?
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- Virtual events put on by the USC Thornton School of Music | thorntonlive.usc.edu
- Hazard Productions | hazardproductions.com
- The Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra | laco.org
- LA Phil | laphil.com
- LA Opera | laopera.org
- Upcoming Visions and Voices events:
  - 3/26: The Met in HD: Giuseppe Verdi’s Don Carlos
  - 4/22: All The Truths We Cannot See: A Chernobyl Story

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Andrew Justice of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about this event. Electronic resources are accessible through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu but may require the user to log in using their USC credentials.

BOOKS


ARTICLES


SCORES


VIDEOS

- Max Adrian et al., L’histoire du Soldat (Creative Arts Television, 2007).
- Nacho Duato et al., L’histoire du Soldat (ArtHaus Musik, 1988).
- Richard Alston et al., Pulcinella; Soldat (Kultur, 2005).