

Saul Williams And Mivos Quartet Come to The Ford Theatre in September

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The Ford Theatres presents legendary poet and performer Saul Williams, known for his distinctive marriage of "firebrand politics with metaphysical word play," joining with the adventurous Mivos Quartet, hailed as "one of America's most daring and ferocious new-music ensembles" (The Chicago Reader) on Thursday, September 6 at 8:30pm.



This dynamic evening combines Mivos' expressive and boundary-pushing string renditions with Williams' evocative vocal poetry. The centerpiece of the program is a rare performance of NGH WHT (The Dead Emcee Scrolls), with text by Williams and music by Swiss avant-garde composer Thomas Kessler, in which the poet's singular voice integrates with the sounds of the Mivos Quartet to create a provocative interaction between hip-hop and contemporary classical music. NGH WHT was originally written for the Arditti Quartet.

Williams' 2006 book of poetry The Dead Emcee Scrolls is the poet's manifesto on the power of hip-hop to radically change ourselves and the world around us. Written with a confessional narrative voice, the book connects Williams' personal experience with his philosophy about expression and human interaction through art.

The program will also feature the premiere of Moonblood by Mario Diaz de Leon.

For this intimate event, audiences will experience this powerful expression of eclecticism in the round on the Ford stage. A limited 140 tickets at \$25 and information about parking are available by visiting FordTheatres.org or by calling 323.461.3673.

Executive Director Olga Garay-English said, "The collaboration between Saul Williams and Thomas Kessler is one of those rare times when two art forms that seem a world apart mesh, creating a spellbinding and unforgettable performance piece. The incredible Mivos Quartet is the perfect ensemble to match Saul Williams' powerful vocal prowess. I am thrilled to bring them both to our Los Angeles audience for this one-of-a-kind performance."

Of the recording made by the Arditti Quartet and Williams, leoweekly.com said, "Williams is one of the premier poets of this generation, who treats the art form not as a museum piece but as a modern, living thing, reflecting urban rhythms with a loving sneer. The Dead Emcee

Scrolls was Williams's treatise and indictment on and of hip-hop. He can bring life and energy to his words in a way your own inner voice cannot ... Kessler's music is an abstract of modern composition. Hitchcockian strings add percussive and exclamation to Williams's paranoid phrasings."

Williams said, "I write poetry because it is the clearest and most direct expression of how I think. For me, they chronicle my growth as an artist, friend, lover, father, son and individual. My goal has never truly been to become an amazing poet, rather I have worked at becoming more expressive, thoughtful and harmoniously balanced, and courageous enough to live my life as a poem. My writings simply chronicle my journey and vision. They are the residue of the work that I'm doing on myself."

Mark Eleveld, the American Library Association said, "Williams is the guy. He has chosen a sublime path in the hip-hop world; yes a road less traveled. He is the prototype synthesizer between poetry and hip-hop, stage and page, rap and prose, funk and mythology, slam and verse -- Williams opens for rock bands and appears in films and records. Avoiding classification, *The Dead Emcee Scrolls* is unique in voice, daring in its trust to chance, and more concerned with wordplay than grandeur. It is strongly musical, uncorrupted, raw, and challenging."

Saul Williams has been breaking ground since his debut album, *Amethyst Rock Star*, which was released in 2001 and executive produced by Rick Rubin. After gaining global fame for his poetry and writings at the turn of the century, Williams has performed more than 30 countries and read in over 300 universities, with invitations that have spanned from the White House, the Sydney Opera House, Lincoln Center, The Louvre, The Getty Center, Queen Elizabeth Hall, to countless, villages, townships, community centers, and prisons across the world. The Newburgh, New York native gained a BA from Morehouse and an MFA from Tisch, and has gone on to record with Nine Inch Nails and Allen Ginsburg, as well as countless film and television appearances. His recent *MartyrLoserKing* (2016) was written and recorded between Senegal, Reunion Island, Paris, Haiti, New Orleans and New York, and he cites Beyoncé, Fredo Santana, and Haitian field recordings as inspirations.

The Mivos Quartet, "one of America's most daring and ferocious new-music ensembles" (The Chicago Reader), is devoted to performing works of contemporary composers. Anthony Tommasini in The New York Times said, "I was hooked by the music and the brilliant performance, as was the audience, which whooped and applauded at the end."

Since the quartet's beginnings in 2008, they have appeared on such prestigious series as the New York Phil Biennial, Wien Modern (Austria), the Darmstadt Internationalen Ferienkurse für Neue Musik (Germany), Asphalt Festival (Düsseldorf, Germany), HellHOT! New Music Festival (Hong Kong), Shanghai New Music Week (Shanghai, China), Edgefest (Ann Arbor, MI), Música de Agora na Bahia (Brazil), Aldeburgh Music (UK), and Lo Spirito della musica di Venezia (La Fenice Theater, Italy).

Mivos is invested in commissioning and premiering new music for string quartet, striving to work closely with composers over extended periods of time; recently Mivos has collaborated on new works with Sam Pluta (Lucerne Festival Commission), Dan Blake (Jerome Commission), Mark Barden (Wien Modern Festival Commission), Richard Carrick (Fromm Commission), George Lewis (ECLAT Festival Commission), Eric Wubbels (CMA Commission), Kate Soper, Scott Wollschleger, Patrick Higgins (ZS), and poet/musician Saul Williams, as well as multi-media projects involving live video and electronics including performances with Ned Rothenberg, Chris Speed, Timucin Sahin, and Nate Wooley.

Every year, the quartet additionally awards the Mivos/Kanter String Quartet Composition Prize, established to support the work of emerging and mid-career composers, and the I-Creation prize, a competition for composers of Chinese descent.

Mivos recently released their second ensemble album, entitled "Garden of Diverging Paths." The members of Mivos are: violinists Olivia De Prato and Lauren Cauley Kalal, violist Victor Lowrie Tafoya, and cellist Mariel Roberts.

Thomas Kessler (composer NGH WHT) was born in 1937 in Zurich. After studies in German and Romanic linguistics at the Universities of Zurich and Paris, he studied composition with Heinz Friedrich Hartig, Ernst Pepping and Boris Blacher in Berlin where he cofounded his own electronic studio in 1965. In the following years, he was director of the Berlin Electronic Beat Studio and musical director of thee Centre Universitaire International de Formation et de Recherche Dramatiques in Nancy. From 1973 to 2000, he taught composition and theory at the Basel Music Academy and created the well-known electronic studio there. Together with Gerard Zinsstag, he founded the festival Tage fuer neue Musik in Zurich and the live electronic music festival ECHTZEIT with Wolfgang Heiniger in Basel. As a composer of numerous instrumental chamber music, orchestral music and live-electronic music compositions, he is interested in the interactions between musicians and electronics.

IGNITE@ THE FORD!

This event is part of IGNITE @ THE FORD!, a series presented by the Ford Theatre Foundation comprised of world-renowned contemporary artists whose work is thought-provoking and reflects the world in which we live. IGNITE @ THE FORD! is supported by Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl.

For this intimate IGNITE performance, audiences will be seated on the stage. Tickets are priced at \$25 and are very limited, at 140 available seats. Tickets and information about parking are available by visiting FordTheatres.org or by calling 323.461.3673.

PARKING FOR THIS EVENT -- For this intimate event, the off-site parking lot at 3330 Cahuenga Blvd. West is not available. Stacked parking is available on site and free shuttles will pick up from the Universal City/Studio City Metro stop.

About the Ford Theatres

At 1,200 seats, the Ford Theatres creates an intimate outdoor amphitheatre concert experience that is a favorite among Angelenos. This season, the Ford Theatres also introduces performances providing uniquely intimate experiences in which audience and performance fit entirely onto the stage, and others at which the seating has been limited to the first ten rows.

Each summer, the Ford hosts music, dance, theatre, film and family events reflective of the communities that comprise Los Angeles County. Proceeds from IGNITE @ the FORD! events benefit the Ford Theatre Foundation. The Ford is owned by the County of Los Angeles and operated in partnership with the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Ford Theatre Foundation. Nestled in a canyon of a County regional park in the Cahuenga Pass, the Ford Theatres has a rich history dating back to the 1920s.

Audiences attending the 2018 Season will enjoy a fully revitalized Ford after the completion of a nearly three-year renovation project, including improved lighting and sound and the Ford Terrace Café on the new terrace - dubbed The Zev - with a menu by Crumble Catering.

The 2018 Season at the Ford Theatres is made possible through the support of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. Additional support provided by Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, along with ABC7; the Caruso Family Foundation; the Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles; Chamber Music America; City National Bank; Discover Hollywood; First 5 LA; Fusicology; The James Irvine Foundation; KCETLink; KCRW; LAArtsOnline.com; Motev; The National Endowment for the Arts; NBC Universal; Southern California Edison; Union Bank; Univision; The Wasserman Foundation; Wells Fargo; and Yelp.com.
