



THE CEDAR  
COMMISSIONS

*The 12th annual presentation of the  
flagship program for local emerging artists*



**Fri. February 17 & Sat. February 18, 2023**  
*Doors at 7:00 pm, Show at 7:30 pm*

**Collaborators:**

Eric Mayson - Bass

Peter Morrow - Guitar

Toby Ramaswamy - Drums

Christian Bardin - Vocals

Skyler Nowinski - Percussion

Cameron Kinghorn - Mentor

## THEO LANGASON (HE/HIM)

### *SONGS FOR MAKING SENSE OF IT ALL*

**About *songs for making sense of it all*:**

“songs for making sense of it all” will be an attempt to use music/songwriting to make sense of the wreckage, rubble, and detritus left by the pandemic, uprisings, and every-day-american-life over the last three, 400, too-many-to-count years. How do we make it through? How do I make it through? This project will be part research and part audience engagement attempting to answer the questions: “How do you use art/music to make sense of the perpetual heartbreak and chaos of the world?” With sounds and lyrics and each other as the tools we have at our disposal, how can we take best care of our ever-breaking hearts?

Theo Langason is a multidisciplinary theatre artist, teaching artist, and musician based in Minneapolis. A graduate of Rutgers University–Camden with a degree in Theatre Arts, Theo has been working nationally and internationally as an actor, director, musician, composer, improviser, poet, and teaching artist for over a decade. Theo is a co-artistic director of Red Eye Theater, a member of Sandbox Theatre, and a member of Blackout Improv. As a teaching artist, Theo has worked with Guthrie Theater, Penumbra Theatre, and Upstream Arts. Theo has also worked with Ten Thousand Things, Park Square Theatre, Pillsbury House + Theater, and Stages Theatre, among others.





## SOPHIA DEUTSCH (SHE/HER)

### *VIS VITAE*

#### **About *Vis Vitae*:**

n., vis vitae: vital force

We live in a time that doesn't cease to provide reasons for grief. *Vis Vitae* aims to create pause to soothe internal dissonance and dysphoria in the way that nature knows to do so well. Inspired by theories of vitalism, the piece draws upon the visceral affects and fundamental vibrations of the natural world— that universal language of beauty and harmony which pulses and aligns. Sophia's translation of these healing frequencies is a series of movements (meditations, 'floatations') written for chamber group, using elements of experimental composition and graphic scoring. "[She] who feels what [she] sees will find no more beautiful example of development in all that book which, alas, musicians read but too little—the book of Nature..." (C. Debussy, 1903)

#### **Special Thanks:**

For emotional support, spiritual, creative, and technical guidance, many thanks go to Sarah Miller, Jacqueline Ultan, my loving parents Mary Laymon and Christopher Deutsch, Dougie Padilla, Joe Berns, Juliette Oken, and all of my other babely friends for helping shepherd me along with love. Also thanks go to: every tree, all gods, yellow roads, all color roads, earthworms/fungi, my body, and yours.

#### **Collaborators:**

Cat Hammond - harp  
 Jacqueline Ultan - cello/  
 mentorship  
 Drew Kellum - cello  
 Alma Enge - cello  
 Adam Patterson - percussion/  
 lap steel  
 Jason Hollis - projections  
 Juliette Oken - design  
 Wind  
 Sun  
 Water

**.Collaborators:**

Alicia Thao - back up  
vocals/vocal mentor

Carlisle Evans Peck- key board

Mayda - guitarist

Sunah - beat maker

*(ALL THE ABOVE HELPED IN CREATING  
THE FINAL SOUND OF THE PROJECT SUCH  
AS CREATING CHORD PROGRESSIONS, OR  
THE BEAT, HELPED IN GIVING DIFFERENT  
IDEAS AND APPROACHES ON HOW TO GO  
ABOUT CERTAIN SONGS WITH RESPECT TO  
MY VISION FOR THE SHOW)*

Mai Se Yang - xim xaus player

Seng Xiong - dancer

Xaria Vang - actor

Both Helped with prop ideas  
and clothing ideas

Savanna Thao (sthao.art)  
created visual backgrounds, some of the  
props, and assisted with lighting

## CYDI YANG (SHE/FLUID)

### SOUL CALL

**Special Thanks:**

My mom Mai Vang for supporting me and helping with the outfits of the show. WungLee Supermarket for designing my outfit. Maudiel Castilleblanco for creating the door prop. Mally Yang for taking the team photos. Hillary Lor for recording the Ncas sound for one of my songs. Elder Yer Lee for singing the traditional Soul Chanting. IN progress for allowing me to utilize equipment and rehearsal space. See Lee for helping me with virtual meetings with my team.

**About Soul Call:**

In Hmong tradition, a soul calling ceremony occurs when the soul of a person leaves their body and becomes lost due to a traumatic experience, leaving the person to be sick, depressed, or overall unwell. "Soul Call" is about reclaiming myself—healing through art in connection to my roots, fused with the influences of my modern world. This set of songs are words with my younger/past selves as I navigated difficult/traumatic times in my life which altered the way I moved in the world. It is to call me back—to reclaim the pieces of me I lost during those life experiences. In utilizing all art forms I've come to love - dancing, acting, poetry, music (rapping and singing) I want to tell a story about my journey in healing and me returning back to who I was always meant to be.



# WELCOME TO THE CEDAR COMMISSIONS

The Cedar Commissions is a flagship program for local emerging artists made possible with a grant from the Jerome Foundation. Since the program began in 2011, the Commissions have showcased new work by over 60 Minnesotan emerging artists in Minnesota. Artists receive \$5,000 plus a \$500 production stipend to create and premiere 30 minutes of new music at The Cedar Cultural Center.

In 2022, the first year that The Cedar was open from January to December since 2019, these artists began crafting their commissions with a bit more normalcy on the horizon, but a lot of strangeness, newness, and darkness in the rearview. They've been composing, exploring new ideas, and assembling teams of musicians to bring their work to fruition on The Cedar's stage later this month. Over the two nights of the Twelfth Annual Cedar Commissions, audience members will witness performances about the existential threat of petrol, the importance of protecting and embracing Somali youth, how to find meaning in the indescribable, how to listen to the song of the planet, an illustration of journeying gender transition, and a depiction of the soul-body reunion after trauma.

Are you a musician or composer interested in applying for a Cedar Commission? Application guidelines for the 2023-24 round will be posted on our website ([www.thecedar.org/cedar-commissions](http://www.thecedar.org/cedar-commissions)) this spring. You can sign up to be notified when the information is released.

## THE CEDAR COMMISSIONS IS MADE POSSIBLE IN PART BY A GRANT FROM



# JEROME

FOUNDATION

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