

**Penn Live Arts 21/22 Season Opening Reflects on the Environment:
Alarm Will Sound Performs *Ten Thousand Birds*
at Morris Arboretum (September 25),
Preceded by On the Environment Film Series (September 16-26)**

(Philadelphia – September 17, 2021) — [Penn Live Arts](#) opens its 2021-22 season with [Alarm Will Sound](#)'s outdoor performance of John Luther Adams' *Ten Thousand Birds*, a Philadelphia premiere, at the [Morris Arboretum](#) on **September 25**. The performance, which explores the connections between nature and music, will be preceded by [On the Environment](#), the season's film series kickoff of two feature and two short films that address climate change from a variety of perspectives.

"We're thrilled to kick off our first season as Penn Live Arts, in collaboration with our terrific partner Morris Arboretum," said **Penn Live Arts Executive and Artistic Director Christopher Gruits**. "This timely environmental focus through the lens of film and music is just the beginning of an amazing year—a new identity that will take us beyond the walls of the Annenberg Center, the return of live audiences, welcoming back incredible artists, and the official beginning of a two-year celebration of the Annenberg Center's 50th anniversary. We can't wait to take the first step into this exciting new chapter."

Alarm Will Sound and *Ten Thousand Birds*

The "unusually versatile, reliably exhilarating new-music ensemble" (*The New York Times*) **Alarm Will Sound** makes its Penn Live Arts debut, returning to Philadelphia after a 12-year hiatus with the local premiere of *Ten Thousand Birds* by Pulitzer Prize and Grammy® Award-winning composer John Luther Adams. This experiential, open-ended collection of pieces is based on native birdsong, encompassing a range of colors and instrumentation and newly informed by actual migration patterns tracked at the Morris Arboretum. The audience roves freely around the space and the performers, experiencing the music from many perspectives as human creativity and natural phenomena blur.

There will be two performances of *Ten Thousand Birds* **Saturday, September 25**, at **1 PM** and at **4 PM**, at **Bloomfield Farm at Morris Arboretum, 100 Northwestern Avenue**. **Raindate: Sunday, September 26, at 1 PM and 4 PM**. For more information and to purchase tickets please visit PennLiveArts.org.

Alarm Will Sound is "one of the most vital and original ensembles on the American music scene" (*The New York Times*). A 20-member band committed to innovative performances and recordings of today's music, it has established a reputation for performing demanding music with energetic virtuosity.

With classical skill and unlimited curiosity, Alarm Will Sound takes on music from a wide variety of styles. "Stylistically omnivorous and physically versatile" (*The Log Journal*), its repertoire comes from around the world, and ranges from the arch-modernist to the pop-influenced. Since its inception, Alarm Will Sound has been associated with composers at the forefront of contemporary music. The group itself includes many composer-performers, which allows for an unusual degree of insight into the creation and performance of new works.

Alarm Will Sound is the resident ensemble at the Mizzou International Composers Festival. Held each July at the University of Missouri in Columbia, the festival features eight world premieres by early-career composers. In 2013-14, Alarm Will Sound served as artists-in-residence at The Metropolitan Museum of

Alarm Will Sound may be heard on fourteen recordings including its most recent, *The Hunger*, and the premiere recording of Steve Reich's *Radio Rewrite*. *Acoustica*, its genre-bending, critically acclaimed album, features live-performance arrangements of music by electronica guru Aphex Twin.

On the Environment

[Landfall](#) (2020) examines what happens when recovery efforts and global capitalism collide in Puerto Rico while [Titixe](#) (2018) shows the deep links between the loss of a beloved family member, the loss of cultural tradition, and consequently, the deterioration of an agricultural environment. Two short films, [The Lake and The Lake](#) (2019) and [When the Lionfish Came](#) (2015), highlight the impact of the obliteration of cultural and environmental resources. These short films are available free only with purchase of an [On the Environment feature film](#).

The Penn Live Arts film series is created in consultation with Curator-at-Large for Film, **Maori Karmael Holmes**, Artistic Director and CEO of BlackStar Projects, who notes "On the Environment features work responding to the pressing concern of the impact of climate change and shifting political alliances on our environment. Connecting these films to the multi-genre programming curated by Penn Live Arts gives us the opportunity to more clearly highlight the impact of the obliteration of cultural and environmental resources."

All film showings will be virtual. The viewing window will be September 16-26. Access information will be provided in advance. Visit Penn Live Arts' [FAQs page](#) for additional details. For more information and to purchase access please visit [PennLiveArts.org](#).

Maori Karmael Holmes is a curator, filmmaker and writer. She founded BlackStar in 2012 and serves as its Artistic Director and CEO. She has organized programs in film at a myriad of organizations including Anthology Film Archives, Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles), The Underground Museum, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. As a director, her works have screened internationally including her feature documentary *Scene Not Heard: Women in Philadelphia Hip-Hop* (2006). She has also directed and produced works for Colorlines.com, Visit Philadelphia, and singer-songwriter India.Arie. Her writing has recently appeared in *The Believer*, *Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good*, and *How We Fight White Supremacy: A Field Guide to Black Resistance*. Maori received her MFA in film & media arts from Temple University and her BA in history from American University. She currently serves on the board of American Documentary (POV), the advisory boards of Ulises, Vidiots, and Lightbox Film Center. Maori is a 2019 Soros Equality Fellow and serves as Mediamaker-in-Residence at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, Curator-at-Large at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, and a Creative Executive with Blackbird.

About Penn Live Arts

The 2021-22 season marks the first for Penn Live Arts. This new identity heralds a wider variety of programming for audiences, as well as presentations outside the physical Annenberg Center space, and a deeper integration with the University of Pennsylvania and Philadelphia communities. Audiences will begin to experience the expanded benefits under Penn Live Arts in the upcoming 2021/22 season including more innovative performances hosted outside the Annenberg Center walls including Alarm Will Sound at Morris Arboretum in Chestnut Hill and The Crossing at Church of the Holy Trinity in Rittenhouse, along with a broad range of beloved dance companies, jazz greats, a brand-new, family-friendly cirque series and a season-long film line-up.

Headquartered at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, Penn Live Arts is the leading presenter of innovative and transformative performing arts experiences in Philadelphia, bringing world-class music, dance, theatre and film to an annual audience of over 80,000 on the University of Pennsylvania campus and at venues throughout the city. Penn Live Arts is an artistic crossroads joining Penn and the greater Philadelphia region. In reflection of Penn's core values as a world-respected academic institution, Penn Live Arts emphasizes artistic and intellectual excellence and diversity in its offerings; prioritizes broad

inclusiveness in the artists, audiences and groups it serves; manages outstanding performance, conference and meeting facilities; and boasts comprehensive event planning, production support and customer service. Penn Live Arts is a key asset for the University's students and faculty, enhancing curriculum through connections with master artists, hosting student productions on professional stages, providing career development opportunities and being a true advocate for student performing arts. Penn Live Arts broadens arts access by actively engaging a wide range of school audiences and inclusive communities from campus, the West Philadelphia neighborhood and the surrounding region. Visit PennLiveArts.org.

CALENDAR LISTINGS

Music

Alarm Will Sound

Ten Thousand Birds

Saturday, September 25, 1 PM

Saturday, September 25, 4 PM

Bloomfield Farm at Morris Arboretum, 100 E. Northwestern Avenue

The "unusually versatile, reliably exhilarating new-music ensemble" (*The New York Times*) Alarm Will Sound makes its Penn Live Arts debut, returning to Philadelphia after a 12-year hiatus with the local premiere of *Ten Thousand Birds* by Pulitzer Prize and Grammy® Award-winning composer John Luther Adams. This experiential, open-ended collection of pieces is based on native birdsong, encompassing a range of colors and instrumentation and newly informed by actual migration patterns tracked at the Morris Arboretum. The audience roves freely around the space and the performers, experiencing the music from many perspectives as human creativity and natural phenomena blur.

Visit PennLiveArts.org for more information.

FILM

Landfall

Through shard-like glimpses of everyday life in post-Hurricane María Puerto Rico, *Landfall* is a cautionary tale for our times. Set against the backdrop of protests that toppled the U.S. colony's governor in 2019, the film offers a prismatic portrait of collective trauma and resistance. While the devastation of María attracted a great deal of media coverage, the world has paid far less attention to the storm that preceded it: a \$72 billion debt crisis crippling the island well before the winds and waters hit. *Landfall* examines the kinship of these two storms—one environmental, the other economic—juxtaposing competing utopian visions of recovery. Featuring intimate encounters with Puerto Ricans as well as the newcomers flooding the island, *Landfall* reflects on a question of contemporary global relevance: when the world falls apart, who do we become?

Directed by Cecilia Aldarondo, 2020, U.S., 91 min, documentary, Spanish.

Viewing window will be Sep 16-26. Access information will be provided in advance. For more information and to purchase access please visit PennLiveArts.org. Please visit our [FAQs page](#) for additional details.

FILM

Titixe

The last peasant of a family has died and with him, all wisdom to till the soil has been lost. Without experience, his daughter and granddaughter attempt a last traditional harvest to try to convince Grandma, the widow of the peasant, to keep their plot of land. Together they will uncover the leftovers (locally known as the titixe) of this man and his world: a mourning tree, dancing sprouts, the language of clouds, ghosts, stories and the endless menace of losing the crops to a tempest. *Titixe* is an intimate mosaic of the last harvest of a Mexican family, in a country that has forsaken its rural origins.

Directed by Tania Hernández Velasco, 2018, Mexico, 62 min., documentary, Spanish.

Viewing window will be Sep 16-26. Access information will be provided in advance. For more information and to purchase access please visit PennLiveArts.org. Please visit our [FAQs page](#) for additional details.

FILM

The Lake and The Lake

In the peripheries of Bellandur Lake in Bangalore, "India's Silicon Valley", an act of observation is interrupted by flying foam, noxious gases, daydreams and questions from passers-by. Despite its toxic waters and fraught ecology, the lake remains a valuable resource and refuge for a forgotten public. As fishermen, migrant waste workers, children and stray dogs congregate on Bellandur's shoreline, it is evident that there is no nature that doesn't also include all of us.

Directed by Sindhu Thirumalaisamy, 2019, India/USA, 38 min., documentary.

When the Lionfish Came

With found and newly captured material, Tamika Galanis juxtaposes coral reefs in the Bahamas that have been ravished by invasive lionfish with footage of the island's traditional Junkanoo street parade, aiming to celebrate and advocate for the preservation of Bahamian culture and native sea life.

Directed by Tamika Galanis, 2015, Bahamas, 6 min., English.

These short films are available free only with purchase of an [On the Environment feature film](#). Viewing window will be Sep 16-26. Access information will be provided in advance. You can also visit Penn Live Arts' [FAQs page](#) for additional details.

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