

The Jewish Museum and Bang on a Can Present
Judith Berkson



Thursday, July 19, 2018 at 7:30pm
Scheuer Auditorium at the Jewish Museum
1109 5th Ave at 92nd St | New York, NY

Tickets: \$20 General; \$16 Students and Seniors; \$12 Jewish Museum Members
Available at www.thejewishmuseum.org. Includes museum admission.

New York, NY – Bang on a Can and the Jewish Museum’s 2018-2019 concert season, pairing innovative music with the Museum’s exhibitions and showcasing leading female performers and composers, begins on **Thursday, July 19, 2018 at 7:30pm**. Brooklyn-based composer, pianist, and vocalist **Judith Berkson** performs a dynamic set featuring her unique blend of cantorial music, Hebrew liturgy, and her innovative indie-contemporary composed songs, in conjunction with the exhibition ***Chaim Soutine: Flesh***.

Mirroring Soutine’s connection to images of shtetl life from his youth as inspiration for the paintings in the exhibition, Judith Berkson performs music that draws on the sounds of Eastern European Hazonos (cantorial) chant and Yiddish song with organ, electronics, and voice. Drawing on her work as a cantor and new music composer her pieces bring together the disparate voices of renowned 20th century cantor Yossele Rosenblatt, Franz Schubert, electronic experimentation, and analog keyboards creating songs that reflect these traditions in an intimate and powerful way.

Running through September 16, 2018, *Chaim Soutine: Flesh* features more than 30 paintings by Chaim Soutine, the Expressionist known for his gestural and densely painted canvases. Soutine’s harsh and wrenching portrayals—of beef carcasses, plucked fowl, fish, and game—create a parallel between the animal and human, between beauty and pain. His still-life paintings express with visceral power his painterly mastery and personal passion.

The 2018-2019 season marks the fifth year of the Jewish Museum and Bang on a Can’s partnership, producing dynamic musical performances inspired by the Museum’s diverse slate of exhibitions. Additional performances this season will feature a solo piano recital by Jenny Lin alongside *Chagall, Lissitzky, Malevich: The Russian Avant-Garde in Vitebsk, 1918-1922* (Thursday, November 15, 2018 at 7:30pm); The String Quartets by Julia Wolfe performed by ETHEL (Thursday, February 28, 2019 at 7:30pm); and a final concert in spring 2019 to be announced.

About Judith Berkson

Judith Berkson is a soprano, pianist, and composer living in Brooklyn, New York. She studied voice with Lucy Shelton and composition with Joe Maneri at the New England Conservatory and has collaborated with Kronos Quartet, Wet Ink, Yarn/Wire, and City Opera, and has presented work at Picasso Museum Malaga, Roulette, Le Poisson Rouge, Joe’s Pub, The Stone, Barbès, and the 92 Street Y. She has received a Six Points Fellowship, a Jerome Foundation grant, Meet The Composer grant, and support from the New York Foundation for the Arts. Her solo album *Oylam* (ECM

Records) was called “Standards and Schubert and liturgical music, swing and chilly silences, a beautiful Satie-like piece to open and close the record” by Ben Ratliff of *The New York Times*.

Tickets for the July 19 program are \$18 general public; \$16 students and seniors; and \$12 for Jewish Museum members and Bang on a Can list members, and include exhibition admission prior to the performance. Further program and ticket information is available by calling 212.423.3337 or at TheJewishMuseum.org/calendar. The Jewish Museum is located at Fifth Avenue and 92nd Street, NYC.

Support

Public Programming at the Jewish Museum is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council.

About Bang on a Can

Bang on a Can is dedicated to making music new. Since its first Marathon concert in 1987, Bang on a Can has been creating an international community dedicated to innovative music, wherever it is found. With adventurous programs, it commissions new composers, performs, presents, and records new work, develops new audiences, and educates the musicians of the future. Bang on a Can is building a world in which powerful new musical ideas flow freely across all genres and borders. Bang on a Can plays “a central role in fostering a new kind of audience that doesn’t concern itself with boundaries. If music is made with originality and integrity, these listeners will come.” (*The New York Times*)

Bang on a Can has grown from a one-day New York-based Marathon concert (on Mother’s Day in 1987 in a SoHo art gallery) to a multi-faceted performing arts organization with a broad range of year-round international activities. “When we started Bang on a Can, we never imagined that our 12-hour marathon festival of mostly unknown music would morph into a giant international organization dedicated to the support of experimental music, wherever we would find it,” write Bang on a Can Co-Founders Michael Gordon, David Lang and Julia Wolfe. “But it has, and we are so gratified to be still hard at work, all these years later. The reason is really clear to us – we started this organization because we believed that making new music is a utopian act – that people needed to hear this music and they needed to hear it presented in the most persuasive way, with the best players, with the best programs, for the best listeners, in the best context. Our commitment to changing the environment for this music has kept us busy and growing, and we are not done yet.”

Current projects include the annual **Bang on a Can Marathon**; **The People's Commissioning Fund**, a membership program to commission emerging composers; the **Bang on a Can All-Stars**, who tour to major festivals and concert venues around the world every year; recording projects; the **Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival at MASS MoCA** - a professional development program for young composers and performers led by today’s pioneers of experimental music; **Asphalt Orchestra**, Bang on a Can’s extreme street band that offers mobile performances re-contextualizing unusual music; **Found Sound Nation**, a new technology-based musical outreach program now partnering with the State Department of the United States of America to create **OneBeat**, a revolutionary, post-political residency program that uses music to bridge the gulf between young American musicians and young musicians from developing countries; cross-disciplinary collaborations and projects with DJs, visual artists, choreographers, filmmakers and more. Each new program has evolved to answer specific challenges faced by today’s musicians, composers and audiences, in order to make innovative music widely accessible and wildly received. Bang on a Can’s inventive and aggressive approach to programming and presentation has created a large and vibrant international audience made up of people of all ages who are rediscovering the value of contemporary music.

About the Jewish Museum

Located on New York City’s famed Museum Mile, the Jewish Museum is a distinctive hub for art and Jewish culture for people of all backgrounds. Founded in 1904, the Museum was the first institution of its kind in the United States and is one of the oldest Jewish museums in the world. Devoted to exploring art and Jewish culture from ancient to contemporary, the Museum offers intellectually engaging exhibitions and programs, and maintains a unique collection of nearly 30,000 works of art, ceremonial objects, and media reflecting the global Jewish experience over more than 4,000 years.

Location: 1109 Fifth Avenue at 92nd Street, New York City
Hours: Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, 11am to 5:45pm; Thursday, 11am to 8pm; and Friday, 11am to 4pm
Admission: \$18.00 for adults, \$12.00 for senior citizens, \$8.00 for students, free for visitors 18 and under and Jewish Museum members. Pay What You Wish on Thursdays from 5pm to 8pm. Free on Saturdays and select Jewish holidays.
Information: The public may call 212.423.3200 or visit TheJewishMuseum.org

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