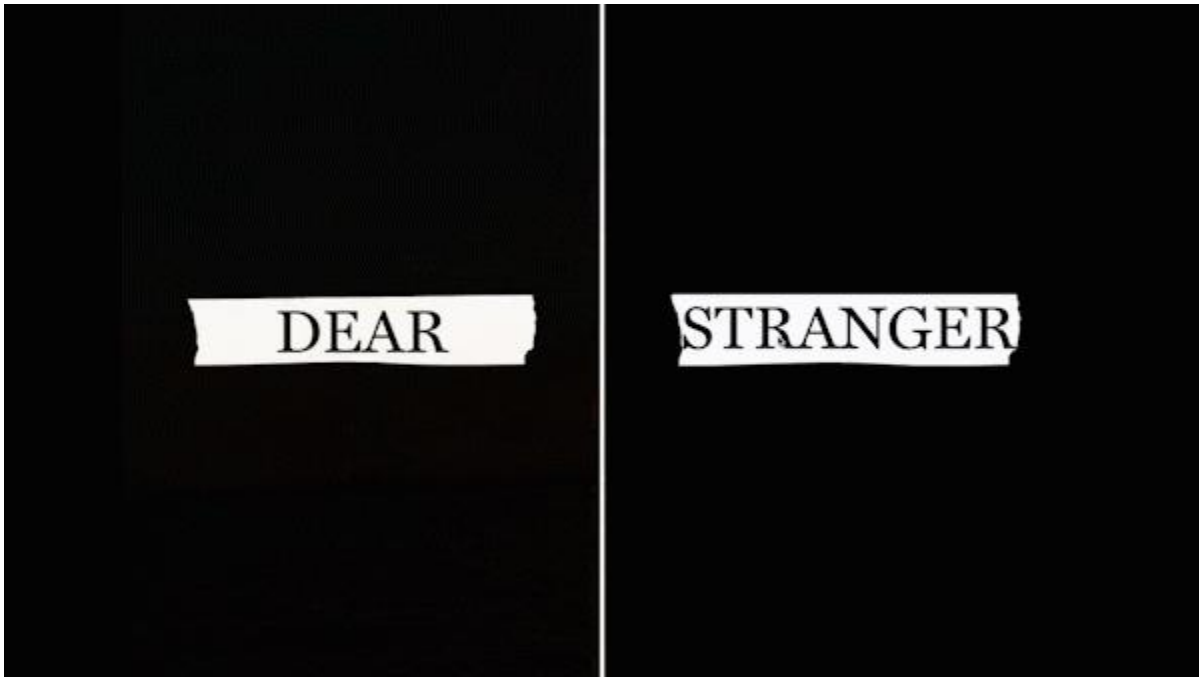




FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CAP UCLA Presents  
Brooklyn Youth Chorus  
*She Is Called: Dear Stranger***

*Media-rich web experience launched April 24, 2021*



*"You have a right to be called by the name you want to be called." - Stevie, Chorister*

[UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance \(CAP UCLA\)](#) presents *She Is Called: Dear Stranger*, a media-rich web experience launched Saturday, April 24, 2021, at [sheiscalleddearstranger.org](http://sheiscalleddearstranger.org). For more information on engaging with or supporting the arts and artists presented by CAP UCLA, visit [support CAP UCLA](#).

*She Is Called* is an original choral theater production being developed for the stage by Brooklyn Youth Chorus under the direction of Founder and Artistic Director Dianne Berkun Menaker. Over a multi-year artistic development process, the young artists of the

Chorus are collaborating with established theater artists to present commissions by contemporary composers that address themes of gender and identity.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chorus is presenting the first phase of the project, *She Is Called: Dear Stranger*, via a media-rich website experience. The website features newly commissioned choral works, photos, recorded letters and poetry from the singers, inspired by the songs' themes and the singers' perspectives and experiences.

The production features new compositions from four celebrated composers — Nathalie Joachim, David Lang, Alev Lenz and Shara Nova — and features significant artistic contributions from the singers themselves. In collaboration with the students are four theater artists — Janani Balasubramanian, Charlotte Brathwaite, Sunder Ganglani and Tareke Ortiz — who, through ongoing workshops, worked with the Chorus to bring this ambitious project to life.

*She Is Called: Dear Stranger* is an exciting new production from Brooklyn Youth Chorus that presents the deep and rich perspectives of young people as they investigate gender, identity, community, and connection during this fraught time in our history.

Funds for the CAP UCLA presentation were provided by the Kevin Jeske Young Artist Fund.

**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

**CAP UCLA Presents**

[Brooklyn Youth Chorus](#)

[\*She Is Called: Dear Stranger\*](#)

Launched Saturday, April 24

Free

**Credits:**

**Produced and Performed by** BROOKLYN YOUTH CHORUS, DIANNE BERKUN MENAKER, FOUNDER AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

**Commissioned Works by** NATHALIE JOACHIM, music, JAKI SHELTON GREEN, lyrics; DAVID LANG, music and lyrics, text from King James Bible; ALEV LENZ, music and lyrics; SHARA NOVA, music and lyrics

**Created in collaboration by**

CHARLOTTE BRATHWAITE (Director)

JANANI BALASUBRAMANIAN (Writer)

SUNDER GANGLANI (Dramaturg)

TAREKE ORTIZ (Composer and Sound Designer)

ALYSSA SIMMONS (Creative Producer)

And MEMBERS OF BROOKLYN YOUTH CHORUS

**Letters, Poetry, and Images by** BROOKLYN YOUTH CHORUS

**Website Design by** AUGUSTUS COOK

## **Additional design by RYAN POINTER**

The *She Is Called: Dear Stranger* project is made possible thanks to the generous support of the following institutional partners:

The Aaron Copland Fund for New Music

The Amphion Foundation

The Howard Gilman Foundation

The MAP Fund, supported by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

New Music USA

Special projects at Brooklyn Youth Chorus are, in part, underwritten by funds from the Barclay Collins New Music Fund.

Additionally, the Chorus is supported in part by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council; the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; and an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

**Artist's website:** [Brooklyn Youth Chorus](#)

### **ABOUT BROOKLYN YOUTH CHORUS**

BROOKLYN YOUTH CHORUS's Grammy Award-winning ensemble, led by Founder & Artistic Director Dianne Berkun Menaker, has collaborated with a range of organizations and artists including the New York Philharmonic, The National, Wye Oak, Bon Iver, Shara Nova, International Contemporary Ensemble, William Britelle, London Symphony Orchestra, Barbra Streisand, Arcade Fire, Sir Elton John, and Grizzly Bear. As a commissioner of new music, the Chorus has introduced more than 120 original works and world premieres by contemporary composers, including collaborations with Caroline Shaw, Toshi Reagon, DJ Bishi, Bryce Dessner, and Nico Muhly. The Chorus has a strong reputation as producer of original works including *Silent Voices* (National Sawdust, New Victory Theater), *Black Mountain Songs* (BAM Next Wave Festival 2014); and *Tell the Way* (St. Ann's Warehouse 2011). The Chorus has released two albums: *Silent Voices* (2018) and *Black Mountain Songs* (2017). Founded in 1992, Brooklyn Youth Chorus is regarded as one of the top youth choruses in the United States, noted both for its artistic rigor and its high-quality musical training of more than 600 young singers each year. The Chorus's faculty teach a range of repertoire and styles using founding artistic director Dianne Berkun Menaker's Cross-Choral Training® method, emphasizing healthy and versatile vocal technique, music theory, sight-singing and ear training.

### **ABOUT CAP UCLA**

[UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance](#) (CAP UCLA) is the public-facing research and presenting organization for the performing arts at the University of California, Los Angeles—one of the world's leading public research universities. We are housed within the UCLA School of the Arts & Architecture along with the Hammer and Fowler museums. The central pursuit of our work as an organization is to sustain the diversity of contemporary performing artists while celebrating their contributions to culture. We acknowledge, amplify and support artists through major presentations, commissions and creative development initiatives. Our programs offer audiences a direct connection to the ideas, perspectives and concerns of living artists. Through the lens of dance, theater, music, literary arts, digital media arts and collaborative disciplines, informed by diverse racial and cultural backgrounds, artists and audiences come together in our theaters and public spaces to explore new ways of seeing that expands our understanding of the world we live in now.

Like CAP UCLA on [Facebook](#), and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). #CAPUCLA

###

**PRESS REQUESTS:** Contact Senior Communications Manager Geena Russo, [geena@arts.ucla.edu](mailto:geena@arts.ucla.edu).

**IMAGES:** Photo for *She Is Called: Dear Stranger* is available for download [here](#).