



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Guerilla Opera Performs Works by Iranian Women Composers at the Museum of Science**

Boston, MA (November 4, 2021) - In their 15th Anniversary Season, the Guerillas of Boston join the Museum of Science on its popular series, *SubSpace*. Guerilla Opera's *FRACTURED* is a performance exhibition of two works by composers Anahita Abbasi and Bahar Royai exploring themes of fractured experiences, directed by Deniz Khateri. *FRACTURED* is a live event happening one-night-only on Wednesday, November 17, 2021 at 7:00PM in Cahners Theater at the Museum of Science, Boston, MA. A conversation and reception with composers and creative team to follow. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 on the day-of the event. Tickets are available now at [mos.org/adults](https://mos.org/adults).

### **Distorted Attitudes III/ Scattered**

The mimesis of a schizophrenic mind

Music and text by Anahita Abbasi

The body and the psyche combat for control of emotions in a schizophrenic mind, performed by baritone Brian Church and percussionist Mike Williams.

### **SALT**

A woman at the edge

Music by Bahar Royai and libretto by Deniz Khateri

**\*\* WORLD PREMIERE \*\***

A portrait of an elder woman who, as she cooks soup, reflects on her salty life of feeling trapped in an abusive marriage, performed by soprano and Artistic Director Aliana de la Guardia with electronic sound design.

The cast features Guerilla Opera All-Stars Aliana de la Guardia (soprano and Artistic Director), Brian Church (baritone), and Mike Williams (percussion), in dynamic solo and duo performances. The production and creative team includes Deniz Khateri (Stage Director and librettist for *SALT*), Nuozhou Wang (Associate Director and Video Effects Designer), Keithlyn Parkmen (Lighting Designer and Associate Producer), Sarah Schneider (Artistic Projects and Production Manager).

*SubSpace*, now in its ninth season, is the Museum's experiential playground for developing fresh, original, social experiences for adults. The Fall 2021 season will be a hybrid of virtual events and the return of live, in-person programming taking place throughout the Museum, including the Mugar Omni Theater, the Charles Hayden Planetarium, and the Exhibit Halls. Visit [mos.org/adults](https://mos.org/adults) to register in advance for these events and learn about new events coming soon.

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### WHO WE ARE

Guerilla Opera is one of Boston’s most thrilling young companies creating brave new works. Founded in 2007, the ensemble has accumulated a repertoire of 40 new works, which continues to grow, by the most exciting composers of our generation. In daring performances, they have garnered a national reputation for innovative contemporary opera, with The Boston Globe raving that “radical exploration remains the cornerstone of everything it does.”

This artist-led ensemble wields a mission to commission and reenvision new experimental works that are custom-tailored to their artists. They champion cutting-edge music, immerse audiences in profound experiences, are a model for creative authenticity and inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) in order to inspire, influence and amplify emerging generations of artists. Their unique body of work ferociously confronts the status quo, eschews antiquated and stereotypical traditions of the art form, examines stories through culturally focused and contemporary lenses, and brings new music to new audiences. ([guerillaopera.org](http://guerillaopera.org))

### ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE, BOSTON

Among the world's largest science centers and New England’s most attended cultural institution, the Museum of Science engages 1.4 million visitors a year to science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) through interactive exhibits and programs. Nearly an additional 2 million people experience the Museum annually through touring exhibitions, traveling programs, planetarium productions and preK-8 EiE® STEM curricula through the William and Charlotte Bloomberg Science Education Center. Established in 1830, the Museum is home to such iconic exhibits as the Thomson Theater of Electricity, the Charles Hayden Planetarium, and the Mugar Omni Theater. The Museum influences formal and informal STEM education through research and national advocacy, as a strong community partner and loyal educator resource, and as a leader in universal design, developing exhibits and programming accessible to all. Learn more [mos.org](http://mos.org).

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



**Anahita Abbasi's** music (Composer of *Distorted Attitudes III / Scattered*) has been described as “a dizzyingly sophisticated reverie - colorful and energetic” (The Guardian). “Theatrical listening experience” “embodies tremendous timbral exploration and multilayered performance gestures” (De Volkskrant & Classical Voice America). Her music has been programmed at numerous festivals around the world, such as Tectonics, Southbank Centre, Darmstadt Ferienkurse, Akademie der Künste Berlin, Klangspuren, IRCAM, Klang Festival, BIFEM, and many others. Ms. Abbasi received several awards, including a work-scholarship from the Experimentalstudio des SWR, Freiburg (2014), a Morton Gold ASCAP young composers award (2015), a nomination for “women composers of our time” (2017) as well as the composition prize of the Acht Brücken Festival (2020). In addition to being a founding member of Schallfeld Ensemble (Austria), she is also the founding member of IFCA, Iranian Female Composers Association (US.) Anahita Abbasi has studied in KUG university in Austria and worked closely with B. Furrer, P. Billone, G. Aperghis, and F. Bedrossian. Currently, she is completing her PhD in composition with Rand Steiger at the University of California San Diego. ([www.anahitaabbasi.com](http://www.anahitaabbasi.com))

Born and raised in Iran, **Bahar Royae** (Composer of *SALT*) is a composer of concert and incidental music. Her compositions are a mixture of timbral and sound-based atmospheric structures, interspersed with lyrical influences derived from her Iranian background. Her works have been performed worldwide, including Italy, Greece, Germany, Canada, Iran, and the USA. Bahar was recently recognized as a runner-up in National Sawdust's 2018-19 Hildegard Competition. Other awards include the Roger Sessions Memorial Composition Award, Walter W. Harp Music & Society Award, John Bavicchi Memorial Prize, and the Korourian Electroacoustic Award. Bahar received her M.M. in composition from Boston Conservatory, where she studied with Marti Epstein and Felipe Lara, and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. from CUNY where she studies under Jason Eckardt and Suzanne Farrin.



Trained in her hometown, Tehran, **Deniz Khateri** (Stage & Film Director, *FRACTURED*) is an actor, director, playwright, shadow puppetry artist and animator based in New York. Her works experiment with form and explore the unique characteristics of her chosen mediums. Deniz has performed extensively in Tehran, Boston and New York. As an actor, she has performed with companies including: Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, the Center at West Park, ArtsEmerson, Central Square Theater, Underground Railway Theater, Boston University, Apollinaire Theatre Company, among others. Her plays have been performed in several national and international festivals. In the realm of puppetry and object performance, was hand-selected to perform her new work, “The Cellos’ Dialogue”, in the Exponential Festival and NY Fringe Puppetry Festival. In it she experiments using a musical instrument as a puppet. Deniz has designed shadow puppetry visuals for several contemporary classical composers and is excited to return to Guerilla Opera for “Salt”, for which she is the librettist as well as film and stage director, after previous collaborations on Papillon featuring “Sept Papillon” by Kaija Saariajo and Rumpelstiltskin by Marti Epstein. In addition to her work in live theater, Deniz has won the NYFA award for her animated web series, “Diasporan”, for which she is the writer, director and animator, and explores the daily struggles of immigrants. ([www.denizkhateri.com](http://www.denizkhateri.com))

**Nuozhou Wang** 王诺舟 is a Chinese filmmaker, sculptor, and video artist based in the East Coast of the USA. Her work, featuring women characters invariably, explores gender, class, beauty, and transitional space. Nuozhou has engaged in the creation of works presented at various venues including the Museum of Modern Art, Pioneer Works, and Art Basel. She has associate directed, filmed, and animated numerous cinematic and experimental operas discussing immigration, assimilation, Asian, Asian-American, BIPOC experiences, including *La Bohème* (2021), *Ofelia's Life Dream* (2020), *ELLIS* (2021), and *SALT* (2021). Nuozhou received her BFA in Sculpture from Rhode Island School of Design in 2020.





**Aliana de la Guardia** (soprano and Artistic Director) is a Cuban-American artist with a multifaceted career as a soprano vocalist, entrepreneur, actor, and educator. A co-founding artist and Artistic Director of Guerilla Opera, Aliana has 15 years of experience leading this Boston-based performing ensemble and produced many newly commissioned operas with roles tailor-made for her ferocious stage presence and garnered acclaim for her “dazzling flights of virtuosity” (Gramophone) in “vocally fearless” performances that are “fizzing with theatrical commitment” (The Boston Globe). A graduate of the Boston Conservatory and consummate interpreter of new classical concert repertoire, she has enjoyed collaborations with many ensembles featuring today’s most eminent composers with American Lyric Theater, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Boston New Music Festival, Dinosaur Annex, Enigma Chamber Opera, Ludovico Ensemble, Monadnock Music, New Gallery Concert Series, the PARMA Festival, Transient Canvas, and Winsor Music, among others. As a recording artist, she can be heard on Navona and Ravello Records. Aliana can also be heard on classical label imprints of PARMA Recordings, BMOP Sound, and on independent labels.

Her work as a Latinx arts leader advocates inclusivity and multicultural collaboration. In her local community, she served on the 2020 Haverhill Multicultural Festival planning committee. With accumulated experience in arts administration, she has received accolades that put her at the forefront of the next generation of arts leadership including the OPERA America Mentorship Program for Women in Opera, and a Public Art Learning Fund grant award from the New England Foundation for the Arts to mentor with Double Edge Theatre. As an educator, she has been a featured artist at Harvard University, Lawrence Conservatory, Vermont College of Fine Arts, University of Memphis, and served on the performance faculty at Hubbard Hall Opera Theater for three seasons, as well as in 2021 at the New England Foundation for the Arts National Dance Project Regional Dance Development Initiative. She is the owner and founder of Dirty Paloma Voice Studio in Haverhill, MA, treasurer of Granite State National Association of Teachers of Singing. Other guest speaking engagements include roundtable discussions sponsored by Washington National Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Boston Singers Resource, Classical Singer Convention, and National Opera Association Convention. (<https://www.alianadelaguardia.com/bio>)

**Brian Church**, baritone, has a busy and varied career in the Boston performing arts scene. A longtime member of the Choir at King's Chapel and the Cantata Singers as well as a frequent guest performer with Callithumpian Consort, Brian has been a strong proponent of contemporary music. Past Performances have been with SoundIcon, Boston Musica Viva, New Gallery Concerts, Dinosaur Annex, Boston Playwrights' Theater, Boston Opera Collaborative and many others. In 2013, he performed the Speaker's part in Lachenmann's "...zwei Gefuhl" as part of the Tanglewood Festival of Contemporary Music. Brian has performed Peter Maxwell Davies' rigorous "8 Songs for a Mad King" with both Callithumpian Consort and Collage New Music in performances in Boston, North Carolina and Alaska. He has performed as a substitute member of the Grammy Award-winning vocal octet, Roomful of Teeth in concerts in Boston, NYC, Seattle, Portland and Carlsbad, CA. With Boston's Renaissance Men, Brian has done vocal arrangements, played guitar, performed from Maine to New Orleans and recorded two critically acclaimed albums. Brian enjoys a long-standing relationship with Guerilla Opera, where he premiered roles in operas and new works by Curtis K. Hughes, Rudolf Rojahn, Per Bloland, Adam Roberts, Hannah Lash, Caroline Louise Miller, Daniel Raza Sabzghabaei, Mischa Salkind-Pearl and Andy Vores, among others, as well as revived and recorded roles by Marti Epstein and Nicholas Vines. Brian teaches Voice, Piano, Guitar, Ukulele and Bass at Music 101 Studios in Melrose. For the past two years, he's been a Preschool Music Specialist in Winchester and Cambridge. For 11 years, he played bass and sang in the avant-noise punk group Tristan Da Cunha. He now plays hardcore/metal bass in the Contemporary Composer's Collective, Niffin. Last August, he released his third solo album of original material called Caption Caption on Bandcamp. He is the father of two boys, Elias and Quentin.





Hailed by The Boston Globe as “one of the city’s best percussionists,” **Mike Williams** has performed throughout North America and Europe and is a regular performer in the Boston area. An advocate for contemporary music, he is a member of the new music sinfonietta Sound Icon and is the percussionist and Artistic Director of Guerilla Opera with whom he has commissioned and premiered fourteen new chamber operas since 2007. He has also performed with groups including the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Ludovico Ensemble, Callithumpian Consort, Chameleon Arts Ensemble, and Harvard Group for New Music. Williams has worked with many of the leading composers of our time including Pierluigi Billone, Philippe Leroux, Salvatore Sciarrino, Gunther Schuller, and Roger Reynolds and been involved in numerous recordings on labels including Cantaloupe, BMOP Sound, Albany, and Northwest Classics. As an orchestral musician he has performed with the Netherlands Radio Chamber Orchestra, Portland Symphony, New Hampshire Symphony, Springfield Symphony, and in the summer of 2010 toured North America with the Star Wars: In Concert Symphony

Orchestra. He was awarded a fellowship from the Tanglewood Music Center and attended The Institute and Festival for Contemporary Performance in New York. Williams has performed at the Festival de Mexico, Gaudeamus Music Week, New Hampshire Music Festival, Monadnock Music, and the Summer Institute for Contemporary Performance Practice at New England Conservatory. Williams holds both B.M. and M.M. degrees from The Boston Conservatory, where he won top prize in the Concerto Competition. He also completed a year of advanced study at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam during which time he regularly performed with the Netherlands Radio Chamber Orchestra under Peter Eötvös. His principal teachers include Peter Prommel, Pat Hollenbeck, Nancy Zeltsman, and Salvatore Rabbio. Williams is on the music theory faculty of the Boston Conservatory at Berklee.