

Thursday, March 7, 2024, 7:30pm
Zellerbach Playhouse

Nathalie Joachim
Ki moun ou ye (Who are you?)
West Coast Premiere

Nathalie Joachim, *voice, flute, electronics*
Yvonne Lam, *violin*
Cameren Anai Williams, *viola*
Izzy Lepanto Gleicher, *flute*
Daniel Villarreal-Carrillo, *drums and percussion*

Ki moun ou ye (Who are you?)

Kenbe m
Fil
Kouti yo
Renmen m plis
Nwa
Ti nèg
Kanpe anba solèy
Nan kò mwen
Zetwal
Ki moun ou ye

*This program will last approximately 75 minutes
and be performed without intermission.*



In *Ki moun ou ye*, Nathalie Joachim takes us through an intimate collection of music that ponders its title's question: "Who are you?" Inspired by the remote Caribbean farmland that her family continues to call home after seven generations, *Ki moun ou ye* travels deeper into the Haitian heritage introduced on Joachim's Grammy-nominated *Fanm d'Ayiti*. Performed in both English and Haitian Kreyòl, this immersive work examines the richness

of one's voice—an instrument that brings with it DNA, ancestry, and identity—in a vibrant tapestry of Joachim's voice and intricate electronically sampled vocal textures underscored by an acoustic instrumental ensemble. *Ki moun ou ye* invites listeners into an exploration of personal history, and draws upon the voice's historic and ongoing role as a tool for survival, healing, self-preservation, fellowship, and an affirmation of freedom.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Nathalie Joachim is a Grammy-nominated Haitian-American performer and composer, hailed as "a fresh and invigorating cross-cultural voice." (*The Nation*). Her creative practice centers an authentic commitment to storytelling and human connectivity while advocating for social change and cultural awareness, earning her the reputation of being both "powerful and unpretentious" (*The New York Times*). Joachim is Assistant Professor of Composition at Princeton University and is regularly commissioned to write for orchestra, instrumental and vocal ensembles, dance, and interdisciplinary theater. This season's highlights include new works for Carnegie Hall, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the Grant Park Music Festival, and Spoleto Festival USA. Her landmark *Fanm d'Ayiti*, an even-

ing-length work for flute, voice, string quartet, and electronics, celebrates and explores her personal Haitian heritage and received a Grammy nomination for Best World Music Album; the work was filmed exclusively for Cal Performances at Black Ensemble Theater, Chicago, and was streamed to an international audience in Fall 2020 as part of the *Cal Performances at Home* concert series. Joachim's highly anticipated sophomore album, *Ki moun ou ye*—an intimate examination of ancestral connection and self—was co-released last month by Nonesuch Records and New Amsterdam Records.

Joachim is a United States Artist Fellow and co-founder of the critically acclaimed duo Flutronix. She is an alumnus of the Juilliard School and The New School.

NATHALIE JOACHIM

Kenbe m

(Humming)
Some of us are roots
And some of us are branches
Some of us are tethered to place
Unsettled until we find our way home
Home

Mèsi pou tèt ou kenbe m (etc.)

Thank you for remembering to hold me (etc.)

How much of their pain am I left with?
What pain is theirs, and what pain is mine?
And how much will I leave behind?

Fil

(instrumental)

Kouti yo

Pa manyen kouti yo
Yo koud blese a
Pa manyen kouti yo
Yo koud blese a
Men blese a fon
Men blese a fon

Don't touch the stitches
They sewed up the wound
Don't touch the stitches
They sewed up the wound
But the wound is deep
But the wound is deep

Menm si li sanble geri
Menm si ou preske pa ka wè l
Pa manyen kouti yo
Pa manyen kouti yo
Yo koud blese a
Pa manyen kouti yo
Yo koud blese a
Men blese a fon

Even if it looks healed
Even if you almost can't see it
Don't touch the stitches
Don't touch the stitches
They sewed up the wound
Don't touch the stitches
They sewed up the wound
But the wound is deep

Pa manyen kouti yo
Yo koud blese a
Men blese a fon
Men blese a fon

Don't touch the stitches
They sewed up the wound
But the wound is deep
But the wound is deep

Renmen m plis

Lè mwen di mwen renmen ou
Ou toujou di ou renmen m plis
Lè m tande ou di sa
Mwen santi ke sa se yon lanmou
mwen p ap janm vle pèdi

M pa sonje yon lè ou pa t nan vi m

Genlè w te la menm nan vi anvan
Nou tèlman konn len lòt
N ap rete soude nan lòt vi pi devan
Mwen mande ou èske sa posib
Ke sa nou santi
Se lanmou san limit

O, tout kote ou prale
Tout kote ou prale
Mwen pral avèk ou
Mwen pral avèk ou
O, mwen vle ou konnen
M pa ka janm bliye
Chak moman nou pataje ansanm

Lè mwen di mwen renmen ou
Ou toujou di ou renmen m plis
Lè m tande ou di sa
Mwen santi ke sa se yon lanmou
mwen p ap janm vle pèdi

Lanmou mwen p ap janm vle pèdi

M pa gèn pawòl pou sa m santi kounya

M pa gèn pawòl pou sa m santi
M pa vle kòmanse reflechir kounya
M jis vle gade ou e souri

Je mwen fikse
M p ap janm vire do m ba ou
M pa ka janm bliye
Chak moman nou pataje ansanm

When I say I love you
You always say you love me more
When I hear you say that
I feel like this is a love that
I will never want to lose

I don't remember a time when you weren't
in my life
You were probably here in a past life too
We know each other so well
That we'll stay together for lifetimes to come
I ask you if it's possible
That what we feel
Is a limitless love

Oh, everywhere you go
Everywhere you go
I'm going with you
I'm going with you
Oh, I want you to know
That I could never forget
Every single moment that we have shared

When I say I love you
You always say you love me more
When I hear you say that
I feel like this is a love that
I will never want to lose

A love I will never want to lose

I don't have words for what I'm feeling
right now
I don't have words for what I'm feeling
I don't want to start thinking about it now
I just want to look at you and smile

My eyes are fixed on you
I will never turn my back on us
I could never forget
Every single moment that we have shared

Lè mwen di mwen renmen ou
 Ou toujou di ou renmen m plis
 Lè m tande ou di sa
 Mwen santi ke sa se yon lanmou
 mwen p ap janm vle pèdi

M p ap janm vle pèdi
 (Hum)

Nwa

Ti nèg

Ti nèg
 Gade ti nèg sa
 Beautiful, Black, Negro, Nigga

Ours is a language created out of a need
 To organize
 To fight back

To show us our beauty
 There's community woven into this language
 Because it's what we knew

Ti nèg
 Gade ti nèg sa
 Beautiful, Black, Negro, Nigga

Though you have tried to abuse us with
 this word
 We've owned it
 We've made it ours
 Reclaimed our power
 On this land, when you hear nèg
 It identifies us
 And marks you as other

Ti nèg
 Gade ti nèg sa
 Beautiful, Black, Negro, Nigga

Nigga
 Nigga

When I say I love you
 You always say you love me more
 When I hear you say that
 I feel like this is a love that
 I will never want to lose

I will never want to lose
 (Hum)

(instrumental)

Little guy
 Look at that little guy
 Beautiful, Black, Negro, Nigga

Ours is a language created out of a need
 To organize
 To fight back

To show us our beauty
 There's community woven into this language
 Because it's what we knew

Little guy
 Look at that little guy
 Beautiful, Black, Negro, Nigga

Though you have tried to abuse us with
 this word
 We've owned it
 We've made it ours
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 It identifies us
 And marks you as other

Little guy
 Look at that little guy
 Beautiful, Black, Negro, Nigga

Nigga
 Nigga

Kanpe anba solèy

Pandan m kanpe anba solèy la
M panse a jan nou te souffri
Tèt nou te bese, kouvri ak swe
Nou te priye
Pou lwa yo vin sove
Bèl po nwa nou anba solèy

Pandan m kanpe anba solèy la
M panse a jan nou te souffri
Tèt nou te bese, kouvri ak swe
Nou te priye
Pou lwa yo vin sove
Bèl po nwa nou anba solèy

As I stand beneath the sun
I think of how much we suffered
Our heads were bowed, covered with sweat
And we prayed
For the spirits to come save
Our beautiful Black skin beneath the sun

As I stand beneath the sun
I think of how much we suffered
Our heads were bowed, covered with sweat
And we prayed
For the spirits to come save
Our beautiful Black skin beneath the sun

Nan kò mwen

Chak mo ou te di mwen
Chak mo ou te di m a la fen
De kè nou twò lwen
Fò m pwoteje tèt mwen
Pawòl ou koupe tankou yon kouto
Yo ban m doulè

Nou pa santi lanmou konsa
Tout emosyon nou tèt anba
Sa se mizè
Sa se mizè
Se mizè

Sa mwen santi nan kò mwen
Mwen vle lage l
Sa mwen kache nan chak kwen
Mwen pa vle wè l
Mwen pa ka pote tout chay sa
Mwen pa ka ba ou tout pouvwa

Pa gen anyen m ka fè
K ap jamn fè m bon nan je w
E pa gèn yon ti grenn respè
Mwen ka jwenn pou m ba ou
Mwen konnen, m pa ka tann
M ap kontinye, m pa ka tann
M ap lage w...
...Tann

Every word you said to me
Every word you said in the end
Our two hearts are too far apart
I have to protect myself
Your words cut me like a knife
They cause me pain

We won't feel love like this
Our feelings are all over the place
This is miserable
This is miserable
It's miserable

What I feel in my body
I want to release
What I'm hiding in every corner
I don't want to see
I can't carry the weight of this
I can't give you that power

There's nothing I can do
That will ever make me good in your eyes
And there isn't an ounce of respect
I can find to give to you
I know that, I can't wait
I'm moving on, I can't wait
I'm letting you go...
...Wait

Mwen konnen ou gen pwoblèm
Men fò m pwoteje espri mwen
Se yon limyè m genyen
Limyè klere
Ou p ap entenn li
Menm si se sa ou vreman vle fè

I know that you have problems
But I have to protect my spirit
It's a light that I have
A bright light
You won't extinguish it
Even if that's what you truly want to do

Sa mwen santi nan kò mwen
Mwen vle lage l
Sa mwen kache nan chak kwen
Mwen pa vle wè l
Mwen pa ka pote tout chay sa
Mwen pa ka ba ou tout pouvwa

What I feel in my body
I want to release
What I'm hiding in every corner
I don't want to see
I can't carry the weight of this
I can't give you that power

Ranje jip mwen e danse pou ou
Jwe ti jwèt nou tankou timoun
Yon poupe ki pa pale
Se konsa ou prefere mwen ye

Fix my skirt and dance for you
Play our little games like we're children
A doll who never speaks
That's how you'd prefer me to be

N ap fini koze sa jodiya
Mwen p ap kontinye kraze lavi mwen pou
ou, o

We're ending this today
I can't continue destroying my life for you, oh

Nou pa santi lanmou konsa
Tout emosyon nou tèt anba

We won't feel love like this
Our feelings are all over the place

M ap chwazi tèt mwen
M p ap chwazi lapenn
M santi mwen pi lejè
M santi m ka pran lè
Tankou m ap respire pou premye fwa
Tankou m ap respire pou premye fwa

I'm choosing myself
I won't choose this pain
I already feel like I'm lighter
I feel like I can take in air
Like I'm breathing for the first time
Like I'm breathing for the first time

Sa mwen santi nan kò mwen
Mwen vle lage l
Sa mwen kache nan chak kwen
Mwen pa vle wè l
Mwen pa ka pote tout chay sa
Mwen pa ka ba ou tout

What I feel in my body
I want to release
What I'm hiding in every corner
I don't want to see
I can't carry the weight of this
I can't give you everything

Zetwal

Gen maji nan syèl la nan lannwit
Limyè ki klere
Ki bay lavi

There is magic in the sky at night
A light that is bright
and that gives life

Ki kote zetwal sa yo ka mennen nou?
Ki rèv zetwal sa yo ka pote pou ou?

Where can these stars take us?
What dreams can they carry for you?

Met tèt ou sou zepòl mwen e lage bèl pawòl

Put your head on my shoulder and
whisper sweet nothings in my ear
Hearing these words makes me desire you

Nan zorèy mwen pawòl dous sa yo fè m
bezwen kò w

Ki kote zetwal sa yo ka mennen nou?
Ki rèv zetwal sa yo ka pote pou ou?
Ki kote zetwal sa yo ka mennen nou?
Ki rèv zetwal sa yo ka pote pou ou?

Where can these stars take us?
What dreams can they carry for you?
Where can these stars take us?
What dreams can they carry for you?

Pafwa mwen santi m pou kont mwen
Menm lè ou chita bò kote m

There are times when I feel alone
Even when you are sitting right next to me

Ki kote zetwal sa yo ka mennen nou?
Ki rèv zetwal sa yo ka pote pou ou?

Where can these stars take us?
What dreams can they carry for you?

Tout sa mwen fè pou m bliye

I've done everything that I can to forget
what's happened

Mwen pa kapab
Dlo koule nan je m
Ki sa n ap fè la?

but I can't
And as tears gather in my eyes, I wonder
Where do we go from here?

Ki kote zetwal sa yo ka mennen nou?
Ki rèv zetwal sa yo ka pote pou ou?
Ki kote zetwal sa yo ka mennen nou?
Ki rèv zetwal sa yo ka pote pou ou?

Where can these stars take us?
What dreams can they carry for you?
Where can these stars take us?
What dreams can they carry for you?

Gendelè mwen ta renmen
Tonbe nan bra w ak je m fèmen
Pou m santi nou gen vi e
N ap kontinye viv

What I would love to do
Is to fall into your arms with my eyes closed
So that I can feel alive with you
And trust that we will continue living

Ki kote zetwal sa yo ka mennen nou?
Ki rèv zetwal sa yo ka pote pou ou?
Ki kote zetwal sa yo ka mennen nou?
Ki rèv zetwal sa yo ka pote pou ou?

Where can these stars take us?
What dreams can they carry for you?
Where can these stars take us?
What dreams can they carry for you?

Ki moun ou ye
Ki moun ou ye? etc.

Who are you?
Who are you? etc.

Whose names are these?
Where do these names come from?
Who once owned us?

Ki moun ou ye? etc.

Who are you? etc.

These names we carry
These names that live on
Who once owned us?

Ki moun ou ye? etc.

Who are you? etc.

Who once owned us? etc.

Where are they?
Where are they now?

Ki moun ou ye? etc.

Who are you? etc.

Who once owned us? etc.

Ki moun ou ye? etc.

Who are you? etc.