

HOMeward BOUND

A KOREAN ADOPTEE EXPLORING THE LONGING FOR BELONGING



MAY 1

The cell theatre 7:30pm

A MUSICAL NARRATIVE SOLO SHOW BY **JAE CARELLI**

HOMeward BOUND

A KOREAN ADOPTEE EXPLORING THE LONGING FOR BELONGING

ABANDONMENT AND REJECTION

The Trees on the Mountains from Susannah by *Carlisle Floyd*

Transit by JAE.CI

LOSS AND GRIEF

Can't Go Home by *Matthew Pellegrino*

Sugar by JAE.CI

TRUST AND INTIMACY

Suspicion by *Bo Konigsmark*

Fireflies Bite Too by JAE.CI

SHAME AND GUILT

Alone in the Universe by *Bo Konigsmark*

Born A New by JAE.CI

INTERMISSION

CONTROL AND MASTERY

How to get Heat without Fire by *Tom Cipullo*

1. Why I Wear My Hair Long
2. The Goodbye
3. The Pocketbook

American Doll by JAE.CI

4. How to get Heat without Fire

IDENTITY AND HOME

Ain't it a Pretty Night from Susannah by *Carlisle Floyd*

Electric Connection by JAE.CI

LOYALTY AND FAMILY

Blood in the Water by JAE.CI

Knoxville: Summer of 1915 by *Samuel Barber*

HOMeward BOUND

A KOREAN ADOPTEE EXPLORING THE LONGING FOR
BELONGING

Narrative and songs written by: Jae Carelli

Piano: Nick Guerrero

Bass: Hari Nandu

Guitar: Tonie Nguyen

Drums: Zac Swanner

Violin: Jen Ho

Visuals: Robin Wong

THANK YOU!

A huge thanks to Nancy Manocherian's the cell theatre
especially Jonah Levy and Julian Wild

Thank you to my amazing band, you are all so talented
beyond comprehension.
So much love to you all.

Thank you so much to RA Frank, my fellow adoptee and
stage manager for making this production run so smoothly-
grateful that you stepped in when I needed you the most.

Thank you to my wonderful and talented friend Seymour
Aprelilio who tuned the piano for this performance.

Thank you to my friends and colleagues, Matthew Pellegrino
and Bo Konigsmark for writing music for me to sing. I am so
excited for the collaborations to come!

(Continued on the next few pages)

Thank you to my incredible teachers and coaches past and present, and a special thanks to my current ones: Amy Shoremount-Obra's guidance over the past 12 years has been invaluable. Kurt Wolf helped me kickstart my crossover journey. Dr. Felix Graham, I wouldn't have been able to make this show happen without you helping me work through all my performance anxiety and shame.

Thank you to my Keepsake House family, Hailey Savage and Jasmine Jang- you all have given me a place to work through this material and a safe supportive space to grow. A special thanks to Azhar Bande Ali and Paula Croxson who took time to help me as I drafted this narrative many many times.

Thank you to my community of adoptees. Sharing our stories with each other gave me the courage to do this. Much love to you all.

Thank you to my amazing friends I am endlessly inspired by your amazing abilities, hearts of gold, and our laughter and tears. You're my chosen family.

Thank you to my family, my parents and siblings.
I love you all no matter what always and forever.

Thank you to Alia Gribbon, my best friend, my advisor, my right hand, my sister-life partner.

This whole thing would not have been here without
your decade of support and advice.

**Thank you to all who made this whole production happen via Kickstarter,
this would have not been possible without you!**

Lisa Messick	Daniel Bonner	Edward Pokropski
Richard and Andrea Eaves	Jennifer O'Connor	Nathan Pearson
Jeff Johnson	Susan DeLeonardo	Akshar Gupta
Eileen Sardinha	Hailey Savage	Sean Gillen
Janet Moser	Benjamin Lundberg Torres Sánchez	Jonathan O'Neill
Rick Allen	Alan Toda-Ambaras	James Ozaki
Sean Kane	Ezra Peaguirre	Sunia Won Gibbs
Madelyn Munsell	Emma Woods	Gaston Gosselin
Jessica Wang	Mohona Sengupta	Tonie Nguyen
Michael Talbot	Taesong Kim	Sharon Summers
Bhanushee	Heather Robinson	Stanley D. Tady
Jeffrey Marani	Mike Harris	Azhar Bande-Ali
Stephanie Maddalone	Nina Buonomo	Alexandra Mann
Amanda Palermo	Hyewon Han	Brandon Mei
John Farrell	Kathleen Parker	Jimmy Lim
Lia Mastrogiacomo	Campbell Mann	Kaity Collins
Oksana Piddlebuna	Sara Goldstein	Gina Izzo
Amy Shoremount-Obra	Shekar Suragani	Edward and Marie Farrell
Jedy Panjitan	Patrice Metcalf	Bethany Congregational Church
Jo Schneider-Leonsky	Vanessa Janik	April Frey
Kimberly Te	Monica Koh	Jerry Pinion
Jasmine Jang	Smiley Rojas-Nunez	Anne DiSanto
Leina Xu	Jalin Perry	Michael Carelli
Hari Nandu	Joanna Chen	Nicole Rizzo
Jesse Nebres	Joy Elizabeth Piedmont	Andrés Ballesteros
Mike and Maria Capobianco	Margo Zak	Ken Fiorelli
Jennifer Lippay	Jungwoo Kim	Rose Hegele
Samantha Aurelio	Daniel Lugo	Jeanie Mattila
Melody Valdez	Heather Gittens	Tom and Mary Keough
Hayli Bazan	Monica Kim	Barbara.
Tina Lewald	Peter Gill	The Donovan Family
Jane and Kelly Williams	Jon Willsten	Carol Henck
Renee Carchedi	Robin Wong	Sungwon McLaughlin
Katrina Sotera	Diane Gasalberti	Sara Goldstein
Joanne K Lessard	Kim Coffin	Stephen Richardson
Killick Hinds	Henry Shen	Mati and Chris Padjus
Brian Sardinha	Justin Barish	Alex Petti
John Leary	Stephanie Sardinha	Andrew Lai
Jackie Mullen	Juliana Villano	Maryanne Walling
Madhu Nalla	Sang Kim	A.nonymous
Fr. Joe Mozer	Michael Keogh	

Carlisle Floyd (1926–2021)

“The Trees on the Mountains” and “Ain’t It a Pretty Night”

from Susannah (1955)

Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah* stands as a cornerstone of American opera—rich in folk-inspired melodies, raw emotional depth, and searing social commentary. Premiered in 1955, the opera is loosely based on the biblical story of Susanna and the Elders, reimagined in rural Tennessee. The work explores themes of innocence, judgment, repression, and resilience, reflecting Floyd’s keen sensitivity to the cultural and moral tensions of the American South.

“The Trees on the Mountains” is a haunting lament sung by the opera’s heroine, Susannah, in Act II. After being wrongfully shamed and exiled by her community, she reflects on the pain of betrayal and the loss of innocence. The aria's simple, hymn-like accompaniment and melancholic vocal line capture a profound sense of isolation and emotional devastation, serving as a pivotal moment of introspection and tragic beauty.

“Ain’t It a Pretty Night”, from Act I, reveals a very different side of Susannah. Here, she gazes at the stars and dreams of a world beyond her small Appalachian town—a place of freedom, excitement, and endless possibility. Floyd’s music here is radiant and expansive, echoing the open skies and youthful yearning of the character. This aria contrasts poignantly with Susannah’s later suffering, making it all the more heart-wrenching.

Both pieces showcase Floyd’s signature blend of lyrical expressiveness and dramatic immediacy, highlighting why *Susannah* remains one of the most performed American operas to this day.

-NOTES FROM THE COLLABORATIVE COMPOSERS-

Matthew Jihoon Pellegrino

Can't Go Home

Can't Go Home is a reflection on home and what it means for one to feel disconnected from the place they might call home. For adoptees the idea of home is fraught with uncertainty; what is home, and what do you do if you can't go back there? Personally I never felt a strong connection to the place I was raised and look back on it with little to no fondness. After I reconnected with my family in Korea and found the supposed home that I was separated from, I still found myself disconnected by all the years I missed there, the cultural barriers, and of course the physical distance separating me from the home that I had found.

Dr. Bo Konigsmark

Alone in the Universe

Alone in the universe was spurred out of a disdain for religious indoctrination in our culture. Growing up in Georgia in a heavily conservative Christian community, I was taught never to question the omnipotence of God, let alone that an entity like this even exists. This piece rebels against the establishment of the church and demonstrates through warped traditional themes and sarcastic language that to many, like myself, it has done more harm than good.

Tom Cipullo (b. 1956)

***How to Get Heat Without Fire* (2009)**

Poetry by Marilyn Kallet

Tom Cipullo's song cycle *How to Get Heat Without Fire* sets four vivid and deeply personal poems by American poet Marilyn Kallet.

Known for her sensual, candid, and emotionally charged poetry, Kallet gives voice to the complexities of modern womanhood—grief, memory, resilience, humor, and longing. Cipullo's music matches her texts with bold sensitivity, transforming each poem into a scene rich with psychological nuance and dramatic texture.

The opening song, **"Why I Wear My Hair Long,"** is a powerful declaration of sensual freedom. Cipullo's setting captures both the intimacy and assertiveness of the poem, blending lyrical tenderness with bursts of emotional urgency.

"The Goodbye" shifts the tone to one of quiet heartbreak and resignation. In this poignant farewell, the speaker navigates the subtleties of parting—when nothing is spoken outright, but everything is understood. The music is restrained yet expressive, letting silences and small gestures speak volumes.

In **"The Pocketbook,"** Cipullo infuses humor and sharp observation into a narrative that at first appears lighthearted but reveals underlying themes of gender, power, and dignity.

The final song, **"How to Get Heat Without Fire,"** provides a meditative and emotionally layered close to the cycle. It explores the longing for love without hurting the ones you love. Cipullo's music here calls for push and pull of rhythm which parallels the text which is mostly questions until the declaration at the end to be sound itself.

Samuel Barber (1910–1981)

Knoxville: Summer of 1915, Op. 24 (1947)

Text by James Agee

Samuel Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* is a lush, nostalgic work for voice and orchestra (often performed with piano reduction in recital) that paints an intimate portrait of childhood memory, filtered through the lens of poetic reflection. Composed in 1947, the piece sets a prose poem by James Agee, later used as the preamble to his Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *A Death in the Family*.

Barber was deeply moved by Agee's text, which resonated with his own experiences of a gentle, idyllic American childhood. The music evokes a dreamlike summer evening in Knoxville, Tennessee, through the eyes of a young child—wrapped in the warmth of family, drifting between wonder, observation, and a growing awareness of life's fragility.

Barber's setting has become one of his most beloved vocal works, treasured for its emotional sincerity, nostalgic power, and lyrical beauty.

-ABOUT THE COLLABORATIVE COMPOSERS-

Matthew Jihoon Pellegrino is an award-winning composer, Fulbright researcher, and devoted music educator. He has enjoyed an eclectic musical upbringing; one which combines Western classical, traditional Korean music, and a brief stint in a metal band. Uncompromising in his work, Pellegrino seeks to create music that engages equally with casual audiences as well as the most serious of listeners. In his music he most enjoys exploring personal themes while incorporating touches of dark humor. Matthew is a Korean American Adoptee researching Korean music both old and new as well as traditional and popular. His research explores the intersections of Korean music with Western culture, the influence of cultural taste and aesthetic on musical sound, and deconstructing the impact of colonization on global musics. An advocate for Adoptee voices, his more current work and interests lie in studying Korean music while creating music in the space between being Korean and American. Born in South Korea, Matthew was raised on Long Island, New York. He is currently serving on faculty at New York University Steinhardt while completing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree with Oscar Bettison at the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University, where he also completed his Master of Music degree. During his time at Fredonia State University of New York he studied Music Composition with Dr. Rob Deemer, Dr. Sean Doyle, and Dr. Karl Boelter.

(continued next page)

-ABOUT THE COLLABORATIVE COMPOSERS-

Dr. Bo Konigsmark is an American composer, multi-instrumental performer, singer and ensemble director. Between 2016-2023 he received a bachelors in music from Berklee College of Music, a master of arts at Tufts University, and a doctorate in composition at the Hartt School. Bo is the artistic director and co-founder of the Into the Light Ensemble, a contemporary vocal group that performs new music by current composers, as well as new songs by the group itself. He is the winner of the Earle Brown award for outstanding composition from Berklee College of Music in 2018 and a 2024 grant recipient from the Newton Cultural Council. He currently teaches musicianship at the Suzuki School of Newton and continues to write music for the ensemble and various other commissions.